

BOLD INDUSTRIES

- ◆ **Company**
Bold Industries
Bridgeport, CT
Manufacturing, Wholesale,
and Retail
- ◆ **Business Challenge**
Bold Industries needed to eliminate their order-processing bottleneck resulting from manual data to improve company efficiency and customer service.
- ◆ **Solution**
ShipGear by V-Technologies and QuickBooks Premier Manufacturing & Wholesale edition 2006
- ◆ **Results**
Together, ShipGear and QuickBooks allow Bold Industries to:
 - Never waste time entering the same data twice
 - Ship more packages every day
 - Improve customer communication and service

“Processing manually could take up to two minutes. Now we process orders in 10-15 seconds.”

Emergency Escape Ladder Manufacturer Steps Up Shipping Speed

In the event of an emergency, fire or debris can block the doors and stairways in your home or office, trapping you inside. That’s why it’s critical to designate alternate exits when you make safety plans for your family and business.

Portable chain ladders provide a reliable and affordable option, because you can use them to turn any upper-floor window into a secure escape route.

Bold Industries manufactures its UL-Classified emergency escape ladders in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The company is committed to making the highest-quality ladders, keeping its manufacturing in the U.S., running an efficient operation, and providing top-notch customer service.

Business Challenge

Bold Industries has traditionally shipped its ladders in pallet quantities to global distributors and resellers as well as to big-box retailers. Recently, however, the company expanded its offerings to provide drop-ship services to catalogs, sales representatives, and online retailers, and also to individual customers through its web site. The company ships these orders via UPS daily pickup.

Customers used to fax or email their orders in to Bold, where employees would then manually key in each order twice: first to QuickBooks, and then to WorldShip, the UPS shipping software.

“Our office could spend up to two minutes to process an individual order,” explains Bold Industries president Jeff Sheldon. “If we had a bottleneck in the process, that was it. We always keep a healthy inventory, and could have shipped more orders.”

Additionally, Sheldon realized employees in the front office were spending a lot of time providing resellers and distributors with shipping dates and tracking information. So, he started looking for a better way.

“As a business owner, I am constantly looking to improve all aspects of our company.

Our goal was to automate the process to meet a growing demand.”

With a background in technology, Sheldon knew there were products on the market that could help. It was just a matter of finding the right one.

Solution

“A UPS representative recommended ShipGear,” says Sheldon. ShipGear offers all the options for customization that we use in our business. It is the most robust and reliable product we found that integrates with UPS WorldShip.”

Because ShipGear also seamlessly integrates with QuickBooks, which Bold has been using for years, it sends information back and forth between WorldShip and QuickBooks, essentially turning the three separate applications into one powerful business solution.

Bold Industries also uses an add-on module for ShipGear, eNotify Premium, which allows Bold to generate and send customized emails with status and tracking information to its customers, so that they can keep tabs on their packages in transit.

Results

Here's how the products work together. Bold customers now place orders via EDI, a custom email ordering system, or the ecommerce web site. Other applications download the order data into QuickBooks and create an invoice, sales order, or sales receipt from it, depending on what type of customer placed it. Next, the accounting department prints a list of the day's orders for the shipping department, which references the list first to assemble the shipments, and second to plug the QuickBooks invoice, sales receipt, or sales order numbers into a ShipGear pop-up window.

ShipGear then uses those numbers to retrieve the rest of the order data from QuickBooks and send it into WorldShip, populating all the right fields with all the right information. "Before we used ShipGear, we would have to duplicate the QuickBooks order in WorldShip," says Sheldon. "ShipGear's strength is not only reducing key entry, but the variety and flexibility of data that it allows us to transfer from QuickBooks to WorldShip. Also, ShipGear can enable or disable a majority of WorldShip options. We are even able to reference specific order data to print on each label. It saves time, resources, and eliminates the 'human factor,' where a key-entry error could occur during processing."

WorldShip then creates a label for the packages that are ready to ship. "As soon as WorldShip creates the label," explains Sheldon, "ShipGear writes back the total

shipping amount and tracking number directly to the QuickBooks sales order or invoice."

Then the truck comes, the driver loads the packages and scans the summary printout, and off they go. And last but not least, the ShipGear eNotify service sends emails out to the package recipients so that they all have their shipment date, tracking number, and any other customer order information Bold specified.

"We especially like eNotify Premium. This feature has been great for us," says Sheldon. Before Bold used ShipGear, customers would call to get their tracking numbers. Now, everyone has all the information they need in an email the day the packages ship. "Our customers receive better service overall, and we do not have to waste time fielding order status questions," he says.

Setting up and learning ShipGear didn't take long. "It's been one of the smoothest software implementations we have performed," says Sheldon. "Whenever we have technical questions, V-Technologies has been there to help." Bold employees have taken to the new system too, Sheldon says. "Some of the shipping personnel were not computer savvy, so a new system of this kind may have been a bit intimidating to some at first. They learned it quickly though, and now prefer it."

"With ShipGear and the additional third-party applications we implemented, we

have eliminated most of the manual key entry we used to perform," says Sheldon. "Processing orders used to take up to two minutes. Now we process them in 10-15 seconds."

"With this new system, we spend less time on order processing, which allows us to focus on other aspects of the business. We can also add new products and services without the need for additional upgrades or hardware changes."

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*Jeff Sheldon
President
Bold Industries*

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