



SMALL BUSINESS WAREHOUSE MANAGEMENT

CASE STUDY



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Situation

Composites Canada, a family-owned distributor of fiberglass, resins, sundries, and paints, has been serving customers since 1985. From hobbyists to large corporations in aerospace and marine manufacturing, the company built its reputation on reliable supply and personalized service.

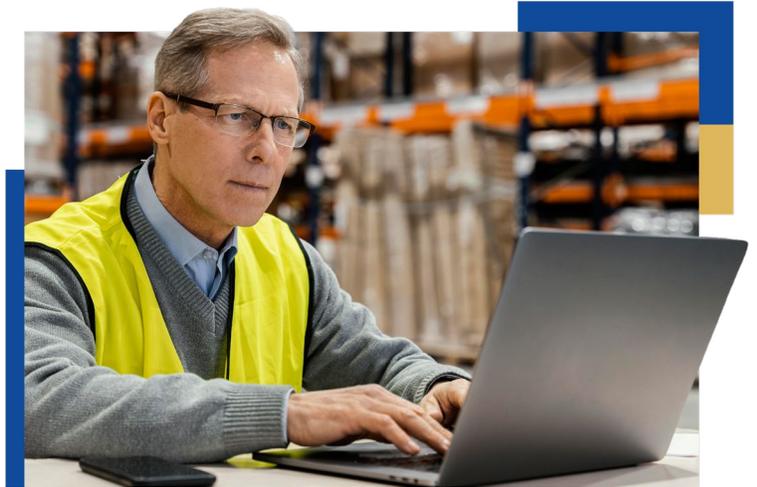
As the business expanded, growing from five employees in 2000 to a team of twenty-eight, Composites acquired new companies and broadened its customer base both locally and internationally. Operating out of a 30,000-square-foot warehouse with an on-site retail operation, the company needed stronger visibility and control over its growing inventory.

Before implementing Blue Link ERP in 2008, Composites relied on invoices from consumer grade accounting software, handwritten notes, and manual sales orders, making it difficult to maintain accurate inventory records or scale operations efficiently. Blue Link ERP became the company's first true system for inventory management, setting the foundation for more advanced tools to support their next stage of growth.

Challenge

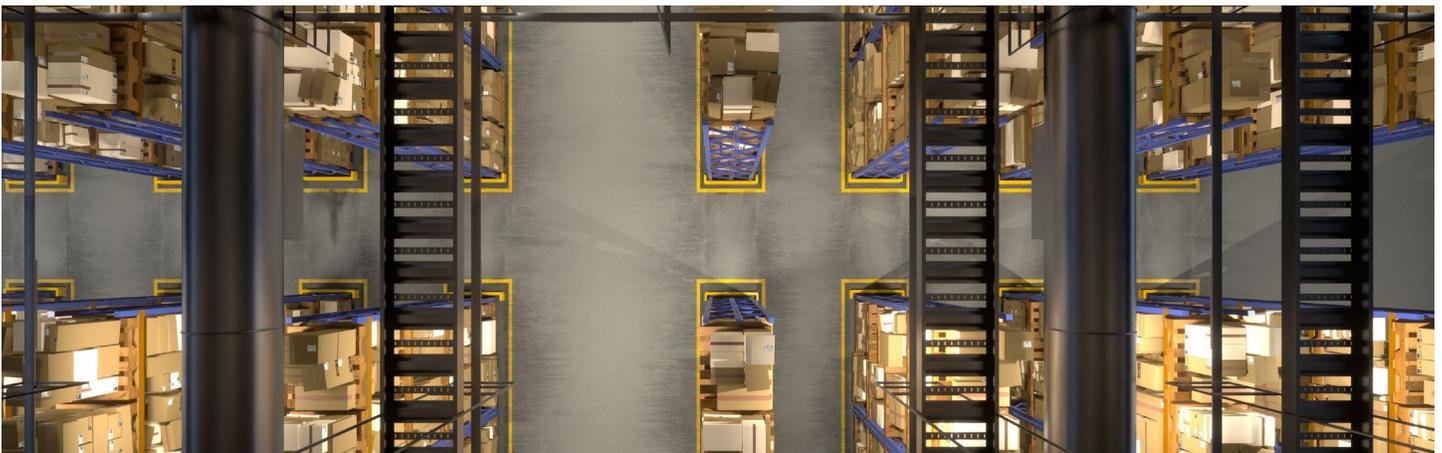
As Composites Canada expanded, the increasing scale of inventory and order volume pushed traditional warehouse methods to their limit. The company already maintained organized racking and product controls, yet daily operations relied on manual location tracking, printed pick lists, and staff familiarity with stock layout. This approach worked well for many years but became progressively harder to sustain as new product lines, higher inventory turnover, and more complex customer requirements were introduced.

The existing process created friction in specific areas such as location tracking during customer volume shifts or when new employees needed to learn the warehouse layout by experience. Occasional discrepancies between vendor labeling and internal naming conventions required staff to cross-reference information manually. While manageable, these were points where accuracy depended on experience rather than system logic.



“The cost of making a mistake is a lot more than you might realize. The amount of labor that goes into fixing that mistake, (...) it runs in the thousands for a couple \$100 worth of material,” commented Joseph Ezeard, Operation Managers of Composites.

As Composites prepared to meet the demands of larger aerospace customers and introduce lot tracking, it became clear that accurate location management and streamlined warehouse processes were essential to supporting future growth. The company needed a more efficient, scalable warehouse management system for small businesses to maintain accuracy, reduce waste, and support continued expansion.



Solution

To address its warehouse challenges, Composites implemented Blue Link's WMS Lite, a built-in warehouse management system designed for small and growing distribution businesses. The goal was to modernize warehouse operations, improve accuracy, and create a foundation for future lot tracking capabilities.

Implementing Blue Link's WMS provided structured location control, standardized product identification, and real-time visibility into movement and inventory levels. What had previously required local knowledge and paper workflows became faster, more consistent, and easier to train. The result was a more scalable operation with reduced manual touch points, improved traceability, and clearer alignment between vendor data and internal records.

✓ Strategic Preparation

Before going live, Composites took a meticulous approach to preparation. Under the guidance of Joseph Ezeard - hired for his WMS implementation expertise - the team spent a year organizing and standardizing the warehouse. Every rack was labeled with a designated location, and 4x2 product labels were applied throughout the facility. The racking system was also reconfigured to support a more efficient picking workflow, setting the stage for a seamless WMS rollout.

✓ Mobile Scanning and Location Management

With Blue Link's warehouse management system in place, Composites transitioned from paper-based picking to tablet-driven scanning. Warehouse staff could now scan products and locations directly, eliminating the guesswork and errors that previously slowed operations. This upgrade provided real-time visibility into inventory movement and accurate location tracking, which were key improvements ahead of the company's planned implementation of lot tracking.

✓ Support for Showroom Sales

Recognizing that not all warehouse operations fit a single mold, Blue Link devised a solution to support sales from Composites' on-site showroom. By setting up the showroom as a separate "Counter" warehouse location, sales staff could instantly generate transfer orders for items not in stock on the floor. The system then automatically updated sales orders, ensuring customers received quick service without disrupting warehouse accuracy.

✓ Leveraging Existing Tools for Coordination

Beyond scanning and inventory control, Composites maximized existing Blue Link ERP functionality to improve coordination. By fully utilizing the Sales Order Review screen and Order Status feature, sales and logistics teams gained instant visibility into shipment progress. Updating the order status automatically alerts the logistics coordinator - streamlining communication and enhancing overall warehouse efficiency

Results

The adoption of Blue Link's WMS Lite transformed Composites' warehouse operations, delivering measurable gains in productivity, accuracy, and visibility across the business. What began as a move to modernize warehouse processes evolved into a complete operational upgrade, providing the efficiency and control of a full warehouse management system without the cost or complexity.

✓ Over 90% Drop in Picking Errors

Since implementing the system, picking errors have nearly disappeared. What once occurred multiple times each month now happens only once or twice a year. Joseph emphasized that "the amount of mistakes we make in a year is less than what we used to make in a month (...) We may make one or two picking errors a year."

This drastic improvement has saved the company thousands of dollars annually in labor, shipping, and customer service costs tied to error correction.

✓ Stronger Productivity and Faster Fulfillment

With system-directed picking and clear warehouse locations, staff can complete orders quickly and confidently. The entire team knows where and how to find product – without needing to hunt down items in different locations. This allows for a faster, smoother, and far more efficient process that enables them to serve more customers each day.

"We can pick orders faster, more accurately, and service more customers in a day. So that's where our growth has really been seen through WMS," added Joseph.

✓ Simplified Training and Onboarding

New employees can now be trained on the warehouse layout and pick paths within a single day. Thanks to Blue Link's intuitive, system-guided workflow, new hires quickly become productive members of the warehouse team, reducing downtime and dependence on tribal knowledge.



✓ **Real-Time Visibility and Control**

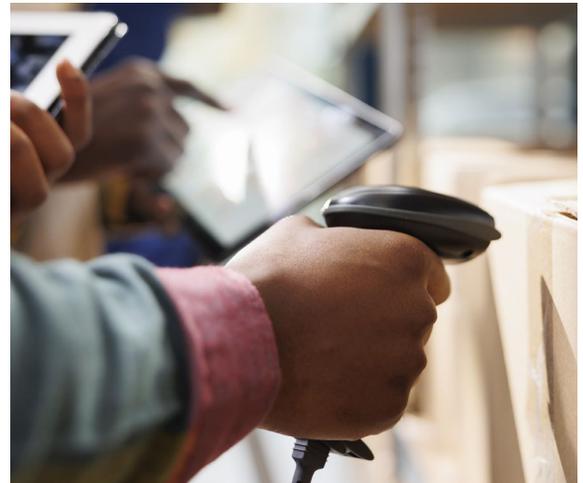
Management now has instant insight into warehouse operations. From Blue Link’s intuitive screens, the team can see the live status of all shipments and transfers across the 30,000-square-foot facility - eliminating guesswork and improving coordination between departments.

Joseph highlighted that now they *“can quickly see exactly the status of the shipments and dissect within seconds. I know what’s happening in my warehouse, just simply by looking at that screen or the transfer screen.”*



✓ **Ongoing Partnership and Future Growth**

Composites credits Blue Link’s responsive support team as a critical part of their success, providing practical solutions and customization guidance throughout the project. With the new warehouse management system in place, the company is now preparing to implement lot tracking to meet aerospace industry requirements and continue its growth trajectory with confidence.



“The support is there... I know I can get a hold of Mike or Lucas and they can walk me through how to improve a small area of something I’m doing... the support that Blue Link has given me personally... that’s been big for me.”

— Joseph Ezeard, Operations Manager





Streamline Your Warehouse Operations

Blue Link's WMS Lite gives small and growing distributors the power of a warehouse management system without the cost or complexity of a standalone solution. See how you can improve accuracy, productivity, and visibility across your warehouse with a system built right into Blue Link ERP.

Want to learn how other distributors are using Blue Link to scale their operations?

Hear from Blue Link customers about their experience

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