Colonial Distributing | Powered by VAI

VAI
INDUSTRY ERP
WITHOUT LIMITS

The Company

Established in 1998, Colonial Distributing specializes in wholesale distribution of groceries, candies, beverages, and tobacco, servicing over 5,000 retail locations with over 5,000 products. The company serves the Tampa Bay Area, the Middle East, and South America with its customers consisting of businesses, convenience stores, restaurants, and gas stations. Colonial has three locations including its main warehouse in Tampa, Florida, and cash and carry locations in Tampa and Pensacola, Florida.

Industry
Wholesale Distribution, Durable/Non-Durable Goods

Requirements
Warehouse Management, Retail Point-of-Sale, Mobile Route Manager, Analytics, Financial Management, Distribution Management

The Solution

Colonial is using VAI S2K ERP software, which includes accounting, warehouse management, mobile route sales, analytics, point-of-sale (POS), and accounting with payroll integration into S2K. Colonial clients come in and buy their own goods at its POS-equipped cash and carry station. "We scan them by their account number to make sure they are one of our customers," said Ahmad Khedir, IT Director, Colonial Distributing. "Our cashiers find VAI's POS system easy to use and user-friendly. One of the other benefits that I like about the POS software, if we lose connectivity with the main office, we use the offline programs."

Salespeople at Colonial use tablets with VAI mobile applications. A salesperson can evaluate special orders while at the customer site and discuss them with consumers to gauge interest in carrying them into the store.

VAI's Mobile Route Sales application allows route sales representatives to take orders in the field and fulfill those orders from the inventory on their truck. Sales representatives can request inventory from the main warehouse and once the truck is loaded, the user can then work offline on their mobile device to process all transactions. Using a wireless Bluetooth scanner, the sales representative can scan the

items that require replenishment and build the order as they walk through the store.

As the order is taken, the user can look up items and edit quantity and pricing if required. Once the replenishment order is complete, the representative can then go back to the truck and fulfill that order. As the user picks the items from the truck, they can edit shipped quantities or make substitutions as needed. When the order is filled, the representative can then print an invoice for the customer using a wireless Bluetooth printer. The merchandise is then delivered, confirmed, and the process is complete. The representative also can enter in an order that they would like fulfilled from the main warehouse and sync those orders back to the S2K software.

Once the orders are uploaded from the salespeople into the VAI S2K solution, it goes into route manager and then is uploaded from route manager to a third-party vendor to organize the routes and stops. When the orders are downloaded back into S2K with the correct routes and stops, they are released into the warehouse. The picker completes an order which is brought over to the staging area. A quality assurance team verifies each order before it goes into the truck for delivery.

The Solution continued:

Khedir said, "With VAI S2K, we've increased accuracy in the warehouse. We accelerated receiving and improved the efficiency of mis-picks. We also have a new program for stockers to replenish all the products before the pickers come to work, which makes it easier for them to find the merchandise they need without waiting for someone to come and stock it for them."

One of the other unique things Colonial does is sell tobacco and the company does its own stamping. They combine stamped and un-stamped products and sell them directly to the customers or through their cash and carry. Colonial also automates tobacco sales and sends the files directly to the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA).

The company also uses VAI Analytics. Said Khedir, "It's a great reporting tool because it provides us with specific reports needed for operation. Managers normally ask for inventory, general ledger, and profit and loss reports, which we can provide via analytics."

The Results

With VAI's S2K ERP software solution in place, the company recently moved to a 100,000 square foot warehouse. The new facility allows Colonial to store more products, grow, and better service customers. The company is planning to grow with the VAI S2K software as Colonial acquires other companies and moves to more locations.

Since the launch, Colonial Grocers has been using the S2K software to:

- Increase warehouse accuracy
- Improve efficiency
- Leverage reporting through analytics
- Sync off and onsite ordering
- Increase customer service

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