Jim Lawrence Ironworks: Achieving warehouse accuracy and production visibility with Business Central and Insight Works apps

Summary

Customer
Jim Lawrence Ironworks

Industry
Interior fittings manufacturing

Location
Hadleigh, Suffolk, United Kingdom

Business Central Version
Business Central online

Partners
Insight Works (ISV)

Solution

- Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central
- Advanced Inventory Count
- Counter Sales
- Dynamic Ship
- License Plating
- Shop Floor Insight
- Warehouse Insight

Results

- Warehouse picking errors significantly reduced
- Tasks once needing four people need one
- Workshop production shortages significantly reduced
- Labor time captured on 45,000 production orders yearly
- Faster, more accurate inventory counts
- Multi-carrier shipping replaced a custom workaround
- All activity in one connected ecosystem



ABOUT JIM LAWRENCE IRONWORKS

Jim Lawrence Ironworks designs, manufactures, and sells interior fittings from its workshops in Hadleigh, Suffolk. The company designs and hand-finishes a wide range of lighting, hardware, and home accessories, selling direct to consumers across the UK, and handles design, production, warehousing, and fulfillment under one roof.

CHALLENGES: BUSINESS CENTRAL GAPS FOR A COMPLEX UK MANUFACTURER

Jim Lawrence Ironworks needed accurate warehouse picking, reliable inventory counts, structured production time tracking, and a replacement for a badly written shipping customization, all after migrating to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central. Standard Business Central alone could not support a manufacturer of this complexity.

The goal was a single connected suite of purpose-built tools across warehousing, production, and shipping.

SOLUTION: HOW JIM LAWRENCE IRONWORKS EXTENDED BUSINESS CENTRAL ACROSS WAREHOUSE, PRODUCTION, AND SHIPPING

Jim Lawrence Ironworks deployed several Insight Works applications alongside Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central Cloud to address warehouse accuracy, inventory management, production costing, and outbound shipping.

1. Warehouse scanning and stock movement: The warehouse team uses Warehouse Insight on handheld scanners to manage picking, stock movements, and outbound shipments directly in Business Central. The scanning workflow replaced error-prone standard Business Central processes.

2. Structured cycle counts: Inventory staff uses Advanced Inventory Count to conduct structured physical and cycle counts, with multi-user count entry, flexible count sheets, and automated reconciliation of lot and serial numbers.

3. Pallet and container tracking: The team uses License Plating to track mixed-item pallets and containers using unique license plate numbers. Employees scanned a single LPN rather than individual items, reducing scan volume and improving traceability.

4. Production time capture: Production staff use Shop Floor Insight to capture labor time against production orders via barcode scanning. With approximately 45,000 production orders processed each year, the system gives supervisors real-time visibility into where each order is within the workshop.

5. Multi-carrier shipping: The team uses Dynamic Ship to replace an unreliable shipping customization, connecting multiple carriers, enabling real-time rate comparison, and printing labels directly from Business Central.

6. Showroom order entry: Jim Lawrence is currently deploying Counter Sales in its showroom locations to handle walk-in sales with a purpose-built order entry screen, barcode scanning, and flexible payment options inside Business Central.

A PHASED IMPLEMENTATION BUILT ON PROCESS DISCIPLINE AND STAFF TRAINING

Jim Lawrence Ironworks first deployed Insight Works applications in 2016, beginning with Warehouse Insight to address warehouse accuracy. Subsequent apps were added over several years.

The rollout required a fundamental shift away from previous operational processes. The bulk of the implementation effort went into process redesign and training rather than technical configuration, and the business worked through a difficult transition before the new workflows stabilized.

Jim's advice to other manufacturers is direct: do not underestimate the time required to train staff, and have someone responsible for data discipline every day. "The system is only as good as the staff who enter the data," he notes.

RESULTS: FEWER ERRORS, LEANER OPERATIONS, AND FULL VISIBILITY ACROSS THE BUSINESS

Jim Lawrence Ironworks reported several improvements across warehousing, production, and shipping.

- Warehouse picking errors significantly reduced. Before Warehouse Insight, pick sheets were printed with no product ID checks, resulting in several picking errors per day and one employee dedicated solely to locating misplaced stock.
- Warehouse capacity freed through efficiency gains. Tasks that previously required four people now require one.
- Workshop production shortages were significantly reduced, removing the daily delays.
- Labor time captured against approximately 45,000 production orders per year, enabling real-time job tracking and data-driven routing times.
- Faster, more accurate inventory counts with structured count sheets and automated lot reconciliation.
- Multi-carrier shipping replaced a slow, error-prone custom workaround.
- All warehouse, production, and shipping activity now flows through a single connected ecosystem.

"Before Warehouse Insight, we were dealing with stock errors every day. Now the warehouse just runs. We enjoy working with Insight Works and their solutions have been a great help to us." **Jim Lawrence, Director, Jim Lawrence Ironworks Ltd**

FROM MANUAL WORKAROUNDS TO A FULLY CONNECTED BUSINESS CENTRAL OPERATION

Jim Lawrence Ironworks significantly reduced warehouse errors, enabled production job costing, and replaced disconnected workarounds with reliable, connected workflows by combining Business Central with applications from Insight Works. The barcode-driven approach brought accuracy and visibility across warehousing, production, and shipping.

About Insight Works

Insight Works is a Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central ISV (independent software vendor) specializing in warehouse management, manufacturing, and productivity solutions. With a portfolio of apps available on Microsoft Marketplace, Insight Works helps distributors, manufacturers, and wholesalers extend Business Central to fit the way they actually work. Learn more at insight-works.com.

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MANUFACTURING IN ENGLAND

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