THE CHALLENGE

Due to bandwidth requirements and heritage infrastructure, American Inks and Coatings (AIC) had been operating with the assistance of an IT department based nearly 1,200 miles from their home office. Utilizing three customized software systems, they routinely ran into communication breakdowns between the systems. This prevented inventory transactions from being processed, or as they were known internally, suspended batches.

The remote IT project manager spent most of his time fixing these suspended batches that resulted delays in operations. They often found themselves waiting for the IT project manager to research, fix, and release each suspended batch before issuing invoices, shipping sales orders, and updating accounting.

This process was particularly complicated because AIC used five servers to process inventory transactions and sometimes experienced up to 60 suspended batches in a week. "Had our IT project manager ever been hospitalized for even a week, our entire computer process would have stopped," Raeke says. "Without him there to release suspended batches, we would have been back to notepads, pencils, and calculators."

After five years spent struggling – and paying – to establish and maintain communication between disparate software systems, AIC started searching for a better way to manage its business processes. Among the company's most viable options was purchasing a fully integrated ERP solution.

Upon researching the major players in the ERP industry, including SAP, Microsoft Dynamics, Chempax, and Sage's MAS product line, Raeke found they all required the same patchwork approach as AIC's customized software setup. "We were very reluctant to go down that road again," Raeke says. "We weren't looking to cobble together best-of-breed systems. We were looking for a different breed altogether – software capable of handling our entire operation in one system. We selected DEACOM."

About American Inks and Coatings

American Inks and Coatings (AIC) is the fastest growing ink company in the country today. AIC, head- quartered in Sheridan, Arkansas, was started and designed to be the low-cost producer of the highest quality, most consistent ink and coatings product available for the packaging industry.

THE IMPLEMENTATION

Deacom conducted a speedy, IT-free implementation: "Our IT guys clammed up when we signed for a new system. We had 15 different databases for our software alone and absolutely no help getting anything out of them. We had to start from scratch, but Deacom figured it out and had us up and running much quicker than we anticipated. It easily could have been a six-month or year-long project, but Deacom knows its product and was willing to jump on board and do it when we were in a pinch. That said a lot about their integrity."

THE RESULT

Since going live on DEACOM, American Inks and Coatings has greatly simplified its hardware environment and reduced its IT dependence. At the outset, the number of T1 lines dropped from "eight in, eight out" to two, and the total number of servers was cut by 22.

"The system's so simple now, our IT manager can solve problems with basic knowledge of DEACOM and the SQL server database", said Raeke. "Add it all up – the reduction of systems, servers, and T1 lines, the elimination of the remote IT office, removal of suspended batches and outdated software, and the simplification of business processes – and you have the most valuable ROI point of all: In one year, DEACOM paid for itself in savings."

"One year of savings more than paid for the software. Deacom essentially eliminated our major issues at no additional cost. Now our only job is the one we're here to do: Being innovative in the products we put out, being competitive in price, and serving our customers well."

ABOUT DEACOM

Deacom, Inc. is the producer of DEACOM ERP, a scalable, single-system ERP solution specifically designed to streamline operations for manufacturers and distributors with complex processes. As the artisans of ERP software, Deacom crafts a solution free of customization or bolt-ons to increase efficiency and decrease the total costs of ERP ownership. The company's headquarters is located in Chesterbrook, Pa. To learn more, visit www.deacom.com or call 1-877-4-DEACOM.