



High Point Furniture Lowers Costs and Improves Customer Service by Choosing Infor IntelliChief

Situation

High Point Furniture Industries (HPFI), founded in 1958, manufactures wood case goods and upholstered seating for a wide range of commercial markets. With two manufacturing plants in High Point, North Carolina, they lead their competitors in quality and environmental practices, with efficient recycling, and raw materials usage.

HPFI experienced severe paper overload. Misfiled documents, lost invoices, and delays in answering customer requests were overwhelming. Elaine Handley, Accounts Payable Manager states, “We were looking to improve processes to save time and money . . . how we dealt with customers, and how we did our daily jobs. Our ultimate goal was to find a way to improve the bottom line, to improve profitability.”

IntelliChief Solution

HPFI, an Infor ERP XA customer since 1999, asked Infor Global Solutions for a document imaging solution. Infor recommended IntelliChief (now Infor IntelliChief Document Management) for its feature-rich solution, and easy integration with HPFI’s ERP XA system.

The next step was to obtain project approval. The CEO and CFO wanted real ROI – reduced costs for labor, faxing, postage, check stock, and paper. “It was difficult”, explains Ms. Handley, “because they [the CEO and CFO] didn’t want to see any soft dollars. . . We could have eliminated people . . . but that’s not how they wanted us to justify the project. . . We were able to show there were big savings, and [they] were hard dollars.”

The first challenge was HPFI’s Purchase-to-Pay process: purchasing, receiving, and accounts payable. When creating PO’s, buyers printed them, faxed them to the vendor, stapled the confirmation receipt to the PO, and put everything in a basket to wait for confirmation, which took up to 4 hours.

Streamlining Purchase-to-Pay

All these steps were eliminated with IntelliChief. When a PO is created, an electronic copy is saved. FastFax (the integrated fax server for IntelliChief) then faxes, or emails the PO's in mere seconds without user intervention. Order Acknowledgements (received via fax or email) are archived in the imaging database, and linked to the appropriate PO. A transactional history is created for future use.

Receiving Document Wastefulness

Incoming products had Receiving Documents matched against PO's, entered in ERP, and filed. When invoices arrived in Accounts Payable (AP), invoices were matched against the receiving record in the system. If there was a discrepancy, AP staff needed to look for the original receiving documents, to determine if they had been incorrectly entered into the ERP, or if the invoice was wrong. "If the purchase had been made by our other facility, I had to call them to fax me a copy of the receiving documents so I could match, and review and find out what happened," says Crystal Delgado, Accounting Associate. Documents are matched in the warehouse, a receiving record is created in ERP, and scanned into IntelliChief. Hardcopies are no longer needed. Filing cabinets for PO's don't exist.

Accounts Payable Results

Invoices are captured via FastFax and archived. Mailed invoices are scanned, and faxed. Emailed invoices are saved with the easy-to-use "IntelliChief Print Capture" application. IntelliChief's Workflow matches invoices against receiving documents, and users no longer manually look up received goods. Invoices with matched receiving documents are sent to an electronic inbox ("Matched Invoices"); unmatched invoices go to an "Unmatched Invoices" inbox. What is the impact? Ms. Delgado says, "Every day I had to pull up the folder and try to match invoices . . . That was a big pain. . . With IntelliChief, they [the invoices] just wait to be matched up against the receiver. . . as if they were saying 'Hey, here we are!' It's a tremendous timesaver . . ."

The huge paper trail prevented invoices that needed approval to be paid quickly. Copies were made by AP staff, sent to the appropriate manager for approval, and came back to AP for a voucher. Ms. Delgado explains, "Some invoices would never make it back to us, and I had to go . . . ask people if they received it, approved it, and sent it back. . . . Sometimes invoices were paid late, or we couldn't take advantage of discounts because we . . . [couldn't] make the deadline . . ." IntelliChief's Workflow now automatically forwards invoices for approval to the correct person. They approve it with a click of the mouse. Automated workflow has put an end to missing invoices.

When AP wanted to pay invoices, Ms. Delgado again had to match paper documents. "I used to spend at least ½ day every week manually matching up invoices and checks . . . [to] be approved, and signed by the CFO and CEO. This meant looking through filing

cabinets for correct invoices, and putting them in a folder with the corresponding check.
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IntelliChief saves checks as an electronic image, and manages them via Workflow. Ms. Delgado describes how IntelliChief streamlines check runs and approval processes. “Now, they are just kind of already there! Checks go via Workflow to them [CEO/CFO and they] can simply click and look up the [relevant] documentation . . . and either approve or void the check.”

Order Processing Pains

The second challenge was orders -coming via fax, email, and mail. They were manually routed to the Traffic Group for review and pricing information, and logged before going to Order Entry. They were sent back to the Customer Service Rep (CSR) or manager with any questions, or when a discount required approval. Amanda Watkins, CSR, explains, “There was no way to know where in the process the order was in any given time, until it was put in the system. Sometimes . . . we had to ask the customer to re-send, which you can imagine they weren’t very happy about. That’s a tedious process . . . having to constantly ask people, ‘you had it, what did you do with it? Who did you give it to?’ . . . it takes a long time.” After the order was entered, an acknowledgement was printed, proofed, and compared to the PO. Once approved, a CSR made a copy, faxed or mailed it to the customer, and filed the copy with the PO.

Order Processing Done Right

With IntelliChief, order processing is efficient. Faxed orders are captured with FastFax, mailed orders are scanned into the system, and emailed orders are copied with IntelliChief’s easy-to-use “Print Capture” feature, and saved in IntelliChief’s database. The electronic order is sent to Order Entry or the CSR. IntelliChief Workflow routes the order to Traffic, and then to Order Entry. IntelliChief creates and saves the Acknowledgement, which is faxed or emailed directly to the customer.

“We have now 3 sets of hands instead of 7 and we always know exactly where the order is,” says Ms. Walkins. “IntelliChief cut the order process time in half.”

When customers called with questions about invoices, CSR’s had to request a copy from Accounting. Elaine Handley explains, “The invoice had to be pulled from the file, which could take minutes or hours, and logged . . .” The order history (original PO, any change orders, acknowledgements, and related documents) is now electronic. Elaine says, “You can pull up and see where your bottlenecks are. You can see if orders are not being entered.” Invoices are emailed to customers, saving postage and labor mailing costs.

Key Benefits

IntelliChief provides HPFI ROI and intangible benefits. Ms. Handley explains, “It helped decrease the stress level! Being able to really see what’s happening, to see where bottlenecks are is incredible. . . From a management standpoint, that’s a benefit to me that’s hard to measure. “ . . . An additional benefit is having everything electronic . . . [for our auditors] . . . We can’t wait until next year when the auditors come in! By giving auditors a computer with access to IntelliChief; they can do document searches without involving an Accounting staff member.”

Paperless Future for HPFI

Implementing document imaging is not an easy process. “We had some people who were scared to make the change,” says Ms. Handley. . . “The idea of not having paper anymore for some people was difficult to overcome. . . They [employees now] understand [document imaging] is a real advantage on how we serve our customers and that’s our competitive advantage.”

HPFI plans to roll out IntelliChief to other areas in the company, reducing costs throughout the organization, while serving customers faster and efficiently.