OVERVIEW OF COMPANY:

Upstate NY Distribution company with 1,000 customers worldwide, representing more than 70,000 products, from 350 vendors. Our company stocks about 4,000 products at any one time. We are brokers, buying and selling machine parts to end-users, service and repair companies, and trading companies. We process in excess 11,000 quotes a year which can range from one item to several hundred items. We place approximately four thousand orders on our suppliers per year. With this level of activity, we need a system that can keep up to gather and analyze the data.

You made the transition from a DOS based GP to a more robust, scalable solution delivered by RBS. What difference has this made to the business on a day-to-day basis?

J. Ryan: RBS has helped to design a system that monitors the quoting process from start to finish. We can keep a close eye on all aspects of the process allowing us to follow trends on products, and track performance with our customers. Before we buy any product, we go back 10 years to look at trends. We then look at the quote to order ratio, as well as open quotes on each product, and through the software, we can get the quote-to-order ratio on every customer. Armed with this data, we know before we buy what the market potential is for each product, and we can be confident in investing in our inventory.

With this level of detail from our data, we are able to prepare quotes much more competitively. We can look back through the data we have gathered, and provide valuable information to our customers on past orders. In many cases we know better than our customers what they have bought, and when. This level of history makes us a valuable business partner to our customers. We are able to develop purchase contracts with our customers that enable them to get quantity price break on items they purchase repeatedly through out the year.

The system truly is a salesmen's dream. I come from sales, and remember gathering competitive feedback, and getting back to the office with nowhere to put it. Now we can put it all in the system by product, in our quote package. Anytime someone in our sales department gets a request for a quote, all of that competitive data is sitting in front of them. It helps them to figure out how to sell a product.

THE CUSTOMER:
A Leading Upstate NY Distribution Company with 70,000 products, and 1,000 customers worldwide

INDUSTRY:
Distribution

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:
Unlisted

KEY BENEFITS OF MS DYNAMICS FROM RBS
• Increased productivity
• Enhanced, real-time reporting capabilities
• Integration with thirdparty service providers
• Ability to make informed business decisions

* Interview conducted with J. Ryan, CEO, by independent marketing firm

Another advantage for our sales team is our comprehensive customer data. Once a customer is entered in our system, they begin to build a profile, all quotes and orders are tracked. If the company is not paying their bills on time, our accounting department can leave notes so as soon as sales goes into the quote program the will see the number of invoices open, and how long they are delayed. While we are working on the quote our customer is in contact with their accounting department making sure that our invoices are paid.

What's different about RBS?

J. Ryan: Rich Wheeler really listens to our needs, and doesn't sell extra bells and whistles without a good reason. He consistently looks for opportunities for us to reach a new level of efficiency, and makes sure to troubleshoot our system to eliminate any bottlenecks.

Rich designed our quoting package that helps us do a lot of the front-end work to get the orders. Once we have the orders loaded in the system, the sky is the limit as to what data we want to pull.

Rich introduced us to Cognos and worked to integrate our data into the cubes which enable us to track quotes, orders, sales, and inventory with a high level of detail that only improves upon what the Dynamics GP software can do. One report allows us to view all customers' year to date activity. With this capability patterns and trends become obvious and we are able to use this information to better serve our customers.

Can you quantify how RBS has helped, particularly in the last 2-3 years?

J. Ryan: With the data we collect from custom reports and software from RBS, we can examine our margins, and make adjustments to offset hikes in the cost of raw materials. With all of the additional information at our fingertips, we grew sales by 20% last year, and we are tracking to grow by more than 20% this year. There are not many businesses that can claim this kind of growth in our economy, but we couldn't have realized this growth without Dynamics GP from RBS.

Are there other ways that RBS has helped you cut costs, or uncover opportunities to make money?

J. Ryan: Thanks to the data we are able to make informed decisions regarding what to purchase for inventory. When approaching a new customer we know which items to lead with to get their attention. Customers are looking to save money without compromisingquality. Our data tells us which items we are most competitive on.

We have three different types of customers with trading companies being our least profitable. In the past we had no way to monitor quoting activity automatically. Now when a new trading company approaches us we are able to tell them right up front what our expectations are. They are put on a six month probation and all correspondence is monitored closely and compared to other trading companies we are working with. If the new trading company fails to keep their quote to order ratio in an acceptable range we contact them and attempt to remedy the situation. If these attempts fail then we simply lock the account and focus our energy on more profitable relationships.

In the past year, we have been able to get a report that shows the total dollars quoted by product, and the total dollars ordered for a selected period of time. It then gives us the number of quotes, or opportunities. We use a document quote-to-order ratio, as well as a total dollar quote-to-order ratio.

We have this data for every single product we quote. This is a huge advantage when planning inventory, and what products we will be selling.

You're not just managing your own inventory — you're also managing various vendors, and servicing your customers. How do you use Dynamics GP from RBS to manage all the pieces?

J. Ryan: With more than 900 quotes a month, and 11,000 a year, we need the ability to gather and track an enormous amount of data. Dynamics GP from RBS allows us to track our sales with a great level of detail regarding who our customer is, and their purchase history.

In regards to our inventory, we can watch trends and adjust our inventory to match the current purchasing habits of our customers.

How does RBS enable business process improvements for your company?

J. Ryan: Rich is always willing to work on custom reporting for us. He will create beta versions of any new programs to ensure we are getting exactly what we need. He works with us to troubleshoot any snags so that by the time we are implementing a new piece of software or running a brand new report, we know we can expect a smooth startup. Rich also integrated all of our ISO forms making it easy for our sales team to conform to the standards. We have integrated the standards into our process without creating additional paperwork or overhead. At one point I asked all of my employees to write down their daily tasks and the steps required to get the job done. Rich reviewed all of our employee's tasks, and created custom programs and reports that have reduced the time it takes to complete the tasks. Prior to working with RBS I remember that several of

my staff was spending time trying to work around the software to get their jobs done. Now the software expedites the process rather than inhibiting it.

In the past year we have invested in virtual computers with Rich's help. Anytime we get new software or an upgrade, Rich is able to create a virtual computer and load our data. Everyone in the company pounds on it, trying to crash the system. If we do, we let him know, and he fixes it. Once it is completely tested, it is time to install in real-time. The beauty of the virtual system is that we just erase the virtual computer; it's pretty slick. This upgrade has increased system reliability.

What's your experience been like working with RBS' implementation team?

J. Ryan: Rich is highly responsive, and allows us to focus on our business and our customers. We meet on a regular basis to take a look at our priorities, and to create a wish list of what we are looking for next. Things change in the software world, and this is where we look to Rich to keep us abreast of the latest changes, and opportunities to improve upon our system and what we can get out of it. Our system will always be a work in process so that we can maintain our competitive edge in the industry.

He is extremely well connected in the industry, and consistently keeps us apprised of any new technology