

“SystemLink always meets and exceeds our expectations. They get high marks across the board from everyone at Flame Engineering.”

Linda Miller
Flame Engineering



Flame Engineering Blazes with the Support of SystemLink

In the mid 1950's, Ralph Pivonka and his son, Mike, designed a propane torch for burning weeds and brush on their Kansas family farm. As word spread about their flaming equipment, Ralph and Mike found themselves building more and more torches to satisfy a growing local demand. The Pivonkas soon outgrew their farm workshop and went into full production establishing the company known as Flame Engineering, Inc., which has expanded into national and international markets with the popular Red Dragon product line. Based in LaCrosse, Kansas, they also engineer other agricultural equipment, construction and pre-engine heaters, even poultry sanitation systems for chicken coops—creating a product line of over 100 items. Their products are sold at retailers like The Home Depot, TrueServ, Ace Hardware and other smaller retailers as well as direct sales from their web site.

Manual Processes Have Flame Fizzling

With a wide variety of products and a growing need to automate inventory and manufacturing, Flame Engineering knew that its DOS-based system wasn't going to continue to be able to support the growing needs of their operation. Linda Miller of Flame Engineering remembers it as cumbersome, saying, “it wasn't producing the information the management needed.”

The biggest problem was a lack of inventory control. With over 100 products, Flame Engineering was greatly in need for an automated inventory control system. Without proper inventory support tools, Flame Engineering had to manually and physically count their inventory using paper and pencil. In addition, their system offered no shipping integration; yet another manual process. Too many of their processes were manual and so they looked to Sage Pro to address the problem. Sage Pro had all the capabilities they were looking for—including an exceptional inventory control module.

SystemLink Fans the Flames

Flame Engineering had Sage Pro installed to help solve their inventory control problems. However, over time they found themselves needing a local company to help manage their solution. Problems started to mount as the software configuration was unable to keep pace with the company's operational needs. Linda shared that they “desperately needed help customizing Sage Pro. It wasn't working well with our shipping system and pick tickets; and Invoicing improvements were badly needed.”

They ended up using a partner from Kansas City however they were dissatisfied with the service they got there. Through a previous relationship established with one of SystemLink's Executive Consultants, Scott Watts, they turned to

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SystemLink desperate for help. “SystemLink was such a perfect match for our company and knew the software very well,” said Linda. “They visited us and took the time to understand what we were doing. They were able to guide us to the correct packages and add to the platform a little at a time until we got exactly what we were looking for.”

“SystemLink got the shipping system talking with invoicing and took care of the inventory control problem,” said Linda. “We thought we had lost some history but SystemLink was able to recover it without a problem. We found ourselves back on board and everything was soon working the way it was supposed to.”

Flame Engineering Burns Bright with SystemLink

It was SystemLink’s expert level of competence with the Sage Pro product that first made Flame Engineering a believer, and it has been the exceptional customer service that has kept them there ever since. Beyond the initial customization, SystemLink has also customized user screens and created specialized reporting in an effort to keep Flame’s system running effectively and efficiently.

Responsive is something of an understatement when it comes to SystemLink’s superior service. Flame Engineering needed a change on their invoice forms—nothing urgent, but an important matter nonetheless. While stuck at the airport in Atlanta, GA, Scott from SystemLink received Flame’s request. Scott was able to log in to Flame’s system remotely from the airport and worked to make all the necessary changes while waiting for his flight. “They may be a long way away, but they can fix the problems like they’re sitting right here—and they’re always able to fix them,” says Linda. And according to David Beck of SystemLink “we want to make sure our customer knows we’re there when they need us and we’re always responsive to their needs.”

The improvements to Flame Engineering’s business are not limited to feeling good about their service support. Staff in the Accounts Receivable and Sales departments is saving time thanks to the flexibility of the system. Linda estimates that thanks to the changes SystemLink’s made, they have been able to save nearly 4-5 hours daily, simply because they do not need to enter data by hand anymore. “I can’t even guess how much time and money SystemLink has saved us,” brags Linda. “The financial savings have been significant.” Thanks to the support of SystemLink, Flame Engineering is running their business with the control and efficiency it needs to keep growing.