

🚚 Helicopter aftermarket parts facility speeds order fulfillment

Business Results

- Faster inventory turnover results in better cash flow
- Intelligent logistics, less wastage improves efficiency
- Increased order volume processed with same people
- Higher on-time order fulfillment draws customer praise



The Challenge – Keep 35,000 aircraft flying

As the world's largest manufacturer of commercial and military helicopters, the supplier of over 35,000 aircraft around the world, our customer's aftermarket parts distribution facility is a bustling operation.

Their challenge first surfaced as the order desk was increasingly flooded with urgent requests. Although they offer two delivery services – standard service and an expedited 24-hour service for customers whose aircraft is grounded – their customers had come to know that standard service was often delayed and would ask for expedited service. The business unit had difficulty meeting the truly urgent needs.

The business unit knew they needed a logistics and fulfillment system that provided:

- better visibility of the physical inventory within their vast production warehouse
- faster, more accurate order fulfillment

The Solution – Epic Data Real-Time, Integrated Parts Movement Management System

The manufacturer calls the Epic Data solution its Warehouse Management System (WMS) because it supports the specific business processes and workflow of their warehouse operations. "The system from Epic Data has improved our ability to get orders out in one day. We now receive many compliments on our service levels," reports the helicopter manufacturer's aftermarket parts warehouse supervisor.

"In addition, there have been many cost and time savings," the Customer continues. "We're processing more sales orders with the same number of people, our orders are completed faster, inventory costs are lower, and cash flow has improved."

Epic Data's software runs in the warehouse. It tracks real-time parts location and movement, generates intelligent order-based pick tickets, and provides order fulfillment status. The efficiencies and time-saving schemes gains are described below.

- **10-minute order release.** Epic Data interfaces directly to a legacy order processing system to release an order to the warehouse within 10 minutes of processing, a significant improvement over the batch orders issued 3-4 times each day previously.
- **Quick parts tracking.** Epic Data's solution captures real-time parts movements, including in-transit parts, from the production line to the stockroom to shipping using handheld data collection devices. Less time is spent looking for missing or delayed parts.
- **Intelligent pick tickets.** Epic Data imposed rules and intelligence to the creation of pick tickets with the primary intent of completing orders faster. Picking is organized by zone for better handling efficiency, and picks are smaller and load-balanced for faster delivery to the consolidation and staging area.
- **Order bundling.** The system combines multiple orders going to the same customer to save logistics and shipping costs.
- **On-line order status.** Epic Data provides order status updates on the manufacturer's web-based and desktop systems so customers or the manufacturer's customer service personnel can view order status 24/7.

Epic Data's System Results:

- *Faster order fulfillment*
- *Better order accuracy*
- *Higher customer satisfaction*
- *Higher volume of orders with same people*
- *Increased ability to react to change*
- *Less time wasted finding missing parts, correcting errors*

Six Sigma team uses Epic Data for continuous improvement

The helicopter manufacturer has a pervasive philosophy of continuous improvement, and a strong Six Sigma team that works inter-departmentally to identify and improve the company's efficiency and effectiveness. "Epic Data's solutions are very helpful in giving us the visibility and ability to continuously monitor and improve our processes," reports the warehouse supervisor.

"We've worked with Epic Data for twenty-six years and continue to be pleased with the level of service they give us," he continues. "The people at Epic Data are knowledgeable professionals, they deliver innovative solutions on schedule, and their output is reliable."

ABOUT EPIC DATA

For over 30 years, Epic Data has delivered real-time shop floor and warehouse management information to the world's most progressive discrete manufacturers through turnkey data collection and lean manufacturing operations management solutions.

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