

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

MEET



Who: Phillips Safety Products

What: Occupational safety product
& prescriptive safety eyewear

Where: Middlesex, NJ

Web: : www.phillips-safety.com



The Phillips family boasts a long and colorful history of more than 100 years in the optical business, having started over century ago producing glasses for Bausch & Lomb in 1905. In 1914, Phillips Lens was established, where the company reworked lenses that Bausch &

Lomb had rejected, selling the refurbished lenses back to Bausch & Lomb. In 1916, after relocating to Middlesex, NJ, Phillips began manufacturing Ultex bifocals, selling primarily to optical labs for prescription lenses.

In the decades that followed, from 1916 to 2000, Phillips manufactured optical lenses for the military, semi-finished lenses for optical labs to make into prescription glasses, sunglass lenses and specialty bifocal lenses. 2001, and Phillips Safety Products emerged, moving away from the optical manufacturing business into the occupational safety market arena, serving key customers in the laser, x-ray, glassblowing and other safety markets, with a keen focus on diversifying eyewear designs, making them more comfortable and safe.

CHALLENGE

With the global protective eyewear market expected to reach nearly \$3B by 2024, Phillips consistently ply their efforts and resources into enhancing their business to keep up with the latest trends in this fast-growing industry. "The introduction of regulations on worker safety is one of the major drivers fueling our market," comments Brian Struble, IT Architect, Phillips Safety Products. "North America and Europe are the two largest markets and competition is fierce. We've always got to be one step ahead," he added.

For this long time manufacturer, experience and expertise, matched with quality, price and compliant with industry standards, are what has made Philips a leading contender. But with an increased application arena and growing availability of protective eyewear products, small and mid-sized players are up against industry giants. "This meant ramping up our entire operation – starting in the boardroom, to the design tables, down to the production line and distribution center," said Struble. "We needed to shift our focus and concentrate on boosting our overall productivity and efficiency. Our industry was growing and we had no choice but to grow with it."

Phillips' management knew it was time to take the reins and look for a viable alternative to their current mix of business management systems. They were not new to ERP and had already adopted an ERP strategy that leveraged two separate systems for Sales and Inventory management. Since both systems were only loosely integrated, they discovered that as they expanded, both in size and in inventory, performance and integration between the systems began to impact their business growth. "We were very concerned that this dual system's capabilities would quickly become overwhelmed, slowing down customer orders and severely impacting customer service," said Struble. They quickly realized it was time to make a change.

SOLUTION

It didn't take long before Struble and his team started shopping around for a suitable ERP solution to not only replace their current management systems, but to handle their processes from A to Z, not just a fraction of their workflow. Once they began adding new product lines, altering the size and scope of their operations and growing their customer base, an open, flexible and scalable ERP seemed the next logical step.

Determined on making the best choice for their business, Phillips scanned the market for suitable vendors. "But we stopped short when we met the team from Priority and saw the demo," said Struble. "It was clear that Priority had what it takes to pull together our entire workflow, especially tying in our manufacturing with our sales, customer service and inventory."

After a smooth implementation and integration process, Priority ERP was up and running, managed by Phillips' internal project team who spent a lot of time revising their product catalog, restructuring part numbers and descriptions. According to their team, system onboarding was quick and easy with a relatively short learning curve, due to Priority's user-friendly, customizable UI. Just one week after going live, Phillips doubled their number of licensed Priority users, never expecting so many employees to jump on board so quickly.

"One of the most attractive features was the completeness of the solution," said Struble. "For example, we no longer need to perform a daily export of Sales and Customer information for accounting, and we now have real-time inventory for Sales to confirm availability before promising a big order." With Priority, Struble and his team continue to build their expertise on generate never before seen reports and were excited learn that system performance is not impacted when loading data or running reports running smoothly with little or no downtime at all. Comments Struble, "We're performing more tasks in real-time now than we could have ever hoped for using our previous solution."



RESULTS

For Phillips, Priority ERP meant having a single system with a holistic view of their sales order and manufacturing processes that's helped strengthen relationships with their customers: Salespeople can be assured of seeing real-time inventory information, while Sales admin, Warehouse and Shipping staff enjoy Priority Talk, the system's real-time chat communications to review open issues and orders. When asked, employees deemed it "one of the best new features we've ever had." From integrating technical data from their prescription eyewear processes into Priority's Sales Order module, to adding data, namely Customer Notes and Product Customizations, and having Information and Notes readily retrievable by scanning a bar code, Priority was hailed a success in every department.

"But it didn't stop there," comments Struble. "Priority's flexible API let us customize our shipping processes as well, so that shipping info is now entered and maintained by our Sales admin team who maintain close relationships with our largest distributors. They're dependent on us to drop-ship many of their orders, using their custom shipping requirements." Here too, Priority fit the bill, enabling Phillips to offer their distributors customized drop-ship service. They are now looking to improve their shipping performance and implement Priority partner, ShipEngine, a leading shipping API and multi carrier shipping system, fully supported by Priority ERP.

When we asked about future plans, Struble concluded, "Our business continues to grow at a healthy pace as we move through Q1 2019. Our IT strategy is to continue to grow the implementation and usage of our core business software, including our implementation of Priority. Priority is our long term partner as we continue to look for ways to eliminate information silos and integrate our data into a single system."

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BRIAN STRUBLE, IT ARCHITECT, PHILLIPS SAFETY PRODUCTS