

Grand Forest, Inc.

Gets finished goods to customers faster with improved visibility and integration with Exenta ERP and Shopfloor Control.

Industry

Garment Manufacturing

Challenges

- » Did not have the visibility or flexibility needed on the shop floor.
- » Managers spent too much time on administrative tasks like ticket scanning and tracking for incentive pay.

Benefits

- » Improved inventory tracking.
- » Reduced administrative time by 80%.
- » Faster turnaround time.
- » Improve employee experience and job satisfaction.
- » Increased productivity by 10% in the first month.



Grand Forest is a premier manufacturer of chainsaw protective clothing and distributor of quality outdoor brands. A woman- and veteran-owned company, Grand Forest was founded on the belief that loggers should be safe and well equipped. All of its chainsaw protective apparel and rugged workwear is cut and sewn in its Summerville, South Carolina facility. Established in 1985, Grand Forest can also be contracted to produce private label products according to a customer's specifications.

The Situation

Grand Forest was originally running two standalone systems: an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and a Time and Attendance package to track labor rates. However, these solutions were not providing the level of visibility they needed to see product progress on the shop floor. "Our previous ERP was a standalone system so we had to manually integrate data from our Time and Attendance system. It wasn't fluid at all," recalled CEO, Carrie Bovender. "Our operators had no ability to scan their own work so managers were spending a lot of time doing ticket scans in the office."

Bovender and her team wanted a solution that provided greater visibility on the shop floor and real-time integration into their ERP system. They also wanted a solution designed specifically to meet the needs of apparel and soft goods manufacturers with a strong sales component. Grand Forest chose Exenta ERP with Shop Floor Control—an end-to-end solution designed for the apparel industry to embolden responsive supply chain operations, better informed decision-making, and increased sales and margins.



“We’ve been an Exenta customer since 2016. While we looked at other systems, we choose Exenta because of the flexibility and the fit to our industry

—**Carrie Bovender**, CEO, Grand Forest, Inc.

The Solution

Grand Forest selected Exenta ERP and Shop Floor Control (SFC) because it was purpose built for the apparel industry and provided a centralized, fully integrated system that delivered real-time visibility. The user-friendly tablet interface sped implementation time on the shop floor, while increasing job satisfaction and productivity with the ability to personalize each individual screen.

Why Exenta?

The implementation of an integrated solution—Exenta ERP with Shop Floor Control—delivered real-time visibility to see when products were being produced and track their progress on the shop floor. Now, both customer service and management can see what products are being produced and when they will be available for shipping. Additionally, operators can record quality assurance checks on the floor and management can view real-time data about potential issues including defects and repairs.

“Having an integrated ERP and shop floor system means we can get goods to our customers more quickly, because we know when something’s available to be shipped as soon as possible” says Bovender.

“Due to the integration between Exenta ERP and Exenta Shop Floor Control, our operators are able to scan their own work. By not having to scan barcodes in the office, we reduced our managerial and administrative time by 80%.”

The time savings and efficiency of this automation has freed up one full-time employee (FTE) to focus on other important activities. Bovender added, “Basically, we saved one FTE who was then reallocated to a sourcing and business development role, which increased revenue opportunities.”

“Previously, we were manually tracking our inventory and entering incentive pay, now that is all done automatically.”

Improving Productivity on the Shop Floor

Grand Forest chose Exenta for the system’s flexibility and the ability to personalize each individual experience. In fact, each individual user can customize their screen and interface making it easier to use their own tablets. The process was so smooth and user-friendly that Grand Forest experienced a 10% increase in productivity within the first month of using Exenta Shop Floor Control.

The tablets have also allowed Grand Forest to continue its operations all through the COVID-19 pandemic-related lockdowns. Bovender noted, “Exenta’s Shop Floor Control tablets have been an excellent advantage during the pandemic. First, we don’t need to have time clocks, so each operator only touches their own machine and their own tablet, which really supports social distancing on the floor. Management also has complete production visibility from the office, without having to go out to the floor.”

“Shop Floor is amazing! The interface is so clean and clear that it is easy to implement and adopt. Even the less tech savvy operators have embraced SFC easily and enjoy using it, which has translated into higher job satisfaction and increased productivity, so much so that Grand Forest achieved a 10% increase in productivity in the first month alone.”

Poised for Future Growth

Exenta is focused on solutions for the unique needs and challenges of the fashion and apparel industry. That is a major reason why Bovender is confident that Exenta will continue to grow with Grand Forest. “Exenta not only understands apparel and soft goods manufacturing, but they also embrace it. They really understand how we’re moving things through a factory,” noted Bovender.

“Exenta is a true partner, always looking for ways to help us improve and enhance our business. As we have grown, Exenta has grown with us.”

The Grand Forest team has been impressed with Exenta’s commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. Bovender adds, “More than anything, it’s clear that the team at Exenta really cares about Grand Forest and wants to see us succeed.”

Bovender continues, “Using an apparel-related ERP is key for any apparel or soft good manufacturing entity, because we have unique operational and administrative needs. First and foremost, Exenta’s grid system is very user friendly for apparel manufacturing, and that’s been essential to improving order accuracy and saving time.”



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