

Company Profile

Royal Consumer Products Information, Inc., Somerset, NJ

www.royal.com

Industry: Office Product Supplier

Varsity Products: ShipSoft-Parcel™, ShipSoft-Freight™, ShipTalk™, ShipAudit™

Shipping Volume: 400 parcels per day

Number of Shipping Locations: Ten

Carriers: UPS, FedEx

ERP: VAI System 2000

“Without hesitation I would recommend Varsity. Our installation was exceptionally smooth and support has been excellent. Varsity goes beyond what you expect from a software provider. “

— John Opalka, IT Director

Varsity and VAI Deliver Order Fulfillment Fit for Royal Consumer Information Products

Royal Consumer Information Products, Inc. is a leading supplier of office products, accessories, and supplies. The company ships nearly 400 UPS parcels and more than 80 Less-Than-Truckload (LTL) shipments each business day from ten distribution centers across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. These shipments are delivered to consumers and small businesses, as well as major retailers such as WalMart, Sam's, and Kmart.

With its roots in the Royal Typewriter Company, founded in 1904, Royal Consumer had well established and reliable shipping processes—until their shipping software vendor discontinued support for iSeries shippers. It wasn't long before Royal Consumer felt the impact of this decision. Faced with obsolete hardware, functionality deficiencies, and inadequate support, it was time to find a new iSeries shipping system.

“I have to credit our ERP provider, VAI, with our decision to switch to Varsity ShipSoft for our parcel and LTL shipments,” recalls John Opalka, IT Director for Royal Consumer. “VAI's close partnership with Varsity really shows in the quality of the pre-built interface between the two companies' software solutions and their joint commitment to our success.”

In anticipation of the switch to Varsity ShipSoft, Royal Consumer's MIS department spent a month defining business requirements, evaluating functionality overlaps between VAI System 2000 and Varsity ShipSoft, and observing shipping processes in their distribution centers to learn how they could improve shipping productivity and employee satisfaction.

The first distribution center to go live was the company's Eastern Pennsylvania center. To ensure a smooth process, Royal Consumer had MIS staff, VAI, and Varsity technical support onsite. This way they could make changes on the fly to fit their unique requirements.

The switch went without a hitch. "On Monday we installed the hardware and by Thursday we were shipping," recalls Opalka. To replicate their success, the MIS team documented everything each distribution center would need to know to use the new ShipSoft system. The company's ShipSoft manual covers tasks such as: how to ship single packages and LTL shipments, how to apply labels for over boxing, and how to prepare ASN labels.

"This best practices manual enabled us to move to ShipSoft at all our North American distribution centers without having to go onsite. In fact, although we had planned for the rollout to take 90 days, we had all our distribution centers live in a few weeks," notes Opalka.

ShipSoft is tightly integrated with Royal Consumer's VAI System 2000, giving them seamless order submission, fulfillment, billing, and inventory processes. Most orders are received via EDI into VAI System 2000, where they are placed on hold until flagged for shipping. When orders are ready to be fulfilled, a pick slip and Bill of Lading are generated in the warehouse. Orders are picked and the bar code on the Bill of Lading is scanned. ShipSoft prints a shipping label and automatically calculates and produces ASN labels, eliminating ASN related retailer fines.

Shipping information from each distribution center is centralized on the company's iSeries system. Each night, shipping details are automatically transmitted back to VAI System 2000 to initiate billing, inventory adjustments, and back-office processing.

Royal Consumer plans to expand their commitment to Varsity's shipping solutions. "We're looking forward to using Varsity ShipAudit to automatically audit carrier statements," says Opalka. "And, we plan to improve our international shipping capabilities by adding ShipSoft to our Canadian distribution center."

"We've been using Varsity for several years now, and they continue to deliver exceptional service," concludes Opalka. "Just the other day, we received a ShipSoft update that will alert us when we attempt to print a shipping label to undeliverable addresses in the regions impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Varsity thinks of everything."