



TOP STAR, INC.

PDI Case Study #12

Executive Overview

Top Star, Inc. operates 31 Top Star Express convenience stores in Central Eastern Pennsylvania. Known for their unique neighborhood stores, tailored to the needs of the community, they earn praise from their customers for their fast, friendly and reliable services.

“It was easy to see that PDI was the best choice.”

— Joe Stark, President

Business Challenge

Company president, Joe Stark explains why they chose to upgrade their back office and corporate accounting and business intelligence systems, “We originally used a software package that was required by our branded fuel supplier. The software required databases residing in every store. It was difficult to maintain and didn’t provide timely reporting to help us operate our business competitively. In addition, we were in the process of acquiring 18 Shell locations and looking to expand, so we needed a company that would allow us to grow. “While researching for a better solution, I visited with my friends at SIGMA, many already PDI customers.” Joe shared, “I observed how PDI competitors were always trying to get to where PDI was, instead of surpassing and building systems that were better. It was easy to see that PDI was the best choice.”

PDI Solution

Prior to implementing PDI/Enterprise, each of Top Star’s 31 store managers maintained individual pricebooks. Stark elaborates, “Having a centralized pricebook is so much easier to maintain and saves us an enormous amount of time. We’ve shifted the focus of our pricebook administrator’s time, and it is much more productive. Our store managers now focus on their customers, instead of spending time in the back office maintaining a pricebook.”

Top Star also took advantage of PDI/Enterprise’s configurable daily forms allowing them to eliminate spreadsheets and consolidate business activities, which really changed the

landscape for their store managers. “Our managers report that the system is easy to learn, manage and support.” Terrie Bobinis, CIO commented, “Any installation has its challenges, but overall, the system was not too difficult to install, the store operations reported it easy to learn, and we are extremely happy with the decision. As for support, most issues are easily resolved in house and when they are not, the PDI Support team is highly responsive to our needs.”

Customer Results

Stark says a centralized database on a wide area network (WAN) is huge for Top Star and greatly improves their ability to respond to “current” business conditions. They have leveraged the expense by tying in their security system and reducing the number of phone lines in their stores.

Stark shares the following example, “The numbers come in quicker and are more accurate. Each morning, I know where we are, as of the close of business last night! It’s great to have daily fuel margins at any given point in time. You have to have this information timely, or you cannot compete in today’s marketplace.

In addition, their legacy hand held took a while to update. Stark said, “The new handhelds (PDI/Store Assistant) update very fast. We enjoy the ability to make corrections, even after audit counts are posted. It’s been helpful when we find areas requiring a recheck that need to be corrected in a timely manner.”

Stark continued by saying, “my month end closing process is so much faster. We have cut the time it takes to close our month in half, compared to our legacy system.” When asked about some of his favorite features, Stark reports, “the ability to review information at a high level, then drill down to specific details is awesome.”

In closing, Stark says, “PDI has never left us dry and always comes through for us. I think it’s the best software out there.”

