

Power Brace Manufacturing

Power Brace is an ISO 9001:2015 certified, Iowa-based service provider and manufacturer of steel components. Since 2002, they have been serving their customers across telecommunications, construction, transportation, agricultural industries etc. by producing high-volume parts at competitive prices.

Through lean processes, they have committed themselves to providing defect-free products on time to their customers from their 120,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Des Moines, IA where they process over 1.5 million lbs. of steel every month.

Their comprehensive solutions, coupled with unrivalled customer service, have earned them a distinguished reputation, demonstrated by their successful collaborations with industry giants such as Verizon, AT&T, and Google.

Location: Des Moines, IA
www.powerbracemfg.com



Key Challenges Faced

Before implementing OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg faced what every manufacturer faces in the absence of ERP software – **Shop floor Visibility**.

They didn't know what was happening on the shop floor. Critical shop floor parameters such as production rates, current inventory levels, operator productivity, jobs per operator, scheduling etc. all depended on guesswork rather than hard, data-based facts.

Material procurement became a worry as they didn't know how many materials they had in hand. Operator productivity was a problem and they didn't know which operators performed better than the others or what their utilization looked like.

The lack of operational visibility coupled with guesswork didn't allow them to grow as they wanted to. The entire process became a rigid structure where if they added something new to their production schedule, a new product line or a new customer order that was a bit different, it threw a wrench into their systems leading to delays and cost escalation.



“We used to face a lot of trouble with our production in the form of push backs. So even the smallest new growth opportunity was very difficult for us to do.”

Jonathan Bishop
 CFO, Power Brace Mfg

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The Reason to Choose OmegaCube ERP

Power Brace Mfg wanted an ERP that was the best fit for their organization and this led them to conduct thorough evaluations and cut down from a huge list of 25 ERP vendors to just 8.

The biggest reason Power Brace Mfg chose OmegaCube ERP was because of the immense flexibility the software had and its ability to easily adapt to their company. OmegaCube assured them that the ERP could do whatever they wanted it to do for their enterprise and that it could adjust to fit Power Brace and not the other way around.

When it came to the long list of features and capabilities desired, OmegaCube ERP easily outran its competitors and checked all the boxes for Power Brace Mfg. There was a large gap between OmegaCube ERP and its competitors in terms of what the competitors couldn't do and integrate.



“There were competitors who weren't as flexible as OmegaCube. OmegaCube assured us that they can do whatever we want them to do and they can adjust to fit our organization and not the other way around. They provided us insights into what they did for other customers and we saw what work they have done for them. This was, eventually, the final selling point for us.”



Implementation Experience

An ERP implementation was something new to Power Brace Mfg as they never had an ERP system before. Thus, they knew the transition from 'no ERP' to 'an ERP' would be a difficult one, especially on the shop floor.

There were instances when a couple of OmegaCube's competitors would tell them to join a week-long training program on how they needed to run their enterprise to fit their ERP. This would be a difficult thing, as it would mean the production team would need to change existing processes and adopt a completely new way of doing things just because the proposed ERP system required it.

OmegaCube ERP on the other hand, with its advanced flexibility didn't have any such issues and they seamlessly adapted to Power Brace Mfg.

With the help of the implementation team at OmegaCube, they evaluated existing processes and saw how the ERP would fit in. OmegaCube has also helped them improve their processes with the ERP helping them run them in a better fashion.

Additionally, OmegaCube assisted them in integrating OmegaCube ERP with a machine monitoring system. This automated their entire machine monitoring workflow - where operational data constantly flows from machines into OmegaCube ERP and vice versa. This way, they get performance data on each machine, operator efficiency, material utilization, running time etc. This helps them to constantly track production, prevent downtimes and idle times and improve overall efficiency.



“The folks at OmegaCube were very honest and told us that transitioning from 'no ERP' to an 'ERP' will be difficult, especially on the production floor as compared to ERP to ERP. It was akin to 'eating an elephant, bit by bit' and with the help of OmegaCube, we did it in incremental, progressive phases.”



Improvements after OmegaCube ERP

Scrap Rate Reduction by 10 Times

Before implementing OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg only knew their overall scrap rate in terms of steel weight that was hauled outside the factory premises in a scrap drum. They didn't have a clue of which machine it was coming from and by which operator. There was no actual means of measuring the scrap rate and taking corrective measures.

With OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg could mark items as scrap or quality hold. This allowed them to track scrap rates per operator, per item, and per machine and that allowed them to cut down scrap by 10 times i.e., from a full 1% to 0.1% which is a huge reduction. Their quality assurance manager was involved in understanding the reporting and keeping a better track of scrap rates and overall quality control.

Reduced Inventory Carrying Costs from 3 million to 1 million

Before implementing OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg had little visibility of its inventory levels. Their inventory carrying costs were high due to increased just-in-time inventory procurement orders to prevent material shortages leading to over-ordering and over-carrying.

OmegaCube ERP enabled them to get real-time visibility of their production schedules and inventory levels. Everyone on the shop floor knew the number of pending orders, how much inventory was ordered, how much was consumed and how much was needed to go out in the coming days. They now have the entire reporting history of how much inventory was consumed in the last 30/60/90 days, allowing them to analyze and manage inventory procurements better.

This allowed them to reduce their inventory carrying costs from approximately 3 million to 1 million.



“We have been able to thin down our inventory carrying costs by about a third i.e. from approximately 3 million to 1 million. This is a huge deal for us. This was one of the prime reasons we needed an ERP, because we had inventory coming out of our ears, and we wanted to make sure that we had the right products at the right time.”

Information at Everyone’s Fingertips

Before OmegaCube ERP, enterprise data was limited only to leadership-level executives. The actual people who needed it i.e., the shop floor personnel, operations team, procurement team etc. had limited access based on their respective roles. However, they would have their own tracking tools in the form of spreadsheets, papers, MS Access databases and free software that they had downloaded to manage daily operations. This ‘siloes’ information consumed immense time and resources to track and manage critical enterprise data.

With OmegaCube ERP, everyone has access to real-time enterprise information. Everyone is on the exact same page and knows what’s going on in the company in terms of planning and operations. It has removed manual record-keeping methods cutting down immensely on hours and manpower.

Quantitative Benefits

Cutting down on Daily Scheduling Adjustment



**1 Week to
1 Day**

With OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg has expanded their production schedule by 7 times i.e., from one day to one week. Previously, the crew would know the scheduling only for the following day.

Improvement in Financial Reporting Efficiency



**15 Days
to 1 Wk**

With OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg has been able to generate and run financial statements every week. Their monthly financial reporting has improved significantly from 15 days to only a week after month-end.

Improvement in AP & AR Efficiency



**80% Less
Errors**

OmegaCube ERP has helped Power Brace Mfg to decentralize and delegate various parts of AP process, thereby reducing human error by

Improvement in Scheduling Efficiency



**15%
Increase**

With OmegaCube ERP’s advanced scheduling features, Power Brace Mfg has been able to improve its scheduling efficiency by 15%.



“Well, I can just say that it’s impossible to make a mistake now. The close-knit process within OmegaCube ERP ensures that almost no mistake can be committed. For example, a purchase order lines up with a purchase receipt, and you can’t enter an invoice without a purchase receipt. In the ERP, you cannot duplicate the purchase receipt because it’s tagged to this purchase order. Therefore, the system makes it entirely difficult to make any sort of mistakes of course, unknowingly.”

Decrease in Emergency Inventory Purchases



**67%
Reduction**

Power Brace Mfg has seen a 67% reduction in emergency inventory procurement and inventory holding. Irrespective of market volatility, OmegaCube ERP's inventory capabilities have helped them to go just-in-time.

Improvement in Customer Response Time



**1 Week to
2 Days**

Power Brace Mfg has improved its customer response time in terms of inquiries and quoting from about a week to

Improvement in On-time Delivery



**10%
Increase**

On-time delivery is one of the KPIs for Power Brace Mfg. With OmegaCube ERP, they have improved on-time delivery from 86% to 96%.

Improvement in Capacity Utilization



**~100%
Increase**

OmegaCube ERP's integration capability with machine monitoring systems has significantly helped Power Brace Mfg to improve capacity utilization to almost 100%. They can track utilization at operator levels and find out reasons for deviation.

Improvement in Inventory Movement and Tracking

Before OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg found it difficult to efficiently track and reduce aged inventory. In the absence of a system, they used to have aged inventory hidden in their premises and they would spend money to order the same materials again without knowing they had it. With the ERP, they can easily track inventory and its movements within and outside the premises when it goes for outside processes.

Improvement in BOM efficiency

Prior to OmegaCube ERP, Power Brace Mfg would run into issues and miscommunications related to the Bill of Materials. They faced issues pertaining to product quality as they would collate a bunch of different products for their customers leading to increased product recalls.

With OmegaCube ERP, they have automated and streamlined the entire BOM process. Everyone has access to the latest version of BOM data. They can print out work orders from the ERP that have the exact part numbers to be put together.



“Our customers have highlighted the reduction in quality issues ever since we adopted OmegaCube ERP into our system because we are not mixing up materials or revisions. OmegaCube ERP ensures that old BOM versions are inactive and we are using the most up-to-date version of the Bill of Materials.”

Improvement in Process Efficiency due to Mobility Features

With OmegaCube ERP's mobility features, Power Brace Mfg has seen significant process improvement. They use scanners and tablets to operate on the shop floor, clock in and out of jobs, record inventory etc. leading to improved data accuracy and personnel efficiency.



Plans with OmegaCube ERP for Enterprise Growth

Currently, Power Brace Mfg is working with OmegaCube ERP to include more quality control checks in the form of integrations. They are also enabling online checklists for quality technicians that they can fill out online. They are also working towards specific lot traceability to improve lot tracking for their customers. Power Brace are also in the process of implementing an incentive program for their operators based on the data collected from the machine monitoring system that is integrated with OmegaCube ERP.



Recommending OmegaCube ERP to Peers

“Yes, absolutely. No manufacturer is the same, no leadership is the same and that's where OmegaCube ERP fits in. They can adapt to the processes and culture easily and that's the most amazing part about them.”