

# JOHNSTONE SUPPLY GROWS SALES THROUGH THE VERSATILITY OF INFORM ERP

*Inform ERP is credited for the improved workflows and greater accountability that will provide benefits for years to come.*



## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

*From the first, modest Johnstone Supply store that opened in 1953, founder John Shank aspired to grow his business among other service-focused individuals. The goal: to share resources, operational benefits, and group buying power. Today, Johnstone Supply is the leading cooperative wholesale distributor in the HVACR industry, with over \$2 billion in annual sales and 410 independently owned store locations across the U.S and Canada.*

### Company Facts:

- Location: Spokane, WA
- Industry: HVAC/R
- Previous Provider: DSPPro
- Website: johnstonesupply.com

### Features Highlighted:

- Quick order entry
- Unlimited product count
- Warranty management
- Schedule cycle count
- Service & support

### Benefits Gained:

- 2 pt gross profit increase
- Scalability supporting growth
- Improved speed & productivity
- Dependable support

A thriving member of the Johnstone Supply Cooperative for over 40 years, Johnstone Supply – Spokane, WA, prides itself on customer service and self-sufficiency. With a branch in Anchorage, AK, the company has seen little turnover in the past four decades, a testament to its ownership and stability. Long time users of Johnstone's proprietary software (a character-based ERP system), the Spokane team knew that the shift to a fully-integrated, highly scalable Windows® based ERP would be significant.

Spokane implemented DDI System's Inform ERP in November 2015. Since then, the store's gross profit percentage is up two points and it steadily generates around 3,000 invoices a month. The credit manager Barb Redinger says that along with her hard-working, diligent team, Spokane's success can be attributed to one key factor: training.

### Streamlining the Busy Season

On a 90 degree day in early June, the phones at Johnstone Supply – Spokane are ringing off the hook. The exterior of the store is under construction, with no signage currently displayed. Yet a steady stream of customers flow in and out of the showroom. "It's the first hot day of the season," says Barb, a vital member of the Spokane team for 30 years and counting.

In the midst of juggling phone calls, answering questions from office and warehouse staff, and giving DDI System team members a tour, Barb enters sales orders. “Sales are the core of our business,” she says. “And entering sales orders into Inform ERP is so easy.”

Along with sales order entry, Barb regularly uses Inform’s Purchasing, Inventory, and Accounts Receivable, as well as the system’s many dynamic reports. “It’s amazing to have all the tools that can be used to help our company grow. We find something new everyday that has helped us with our sales team.”

Alicia Shultz has been a member of the Spokane team for more than 12 years. She leverages Inform’s warranty options the most, along with Accounts Payable. “Inform is so versatile,” she says. “Unlike our old system, you can access multiple features at once.” When it comes to warranty, Alicia especially likes that vendor tag requirements must be entered at the counter in order to save the tag to the sales order. “The warranty process is much easier now because I don’t have to track down tag information,” Alicia says.

### Accessible, Personalized Service & Training

Acknowledging the difference between the store’s previous software system and Inform, Alicia asserts, “As with anything new, it’s a matter of learning.” Barb understood the shift to Inform would involve a learning curve for the counter, warehouse, and office staff. She eagerly worked with DDI to learn best practices for managing the transition and to arrange pre-implementation training with DDI’s Support team. “Support accessibility was the best part of the transition,” Barb says. “Plus, we worked as a team.”

Along with store co-owner Dan Kennedy and team member Darren Sybouts, Barb attended the full week of on-site training sessions. Other team members, such as Alicia and warehouse manager Motie Curtis, were pulled in to attend those sessions most relevant to their specialty.

Because all training sessions are recorded and given to the store for reference, Barb’s team was able to review concepts prior to the go-live date. As DDI recommends, Barb copied the sessions onto thumb drives so team members could access them at their convenience. The thumb drives came in handy especially for Anchorage team members who were not able to attend training. “They watched the training videos, practiced, and were able to figure things out on their own,” Barb says.

### Easy Product Tracking

In the warehouse, Motie was an avid user of the store’s previous ERP system for three years and says, “I picked up Inform right away.” He attended training sessions relevant to his day-to-day tasks during the pre-implementation week and took notes. Along with Inform’s Warehouse, Bar Code Receiving, and Inventory options, Motie uses Sales Order Entry when he helps at the counter during busy times.

“Inform speeds things up,” he says, adding that the new system has made his work more efficient. “Some of the terminology is different from the old system, but you get used to it.” Even though busy season means items are going in and out of the door rapidly, Motie successfully tracks nearly 12,000 on-hand products by number and over 120,000 products overall.

Barb mentions that the store currently counts inventory manually and is excited to learn about Inform’s Schedule Cycle Count. Based on product ranking, this feature allows you to assign items to a count schedule. After the schedule is set, the system divvies out products for counting accordingly, cutting down on the need for manual inventory adjustments. “That will save us a whole Saturday of counting,” Barb says. Not to mention all those Saturdays in the future.

### Quick Response Times

Natural problem-solvers, Barb and Alicia troubleshoot software issues on their own as much as they can before calling DDI. Barb rates DDI System’s Customer Care team at a 9 out of 10. “They get back to you really fast!”

Along with the speed and friendliness of Customer Care, Spokane is highly impressed with the follow-up emails Customer Care sends after a job is resolved. Alicia says, “Support always sends an email with the full details of our conversation. That way we can go back to them later if we need them.”

### A Seamless Transition

After decades spent on the same legacy software, Johnstone Supply – Spokane tackled the shift to Inform head on, recognizing early that training was the key to success. Several busy seasons later, Spokane continues to manage a hectic showroom and a bustling warehouse with ease and efficiency. Spokane anticipates success for years to come due to the improved workflows and greater accountability Inform continuously delivers.