



# Reducing the Cost of Processing Orders While Boosting Productivity

National Marker Company

## Background

National Marker Company (NMC) is a leading provider of safety identification. Originally founded in 1934, NMC has evolved to deliver vital messages to prevent loss of life and damages, while improving productivity and safety. Based out of Rhode Island, they serve a diverse range of industries including safety, parks and recreation, construction, transportation, healthcare, retail, and marine.

To serve their broad range of customers, NMC manufactures an impressive portfolio of safety signs, tags, machine and hazmat labels, utility tapes, engraved identification, traffic signs, lockout kits, banners, and scoreboards. With such a large product offering, they turned to Epicor® Prophet 21® to streamline distribution by integrating information between inventory management, warehousing, purchasing, and reporting. Realizing many vital operational efficiencies in these areas inspired NMC to seek improvements in order processing.

## Challenges

### Need to Eliminate Manual Entry Bottlenecks

As the first choice for safety identification across the USA, NMC was handling an incredible volume of orders daily. While some larger customers chose to use EDI, the majority of customers submitted orders in a more traditional means including phone, fax, and email. Purchase orders received in this fashion needed to be manually keyed by the Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), which required considerable time and effort. "Our business is all about speed. We're handling lots of small orders for \$10 signs and the like," explained Jeff Morris, Information Technology Manager.

### Need to Standardize Purchase Order Formats

Serving customers nationally required working closely with multiple locations of the same organization. As a result, the CSR team frequently received purchase orders with different formats, as well as varying levels of information. In some cases, this translated into a need for order verification, as well as occasional interpretation. These fluctuations slowed the CSR team and slowed down the rate of order processing.

## Key Results

- Eliminated manual order entry
- Faster, more accurate order processing
- Refocused CSR team on other tasks
- Reduced costs of order processing

NMC identified the need for a low-cost solution to automate the sales order process. They were focused on high-volume customers who were not capable of implementing EDI, yet frequently placed many orders with multiple line items. Automating this particular group of customers would allow NMC to process orders faster and with lower costs, while accelerating order processing to deliver better customer service.

## The Solution

In 2010, NMC turned to Conexiom® to automate the ordering process and eliminate the bottleneck of manual entry. Eager to try Conexiom, NMC analyzed their customer base to determine where they would get the most value by converting their loyal, frequent customers to sales order automation. "It was a collaborative effort and our Inside Sales team was heavily involved in the selection and setup of new customers on Conexiom. They continue to be very involved today," explained Morris.

Conexiom was the ideal solution for NMC because it captures customer orders in the customer's own format and automatically transforms them into electronic sales orders in Epicor Prophet 21. This eliminates the challenge of dual entry and is complementary to their existing EDI and eCommerce platforms. "Conexiom was a good fit for us. It filled the void between EDI customers and the more 'mom-and-pop' operations we serve — that's really the sweet spot for this application," shared Morris.



“Conexiom has helped us to eliminate having to enter orders manually. We have definitely seen ROI as a result, as well as a benefit to our customers because their orders are entered faster and bottlenecks are eliminated. We are now able to enter more orders without adding more people and Conexiom is a big reason for that.”

Jeff Morris, Information Technology Manager at NMC

## Benefits

### Uninterrupted Customer Experience

Getting customers set-up on Conexiom was simple. NMC appreciated that their customers did not experience any changes to their existing business practices. “The transition was very transparent to the customers. They didn’t really have to do anything differently or see that anything had changed,” recalled Morris. “Even the different branches of the same customer submitting different PO formats, Conexiom handles the majority very well. It can easily search for very detailed and specific information with its built-in logic.”

### Faster Order Processing with Higher Accuracy

Automating sales orders through Conexiom has taken the average order processing time from minutes to seconds. “Conexiom has helped us to eliminate having to enter orders manually. We have definitely seen ROI as a result, as well as a benefit to our customers because their orders are entered faster and bottlenecks are eliminated,” shared Morris. Automation has also prevented unwanted sales order entry errors helping customers to receive the right products every time.

### Refocus CSR Team on Value-Added Tasks

Saving time processing orders has reduced the cost of order entry, while freeing up considerable time for the CSR team. “Thanks to Conexiom our employees can now focus on more value-added tasks,” said Morris. Instead of being overloaded by the sheer volume of orders awaiting manual processing, now the CSR team has found time to handle other important business priorities including delivering higher levels of customer service and focusing on revenue generating activities.

### The Future

Due to Conexiom’s impressive efficiency and total data accuracy, NMC quickly enrolled more customers in the application. Today they have successfully converted a number of key customers and they are always eager to enrol new customers that fit the ideal profile. Thanks to Conexiom, NMC has saved money by reducing the expenses associated with order processing costs and is now

handling higher order volumes without requiring extra staff. The solution has easily paid for itself many times over.

As they look to the future, the biggest advantage for NMC is the increased capacity for processing higher volumes while keeping operational costs balanced. “Our business is growing. We are now able to enter more orders without adding more people and Conexiom is a big reason for that. This is one case where we (in IT) wouldn’t have done anything differently,” exclaimed Morris.

## About Conexiom

Conexiom® allows manufacturers and distributors to focus on serving customers and managing supplier relationships instead of entering data. The patent-pending Conexiom solution was created by ecmart, a cloud solutions developer. Conexiom revolutionizes critical sales and accounting business practices by automating manual entry with 100% accuracy. Conexiom effortlessly converts emailed and printed customer purchase orders and supplier invoices into automated sales orders and invoices, enabling companies to focus on driving growth. Conexiom helps organizations across the globe maintain a competitive edge. [For more information visit conexiom.com](https://www.conexiom.com)