



CASE STUDY

WEASTEC EXPANDS LEAN PRINCIPLES TO DOCUMENT PROCESSES WITH THEREFORE™



THE COMPANY

Weastec, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Toyo Denso, Ltd. of Japan (TEC). It is a worldwide automotive supplier of interior switches, engine sensors, motorcycle switches, and ATV products. Weastec, TEC's first American venture, has been supplying OEMs in the region since 1988. In 2005, Weastec opened a Technical Design and Engineering Center in Dublin, Ohio. A portion of its sales team and design engineering are located at that facility. Through visionary design, precise manufacturing, and peerless quality, TEC sets itself apart from the competition.



THE CHALLENGES

Weastec, a global manufacturer of vehicle electronic components, needed document management software solutions to help streamline business processes and workflows across all of their departments. They were looking for a unified workflow that could move documents through Shipping, Accounts Payable, and Accounts Receivable. Additionally, they faced challenges with their travel expense report system—which, for a globally situated company, is a significant factor. The right system was needed to help automate the entire process, from the employee submitting records to the executive approving the expenses.

Most manufacturers embrace lean principles for their production processes, yet often these same companies fail to implement “lean” across the rest of their organizations. Many areas of Weastec had paper-driven workflows which were legacy processes, but had not yet been analyzed to discover potential opportunities for improvement. Weastec recognized that lean document processes would help them improve in many areas such as productivity, customer service, and profitability.

“We’ve become a leaner company, and we need to look at those items and see how we can make people’s jobs more streamlined,” said Angie Allard, business management assistant manager at Weastec. “We want to streamline some processes here...we want to make sure that people have the tools to do their job, and that they can do it effectively.”



“Therefore has been beneficial to Weastec because it has allowed us to go to a more electronic system for our approval processes. We no longer have to send physical documents to and from departments to get authorizing signatures. Everything is done through the software.”

**- Bob Dodrill,
CAD Specialist**

THE SOLUTION

The powerful software combination of Therefore™ and IRIS helped Weastec eliminate paper, save time with expense approvals and the handling of shipping documents, and automate many accounts payable and receivable processes.

Therefore manages any type of information—both paper and electronic documents—storing, sharing, and processing it all in a secure, user friendly manner. IRIS provides unique technologies for document capture, identification, recognition, conversion, and compression. Integrating the document management capabilities of Therefore with the intelligent scanning power of IRIS created a seamless system for Weastec to control their critical information more efficiently, cost effectively, and securely.

As a company with locations across the world, Weastec takes full advantage of the Therefore App to enable work to keep moving while employees travel. “While you’re out, you’re able to still get your email contacts. I can still approve any processes. If somebody has an expense that they want to get paid, I can approve it on my phone,” said Angie Allard, business management assistant manager.

With Therefore, documents progress easily through the workflow with the push of a button. Storing all information digitally allows Weastec employees to retrieve any document at any time; the location and status of each item is immediately accessible.

“Therefore has helped us to streamline our efforts with approval processes because we can track the status of the documents. The documents are no longer lost. They’re always able to be located and [we can identify] who is currently assigned the task,” said Bob Dodrill, CAD specialist.



“It’s a huge difference; it’s an unbelievably huge difference. Before Therefore, I was spending at least four hours a day on printed invoices and handling the paperwork. With Therefore, I’m probably only spending four hours a week.”

**- Kathy Stevens,
Sales Administrator**



THE RESULTS

Through the use of Therefore and IRIS, Weastec has been able to optimize their document business processes from capture devices to their backend systems, helping to reduce multiple steps and create a lean document process. Increased efficiency has lifted the burden of documentation, so now employees can focus on other tasks and spend their time more productively. The reduction in paper usage contributes to economic and environmental goals.

With fully indexed documents, Weastec representatives can access records easily and reply to customer inquiries instantly. This is a vast improvement over the previous method of writing down what the customer needs, researching the issue, and then getting back in touch with the customer to resolve it.

The new document workflow automatically creates, processes, and archives papers, forms, and digital documents, earning the respect of many employees. “IRIS’s ability to match documents without any intervention or human handling, to me, was amazing,” said Kathy Stevens, sales administrator.

The new system, implemented in several areas of the company, has helped enable Weastec to realize increases in workforce productivity, customer service capabilities, and profitability.

BEFORE	TIME	SPACE	PROCESS	SECURITY	PAPER
	One AP associate spending 20 hours per week on paper invoicing.	Binders of paper shipping records in paid storage offsite. Costly and inaccessible.	Shipping department required to key in all information.	Documents manually moved from department to department and location to location; security risk and time intensive.	Paper-intensive office setting.
AFTER	TIME	SPACE	PROCESS	SECURITY	PAPER
	Time spent reduced 80%, to just four hours per week.	No paper. All records stored electronically, easily retrieved.	No paper. All records stored electronically, easily retrieved.	Workflow streamlined and electronic; documents are secure and transmission is immediate.	Increased environmental sustainability.



THE FUTURE

Weastec implemented Therefore and IRIS in specific areas that had the potential for immediate improvement of workflow and processes. They have seen how easily the solution was customized for their applications, and soon realized the possibility for development into other areas.

"We do plan on expanding Therefore usage within Weastec. We hope to move it out to other areas that are not currently using it, because we see the benefit of it. We see that you can save time. You can save paper. You can save frustration looking for something," said Angie Allard, business management assistant manager.

"I feel like we're just scratching the surface," said Kathy Stevens, sales administrator.

"Therefore and IRIS can be utilized for many things, but your success is only limited by your imagination of what you can put Therefore and IRIS to use for."

**- Robert Moot,
Senior Manager**

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