

PROFESSIONAL PARTS, INC.

Multi-Location Warehouse Dominates Pittsburgh with WHI Store Management

"I think WHI's Nexpart® Distribution Management system has helped tremendously from the Point of Sale side to make us better counter people." Rich Johnston, President

Overview:

Professional Parts, Inc. is one of the leading two-step automotive warehouse distributors in Pittsburgh, PA. With three locations around town, they have eclipsed almost all other competition in the area. Rich Johnston, President and co-owner of Professional Parts, Inc. began his parts distribution career in 1971. Professional Parts' main downtown Pittsburgh warehouse and two satellite locations were originally part of the Precision CertiPro, VA chain. Pro Parts presently manage all of their warehouses with WHI Solutions, Nexpart Distribution Management system and provide a web site and eCommerce with the WHI Nexpart solution. "I was with Precision CertiPro for about eight years when they went bankrupt," said Johnston. "My partner, Dave Hayden and I purchased the three warehouse locations in Pittsburgh from the bank, on April 4, 2004. We immediately started to implement changes that would bring us market leadership in the greater Pittsburgh area."

Building The Business:

Precision CertiPro had previously switched systems from DST to Datatron at these locations. "We stayed with Datatron for



Rich Johnston

the first couple of months, but my goal was to change to the Nexpart Distribution Management system all along. They had the Datatron for nearly six months and they were still struggling to learn how to use it." I am a very strong believer in what the Nexpart Distribu-

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tion Management system can deliver now and in the future." The Nexpart Distribution Management system is unique in the industry because it is designed from the ground up as a



SaaS (Software as a Service) with virtually unlimited growth managed by the WHI centralized data center. "The main thing was to get a really good Point of Sale system in place and the Nexpart Distribution Management system did that for us. The old systems that came with the business and the other leading

vendor systems were antiques in comparison [to Nexpart Distribution Management]. Nexpart Distribution Management is a system that is very easy to train staff on. Within half a day I can have a new person that doesn't know much about this business working the counter and using the Nexpart Distribution Management system effectively."

"One of my first goals was to build customer confidence in us as good suppliers, by carrying the right parts and being able to deliver what they needed fast. We chose vendors with the highest quality and the best delivery intervals. Margins were a secondary

consideration. Some of them, I had investigated while working at Precision. We offer customer satisfaction on every product we sell regardless of the vendor's warranty."

"In the first month of business we only sold \$40,000 in the three locations combined. But, we had a plan to be high quality specialist



Results Driven eBusiness

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suppliers in very select product lines. Our four premier lines include electrical, radiators – heating – cooling, complete brake systems – gas tanks and fuel pumps. We brought in the right lines, got into depth on product, and our business grew rapidly. We joined the AIM-CMB buying group for better group pricing and rebates. Now, I can find out from other members about new vendors, the quality of new lines and what works for businesses like ours. Our specialist strategy is working because at our one-year anniversary we are selling over \$200,000 per month consistently and continue to grow. There are plans to add locations next year to serve new areas."

Reaching New Heights:

"It is important to me that every one of my counter staff is professional on the phone. Nexpart Distribution Management system gives us easy access to cataloging, current information, great inventory control and makes everyone on the phone sound like professionals because everything they need is instantly on screen. I think the Nexpart Distribution Management system has helped tremendously from the Point of Sale side to make us better counter people."

"The Nexpart Distribution Management system made a significant improvement in inventory accuracy and reports. With Nexpart Distribution Management my inventory is better than 99% accurate. That's over 19% more accurate than my old system. On our critical



lines we order thousands of parts multiple times a week. Accuracy is important in our branch locations for daily replenishments from our distribution center. The Nexpart Distribution Management sys-

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tem has made replenishment, transfers and redistribution automated, quick and easy. Our goal is to maximize our inventory turn."

"Of all the products that are available, the WHI products are truly cutting edge. I recommend Nexpart Distribution Management without a doubt." Rich Johnston

"The Nexpart Distribution Management system ranking reports are great. We can get a ranking report on any product line or part we carry, any time we want. It was like pulling teeth to get any kind of ranking report out of either the DST or the Datatron systems."

"We only recently started promoting our eCommerce capability, and are starting to pick up more and more on-line orders."

"I think the WHI support staff are super. I've got an assigned rep. that is completely familiar with our account. I can email or call in a question, even on the weekend and get the answer from them very, very quickly."

In Retrospect:

"These days, having a giant computer room in your office and spending hundreds of thousands on equipment is crazy. I don't understand the logic of why anyone wants to invest in a giant computer. Today, anyone can get just about anything they want on the Internet with a \$400 PC. So, why do I need a \$60,000 to \$70,000 dedicated computer server that requires special maintenance contracts and special room to house it? Those days are gone. That was a primary reason that I chose the WHI products, because they use the Internet and run the servers in their dedicated data center. Secondly, I was able to purchase all new PC equipment, networks and printers in my entire multi-location chain for far less than what it would have cost to get the server for a single location green-screen system. Now we have color Windows computers that are easy to train people on and use. Of all the products that are available, the WHI products are truly cutting edge. I recommend the Nexpart Distribution Management system and integrated eCommerce without a doubt."