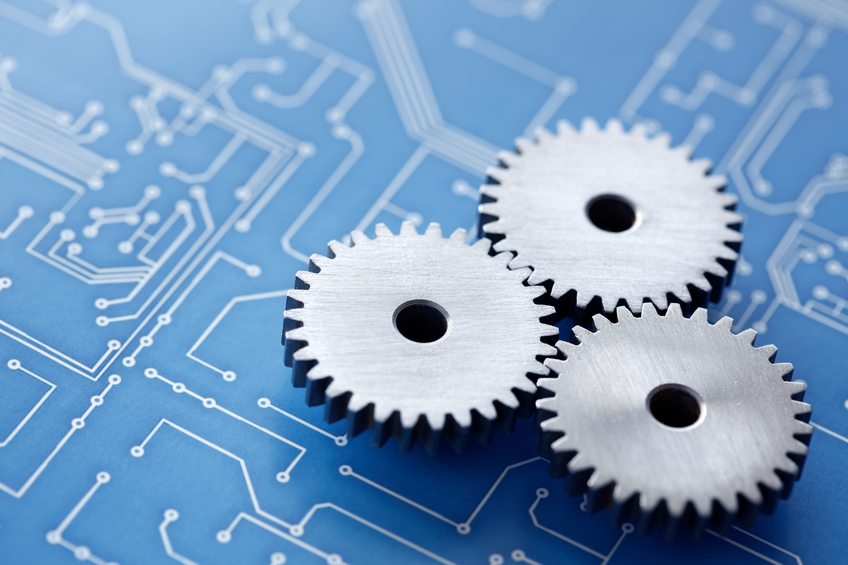
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White Paper

12 Manufacturing Challenges

Resolved with Epicor ERP

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# Introduction

The changing landscape of North American manufacturing is transforming the way manufacturers are doing business. The evolving economic climate combined with new demographics, technology and opportunities for innovation are influencing customer expectations while the labor skills gap is affecting operations.

It should come as no surprise then that manufacturers, regardless of industry, are feeling many of the same pains. To survive, today’s manufacturers must look closely at their business and continually look for opportunities to:

* Cut costs
* Improve efficiencies
* Be innovative
* Provide higher levels of service.

How industry leaders tackle today’s challenges will impact both the direction of the individual company and the industry as a whole.

MIS specializes in Epicor ERP, a proven ERP solution based on the latest Microsoft technologies. We help manufacturers conquer their biggest challenges through innovative technologies for improved efficiencies and responsiveness, streamlined operations, better insights and the ability to provide higher levels of customer service -- all of which lead to a positive impact on the bottom line of today’s organization.

# 12 Manufacturing Challenges

Learn how Epicor ERP can resolve your toughest manufacturing challenges.

## Manufacturing Challenge #1: “Our disparate systems, with data everywhere, make it hard to get a picture of what is really happening.”

With Epicor ERP, all business and operational information can be accessed from one place. Epicor ERP can link to data from multiple disparate systems allowing a complete view of the enterprise. Removing the data access roadblock gets information to everyone faster. Management can make smarter decisions faster, with greater confidence. The organization can shift from being reactive to proactive.

Epicor ERP is able to link data easily because the architecture is pure Microsoft. Epicor ERP takes advantage of Microsoft SQL Server and the Microsoft .NET framework to combine data from multiple database sources, including non-Epicor databases, as well as the execution of commands and retrieval of results. The layer between the data source and code is minimal so the end result is an increase in performance without a sacrifice in functionality.

With Microsoft .NET, Epicor ERP gains efficiencies as there is no middle-ware or end-of-day processing that needs to occur. No other ERP system is better at integrations or enterprise reporting than Epicor ERP.

## Manufacturing Challenge #2: “We continually need to identify ways to cut costs to remain competitive.”

Epicor ERP can help manufacturers remain competitive by increasing productivity through improved business processes and production planning leading to better insight into the enterprise for improved decisions and regulations. For example, manufacturers can gain a complete view of their order history and use the information to negotiate lower pricing with vendors for further cost savings and discounts.

In the modern manufacturing environment cutting costs means maximizing efficiency; expensive equipment needs to operate at full capacity. Epicor ERP has unexcelled scheduling and planning tools to help organizations reach their full capacity, including:

* Visual scheduling tools and graphs to show, at a glance, which resources have unused capacity and which resources are overloaded.
* The Global Rescheduling engine which uses advanced scheduling algorithms to create the most efficient resource utilization in complex environments.
* The Epicor ERP MRP engine, the most advanced in the industry, enables manufacturers to minimize inventory and optimize order quantities while ensuring parts arrive as needed.
* Advanced production tools like job splits, job batching and non-sequential scheduling allow job changes, even after they are started, for maximum efficiency.

## Manufacturing Challenge #3: “It takes us too long to quote jobs accurately and the delay is costing us business.”

Epicor ERP provides real-time access to previous job labor and material costs so customers are provided with the best quote possible, with a quick turnaround.

* The Epicor ERP quoting module includes the full suite of Epicor ERP engineering tools for quote building.
* Quotes can be based on revisions (approved or not), jobs and other quotes.
* Quotes can be built on the fly and include all material and resource costs.
* Separate quoting rates can be used for labor and burden and these rates can vary from actual rates.
* The quoting module includes a ‘Worksheet’ that suggests pricing based on markups. Different markups can be used for labor, material, burden and subcontractors.
* The unique costing engine of Epicor ERP calculates an accurate estimate of total labor and materials, even if the estimate includes in-house manufactured sub-assemblies.
* When the order comes in, both the job and the sales order are created with one click.

## Manufacturing Challenge #4: “We need to identify a better pricing strategy that will have an impact on our bottom line and profit margins”

The key to better pricing is knowledge, including cost of sales by product. Epicor ERP allows overhead to be applied by Resource Group and Labor using employees actual labor rates. Epicor ERP gives you confidence that markups are positive for every product sold.

The robust pricing options in Epicor ERP can be based on customer, product groups, specific locations and/or products. Flexible pricing methods include a single pricing method or the ability to deploy multiple pricing methods in tandem. The ability to up-sell, cross-sell, and down-sell all enhance your selling opportunity.

The robust reporting capabilities of Epicor ERP provide the needed visibility for in depth analysis into profit margins so prices can be adjusted, or offerings eliminated if they are not cost-effective to maintain.

## Manufacturing Challenge #5: “Our customers are constantly changing order or delivery quantities and delivery dates.”

Epicor ERP is flexible so when a customer’s needs change, orders and jobs can easily be modified to reflect the most

recent/updated requirements.) Epicor ERP functionality includes:

* Unlimited releases per order line.
* The ability to create jobs by release so that large orders can easily be split into multiple jobs.
* Advanced tools for managing large orders and contracts.
* Visual scheduling tools that allow for rescheduling of jobs with a simple drag and drop.
* The ability to ‘lock’ individual jobs so other jobs can be rescheduled around favored customers.
* The ability to split jobs, even if they are already started, so that delivery dates that have been pushed up can be met.
* ‘Make-to-job’ and job batching features where job quantities can be increased after they have been started.

## Manufacturing Challenge #6: “Our late deliveries are affecting our customer satisfaction levels, and sometimes costing us repeat business.”

Epicor ERP 10 supports a wide range of Quick Response Manufacturing (QRM) processes so your teams can react faster and with greater flexibility, resulting in reduced lead times and faster deliveries.

The personalized dashboards within Epicor ERP give each user visibility into job status' and schedules, bottlenecks, and where resources can be adjusted and more.

The secret of on-time delivery, of course, is providing customers with accurate quote and delivery estimates when an order is placed.

With Epicor ERP, sales and customer service teams have tools for accurate estimations of delivery schedules during the quoting and order entry process. Setting customer expectations right from the start results in higher overall levels of customer satisfaction.

* For stocking items, with one click, the ‘Time Phase’ feature in Epicor ERP drills down to view stocking items as well as time-phased supply and demand. Epicor ERP inventory is real-time, so the information viewed is always current.
* For non-stocking items, ‘Capable to Promise’ considers purchase lead time for purchased items and both manufacturing lead times and resource schedules for manufactured items. With one click, the application updates the ship date to the earliest possible promise date and creates the purchase order or job.

## Manufacturing Challenge #7: ”We have no idea if we are running over or under budget until after the job is done.”

Epicor ERP means improved financial control and transparency. From easy access to estimated vs actual costs in real-time, to providing key employees with access to dashboards, Epicor ERP provides complete visibility into jobs.

* Complete transparency into real-time inventory means you always know where you stand. Job statuses and profitability are always up to date so quick adjustments can be made if needed be.
* The ability to view labor and material transactions as soon as they are entered.
* Know at the time of completion whether each operation is over or under budget.

## Manufacturing Challenge #8: “Our shop floor lacks visibility.”

Epicor ERP Mattec MES (Manufacturing Execution System) enhances entry for quotes, configure units, and orders with greater efficiency while providing complete visibility to the shop floor.

With Epicor Mattec, MES data can be collected and analyzed across multiple plants, product lines and asset types resulting in increased productivity, unlocked capacity, and reduced inventory and labor costs.

Epicor Mattec MES is real time providing immediate visibility to operational statuses on your factory floor. You’ll know if work is started, in process or complete. Knowing whether the job is early, on time, or late is key to remaining as efficient and profitable as possible.



When the Advanced Manufacturing Module is used in conjunction with hand-held input devices, management literally has visibility into **every moving item in the plant!**

## Manufacturing Challenge #9: “We’re carrying too much inventory on our shelves *just in case*.”

Epicor ERP helps users improve the management of inventory levels by providing tools that help forecast customer buying trends, including seasonal demands. Improved insight means management can confidentially align manufacturing processes with customer demands and trends. Additionally, better insight allows for inventory level reduction while maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction,

* New in Epicor ERP version 10.1 is a Min/Max/Safety Stock calculation. Epicor will calculate Min, Max and Safety Stock based on part usage and /or sales.
* With advanced ABC algorithms, parts can be assigned to ABC categories based on user-defined parameters.
* Epicor ERP is the most advanced and mature MRP engine of any ERP system. Minimizing inventory is easy with Epicor ERP.

## Manufacturing Challenge #10: “Our productivity has remained the same while labor costs have been creeping up.”

Epicor Mattec MES production control software provides 24/7 monitoring and control of production and manufacturing as well as accurate labor reporting for job status and job costing.

Optimized for the plant floor, the work queue within Epicor ERP prioritizes work schedules, including the ability to select multiple jobs simultaneously.

Visibility into jobs, labor, material, and all other job impacts (like unscheduled equipment downtime or material shorts) provides detailed insight into laborcosts so they can be better understood and addressed.

## Manufacturing Challenge #11: “We are not on top of our equipment’s preventative maintenance schedule and end up with unplanned and even excessive downtime pushing out our delivery dates.”

With Epicor ERP Maintenance Management, preventive service can be easily managed by building it into production schedules based on pre-defined service plans.

Unscheduled service requests and tracking of resolutions, warranties, and repair histories are also addressed with the Maintenance Management module.

The robust reporting capabilities of Epicor ERP help monitor assets while proactively addressing planned service.

For more detailed information and analysis of service calls, such as periods of repetitive downtime, management has the option to drill further into the specifics.

## Manufacturing Challenge #12: “Your biggest manufacturing challenge.”

What is your biggest manufacturing challenge? Challenge MIS to help you resolve your biggest manufacturing challenges with Epicor ERP.

MIS can show you how, with Epicor ERP for manufacturers, you will be rewarded with improved efficiencies, higher customer satisfaction levels, reduced errors, cost savings and more. Epicor ERP will have a positive impact on your bottom line to help you be more competitive in the long run.

# Return on Investment

Technology is changing at a rapid pace. Today’s ERP systems enable businesses to do more with less even when compared to what was available just five years ago. Take a look at some of the ROI metrics you can expect with Epicor ERP:

Improved business processes and automation for gains in efficiencies.

Faster access to real time information for better decision-making.

Collaboration for teamwork and fewer bottlenecks.

Improved customer service levels.

Mobility for anytime anywhere access.

Designed with the future in mind, Epicor ERP will continue to deliver returns on your investment over time. The solution is scalable and flexible to fit your needs and budget today and leaves you with room to change and grow tomorrow. Whether you deploy Epicor ERP in the cloud, on-premise or as a hybrid solution, or choose to start with a few modules and add additional functionality over time, you’ve made an investment for the long run. Epicor ERP is unique in that it uses the same database and code set regardless of deployment, making upgrades easier and faster while keeping upgrade costs down.

# Conclusion

Epicor Software Corporation has spent over 40 years gaining manufacturing expertise that has resulted in a robust, flexible ERP solution that meets the needs of today’s forward thinking manufacturers.

Epicor ERP offers a complete solution that takes you from quote-to-cash and procurement-to-pay with complete visibility into your operations. You will have the information you need for better and timely decisions. No more disparate data. Epicor ERP can access all of your information real-time, including inventory and order status, quote history, work-in-process, future deliveries and data from external point solutions. With Epicor ERP advanced technology and tool sets, you can be your most competitive today and tomorrow.

# About MIS

MIS Consulting & Sales, Inc. and its subsidiary, MIS Solutions Canada, is an Epicor Gold Partner that has been helping clients meet their vision with business strategies every day since 1987. Not all ERP systems are created alike, and neither are all ERP implementation partners. Through long-term relationships we inspire our clients to achieve their business goals and have an ***Exceptional* ERP***™* experience. As an experienced firm, we believe that clear communications with repeatable, proven methodologies using certified consultants leads to ERP success with the greatest ROI. Our goal is to help you build your solution today and be your trusted advisor tomorrow.

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