

Manufacturing and Beyond: Sleeptronic's Fully Integrated OSAS Solution

Sleeptronic in Dallas, TX, is one of the largest independent mattress manufacturers in North America. Millions of consumers and tens of thousands of hotel rooms trust Sleeptronic branded mattresses and boxsprings to provide a great night's sleep. The company offers expanded choices and a broader product selection to consumers and retailers in comparison with most other mattress manufacturers. These choices span many product selections, each featuring several models. A major point of difference between Sleeptronic and many other major manufacturers is the fact that Sleeptronic continues to provide consumers with a choice between conventional, two-sided mattress construction and bedding featuring no-flip, single-sided construction. Products include many of the latest technologies, including a specialized memory foam.

Sleeptronic has been running their business with OSAS for 11 years. The software from Open Systems, Inc. handles their payables, receivables, inventory, order entry, payroll and other accounting functions, and recent enhancements have greatly increased efficiency and productivity throughout the company's operations. Sleeptronic receives their OSAS software, customizations and support from Response Computer Group (RCG) of Milford, Delaware. Recently, they have also added a specialized solution developed by RCG called Manufacturing and Beyond.

Manufacturing and Beyond is a complete manufacturing solution, designed with the bedding industry in mind. It starts with a configuration tool that allows mattress manufacturers to build a recipe and then explode the bill of materials into separate inventory items for each bed size. As customers order these items, the orders are added to a daily schedule that drives the production process. Bar-coded media is produced for each serialized piece to help track it through the operations on the manufacturing floor. Detailed information about the status of orders and individual items can be viewed at any time during the production process. On the manufacturing floor, a .NET-powered browser-based solution provides clear instructions to employees as they scan each piece through the production operations. This full-screen graphical interface also enforces lot number collection and includes pictures, multi-lingual prompts, and a running total of the day's pay for piecework employees. Completed pieces are bagged and scanned onto trucks using this same web interface, and employees can be paid piecework rates for these operations as well. Once a truck is loaded, the process comes full-circle back to the billing department as orders are verified and paperwork is generated for the entire load in one combined process.

Sleeptronic uses Manufacturing and Beyond to expedite many of their manufacturing processes, including the creation of items. "Our company offers our product in seven different sizes," explains VP of Operations Alim Sunderji. "Twin, full, queen, king, and some other odd sizes. Previous to this solution, we had to go through a lot of repetitive entry to create just one SKU." (A SKU or "stock-keeping unit" is a number or string of alphanumeric characters that uniquely identify a product). "I had to create 14 SKUS just to get one in all sizes. If there was any duplicate entry or a mistake in typing a description or anything, it really created problems."

"Manufacturing and Beyond is a higher-level module that allows us to create just one SKU, and the system does an explosion and creates all of the item IDs for us, for all of the sizes; everything is completely calculated," says Sunderji.

Prior to the implementation of this solution, only a few select employees at Sleeptronic could do inventory coding; now, almost anyone in the company can do it. Once the coding is approved and posted, the system generates a list of needed components via the explosion process. Sunderji goes into more detail. "When you create an item and you start typing an Item ID, in order to distinguish one size from another you'll have a couple of digits at the end of the code that are different in order to make different SKUs. We create one model without the size at all, and then we tell the system which size we're going to create; we actually go in and put in a whole bill of materials all in one screen and one step: stocking levels, materials, everything. Once everything looks good, we just hit a button and all the inventory items are created for us, with the digits at the end appended. So now the process of creating codes is more than twice as fast as it was before. In fact it's probably at least 75% faster. And the accuracy is there because the software is matching everything up now." Once that step is done, the manufacturing process begins.

Order entry at Sleeptronic is standard, but they now use a scheduling module in which all orders are scheduled and grouped into a bin or truck. The system then automatically commits all of the necessary items and displays the raw materials that need to be ordered. "The items we put in an order already have a bill of materials attached to them, which in our case is specific amounts of foam, tape, thread and things like that," says Sunderji. "If we get an order on a Monday, we schedule our jobs that day, order the supplies on Tuesday, make the items on Wednesday, and by Thursday they're in the truck making their way to Oklahoma, Nebraska or wherever they need to be. It's that fast; just a two-day lead time."

In addition, Sunderji uses OSAS Info-Alert, a powerful tool that monitors business data and provides automated alerts when various business conditions are met. Sunderji uses it to email PDF files, grouped by Sleeptronic sales rep, of all the orders entered for their customers that day. The files show total dollars, pieces, average invoice size, selling price, etc., and are automatically sent every day. Sunderji also receives a copy of each PDF file. "It gives everyone a nice breakdown of all the orders entered that day," he says, "And no one has to do anything to get it."



Sleeptronic VP of Operations Alim Sunderji.

Sunderji also has email alerts set up that inform him of any outstanding credits he may have, and one lets him know whenever someone orders from Sleeptronic for the first time. Another gives him details on his inventory items. "It tells me what is on hand, on order, committed and so forth," he says. "It brings the old daily task of digging through stuff to a minimum."