



CASE STUDY

Work Sharp empowers data-driven decision making with Infor CloudSuite Industrial

Work Sharp is a fourth-generation, family-owned business in Ashland, Oregon. The company is a leader in designing and supplying knife and drill-bit sharpening equipment to 50+ countries globally via its brands, which include Drill Doctor, Darex Industrial, and Work Sharp Sharpeners. For more than 40 years, Work Sharp has been creating industry-leading products in the US and works closely with contract workers in China to develop supplier relationships and validate quality expectations. Work Sharp employs around 100 people and has the honor of being named an “Oregon Top Workplace” for seven consecutive years. However, the company's leadership saw that its potential was being limited by the legacy enterprise resource planning system it had in place.



Headquarters

Ashland, Oregon

Industry

Industrial manufacturing

Employees

100

Infor product

Infor CloudSuite™ Industrial

Website

worksharptools.com

“At the SUN annual conference, we sensed that Infor customers are highly satisfied. This gave us confidence and ultimately led to our decision to move to Infor CloudSuite Industrial.”

BETH HOFFMANN

Senior Financial Manager & System Administrator, Work Sharp

Modernizing operations

With advances in technology and evolving customer expectations, Work Sharp discovered that its legacy ERP system made running the business increasingly challenging. The company also relied on a sole IT professional to develop reports and program data views. Unfortunately, this resulted in data silos throughout the business, with most users unable to access all of the data they needed to make informed business decisions. In addition, Work Sharp was performing all its tracking manually on spreadsheets, which created inefficiencies throughout its operations.

Because Work Sharp had been using an outdated ERP system for so long, the company was missing out on numerous, modern capabilities that could significantly improve how its business operates. When Work Sharp found out its legacy ERP system would no longer be supported, the company recognized this as an opportunity to bring its operations into the digital age. Around that same time, Work Sharp lost its only IT professional and had a difficult time replacing him. This all added up to indicating that it was time to move to a cloud-based, ERP solution that could meet the company's data accessibility demands, without the need for highly skilled technical expertise.

Having confidence in Infor

The first step in evaluating cloud-based ERP systems for Work Sharp was forming an evaluation team, which included an executive sponsor, an outside consultant, and subject matter experts from every area of the business. As a cohesive team with a range of perspectives, they narrowed their search down to two vendors, Infor® and Epicor®.

“That’s the most rewarding thing for me. When employees comes to me with questions, I get to show them how easy it is to find the answer themselves in the system. Their eyes get really big and they think it’s really cool. I love that. Being able to easily access data has made a tremendous difference.”

BETH HOFFMANN

Senior Financial Manager & System Administrator, Work Sharp

Business challenges

- Lack of data visibility created information silos throughout the business
- Manual data entry in spreadsheets reduced productivity
- The legacy ERP system was being decommissioned
- The sole IT professional was leaving the company

After reviewing several presentations and demos of each product, Work Sharp noticed that Infor CloudSuite Industrial was more user friendly than the competitors, but what stood out the most about Infor was its people and dedication to customer success. “Prior to making our final decision to move to Infor CloudSuite Industrial, we attended the SUN Annual User Group Conference. The level of service and satisfaction we sensed from Infor’s customers was unmatched when compared to other vendors we evaluated. This experience gave us confidence in Infor and ultimately led to our decision to move to CloudSuite Industrial,” said Beth Hoffmann, Senior Financial Manager and System Administrator for Work Sharp.

Gaining real-time data access

Working with Infor Services, Work Sharp implemented CloudSuite Industrial in under eight months—on time and under budget. Infor leveraged its 60:30:10™ business process assessment concept to clearly identify the processes that were most important in helping Work Sharp differentiate itself and deliver maximum value. In addition, Infor Implementation Accelerators provided Work Sharp with core, industry-leading business processes; application configurations; and an implementation playbook, tools, and templates. This helped ensure that Work Sharp employees could access real-time data to facilitate decision-making within six months of the start of implementation.

Empowering decision-making

CloudSuite Industrial provides Work Sharp employees with real-time data access, anywhere, anytime, and on virtually any device. “The ability for users to access the information they need without technical expertise in report writing has made a significant impact on our business,” Hoffmann says.

Transitioning from manual, spreadsheet-based reporting to the intuitive dashboards in CloudSuite Industrial has substantially increased the productivity and efficiency of Work Sharp’s operations. Employees can now rapidly analyze real-time data and have confidence in the decisions they’re making.

Increasing productivity fuels growth

CloudSuite Industrial’s flexibility allows Work Sharp to tailor the solution to fit its unique business needs with industry-specific modules. Infor Factory Track® allows Work Sharp to easily manage inventory with barcoding, while the Quality Control (QC) module within CloudSuite Industrial helps to dramatically reduce the company’s reliance on manual tracking. “Our tracking and information management is at a new level. CloudSuite Industrial saves time and prevents missed opportunities for product improvements,” according to Hoffmann. These productivity gains enable Work Sharp to quickly scale its business without hiring new employees.

Business results

- Real-time access to data empowers data-driven decision making
- Industry-specific modules improve operational efficiency
- Intuitive dashboards decrease the amount of manual data entry
- Continuous cloud upgrades keep the system current

Keeping operations current

Work Sharp has big plans for the future with Infor CloudSuite Industrial. Once the team is fully trained and able to utilize the QC module, Work Sharp’s next step is to utilize the document management service of Infor OS. Hoffmann says incorporating advanced analytics with Infor Birst® is also on Work Sharp’s list as the company continues to grow and modernize.

No matter how Work Sharp’s business adapts over the coming years, the company can count on CloudSuite Industrial to keep its operations current, without major disruptions. “We were amazed by how smoothly our transition to the cloud went. This experience has given us confidence in Infor’s ability to support our business for years and years to come,” Hoffmann said.

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