

GLOBAL SHOP SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

Auger Fabrication, Inc.

Founded in 1983, *Auger Fabrication, Inc.* (Auger Fab) is a family-owned business that specializes in the design and manufacturing of parts and accessories for product packaging machines. Their parts, which are entirely designed, manufactured and fabricated in-house, include new and replacement augers, conveyor screws, feeder screws, and flight material for powder and bulk solids material-handling equipment.



Auger Fab's shop includes a variety of machinery: 6 thread mills, 8 welding booths, 10 manual engine lathes, 12 CNC multiple axis machines, and 3 manual mills



Auger Fab's newly expanded facility to 65,000 sq. ft. from 50,000 sq. ft., located in Exton, Pennsylvania.

Headquartered in Exton, Pennsylvania, Auger Fab's products are used in a wide variety of filling machines, including auger filling, vertical form fill and seal, piston filling, and horizontal filling machines, as well as custom packaging equipment. An integral part of the packaging process for products ranging from food, candy, coffee and beverages to cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, hardware and chemicals, Auger Fab products are used around the globe.

For most of its early years, Auger-Fab ran the business with manual spreadsheets and hand-written paper documents. Recognizing the need for a more sophisticated business management tool, ownership chose [Global Shop Solutions ERP software](#) to manage the company's future.

"We liked the robust features and functionality of Global Shop Solutions," says Executive Vice President and 3rd-generation family member Eric Edginton. "What really sealed the deal for us was the software's ability to adapt to the way we do business. Our production flow and customer demand differ from most manufacturers, and during the on-site demo the [Global Shop Solutions consultants](#) showed us how we could tailor the system to fit the way we operate."

Handling WIP Changes with Ease

One of Auger Fab's biggest shop floor challenges is the constantly changing nature of their customers' manufacturing environments. In particular, Auger Fab must constantly contend with sudden changes to work orders while production is in progress.

"Our shop floor and delivery processes can – and frequently do – change on an hourly basis," says Edginton. "Once we begin work on a part, we can get a call the next minute that completely changes the flow of that part in the shop and in the system, including price, delivery and everything else that goes with it."

For example, an Auger Fab customer might suddenly switch from a two-inch container opening to one-inch. Sometimes, Auger Fab will have the new piece in stock and can ship right away. In most cases, Auger Fab has to modify the part in progress, which requires changing the specifics of the stock part and making it a unique part number.

In the old system, manually tracking these changes involved a time-consuming and error-prone task. With Global Shop Solutions, production managers can now make changes to work-in-progress (WIP) in a timely and accurate manner.

“We can quickly respond to customer changes because Global Shop Solutions puts all the part, job and customer data at our fingertips,” explains Edginton. “With a few clicks of the mouse, we can see where the job is on the shop floor, whether we have any of the new part in stock, and if not, whether we have the raw materials to make it. The software also makes it easy to assign new part numbers, create new routers and work orders, and track them as they proceed through the shop floor.”

Fast, Accurate Costing

Global Shop Solutions also assists with two key areas all manufacturers face – identifying **true costs** and efficiently **managing inventory**. With the ability to instantly look up work orders in the system, parts can be easily identified and costs are applied immediately.

“It’s all about the visibility of data,” says Edginton. “The software gives us a wide array of lookup options to easily track costs and make sure they’re correct – without having to go on the shop floor and manually dig through hundreds of routers. I typically use the **Shop Management software** because it enables me to easily drill down into a specific work order, part number or purchase order number to access the data I need.”

Auger Fab also maintains an extensive inventory of stock products, partly so customers can pull product when needed, but also because it facilitates fast delivery when customers need replacement parts to avoid downtime with their equipment.

“Breaking an auger can shut down production for our customers, so we need to have the part readily available to provide a quick turnaround solution,” adds Edginton.

“Global Shop Solutions helps us keep a suitable inventory by allowing us to assign part numbers to raw materials as they are received, and track how much is released for each job. When the materials in inventory reach a preset minimum level, the system alerts us in time to order more material so we can manufacture those augers and have them in stock for the next customer emergency.”

Transforming Sales with CRM

Early on, Auger Fab primarily used Global Shop Solutions to lean production processes and improve financial tracking and reporting. Recently, implementing the **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software** has dramatically improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the sales team.

“CRM has made our sales process a lot smoother,” says Edginton. “I can do everything from quickly looking up customer data to seeing when salespeople are traveling to certain areas and which customers they plan to contact. I can also track job costs by customer. That way, if a customer wants to change a part and we sold it to them at a different price the first time, we can alert them to the increase in price for materials up front.”



Free-flow tooling is used with vertical auger filling machines for products such as whole bean coffee, grain, and granulated sugar.

“CRM has also gotten our salespeople more involved with the system. Before they just took orders and answered phone calls. Now they dive into the system to retrieve data so they can answer customer questions and requests much faster than in the past.”

25% Growth

To keep on top of sales as well as what’s happening on the shop floor, Edginton divides his time between looking up customer orders and delivery dates in CRM and tracking open work orders and work flow in the Shop Floor Control application.

“I especially like the work order screen because it lets me track the status and costs of jobs in progress and who is working on what at any given point in time,” he says. “I review the open work order detail report three times a week to keep up with all the changes taking place on the shop floor.”

Another of Edginton’s favorite Global Shop Solutions features is the ability to create custom Crystal reports, which allows Auger Fab to format data based on specific criteria in the way managers prefer to see it. One custom report that gets a lot of use tracks how many parts have been issued per specific size, and the average costs of those parts. Another tracks the quantity of parts and associated costs by date range and customer.

According to Edginton, Auger Fab has grown more than 25% since implementing Global Shop Solutions, in large part because it has made everyone in the company – from the back office to the shop floor – more efficient.

“The software enables us to do so many things we couldn’t do before,” he says. “Cost analysis has become easier and more accurate. Managing our customer base in CRM saves huge amounts of time and keeps everyone on the same page. I can’t count the number of processes that used to take multiple steps but now can be performed with one click of a button.

“For such a sophisticated piece of software, Global Shop Solutions is very straightforward and easy to use. The company is constantly adding new features and upgrades to keep up with the changing manufacturing environment. And if we need to do something a bit differently, we can usually find a way to adapt the software to our business processes. It’s a great tool that simplifies every area of our manufacturing.”