

The background of the slide is a photograph of a modern industrial manufacturing facility. The image shows various pieces of machinery, including conveyor belts and large processing units. The scene is brightly lit with overhead industrial lights. Overlaid on the right side of the image are several large, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of teal and yellow, creating a dynamic, modern aesthetic.

ESKER'S IMPACT ON MANUFACTURING

4 Compelling Customer
Stories of Order Processing
Automation

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RAISING THE BAR

Why manufacturers need to rethink their manual sales order system

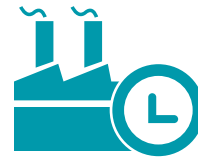
Each and every day, companies in the manufacturing industry receive and process sales orders from their customers. This might sound like just another boring, mundane aspect of doing business but don't be fooled ... it matters ... a lot. How effective manufacturers are at handling orders has a direct connection to profitability.

Orders arrive via a wide range of formats and channels, and when processed manually with lots of human intervention involved, it can make for a very slow, expensive and error-prone process. Manual order processing systems can make life particularly painful for manufacturers. Examples include:



DELAYED/INCORRECT SHIPMENTS

associated with errors from manually keying in data



PRODUCTION DELAYS/ OVERSTOCKS

resulting from inefficient data entry into ERP systems



INCREASED STAFF/ IT COSTS

in order to handle high volumes and peak periods

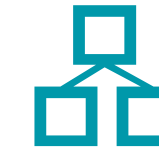
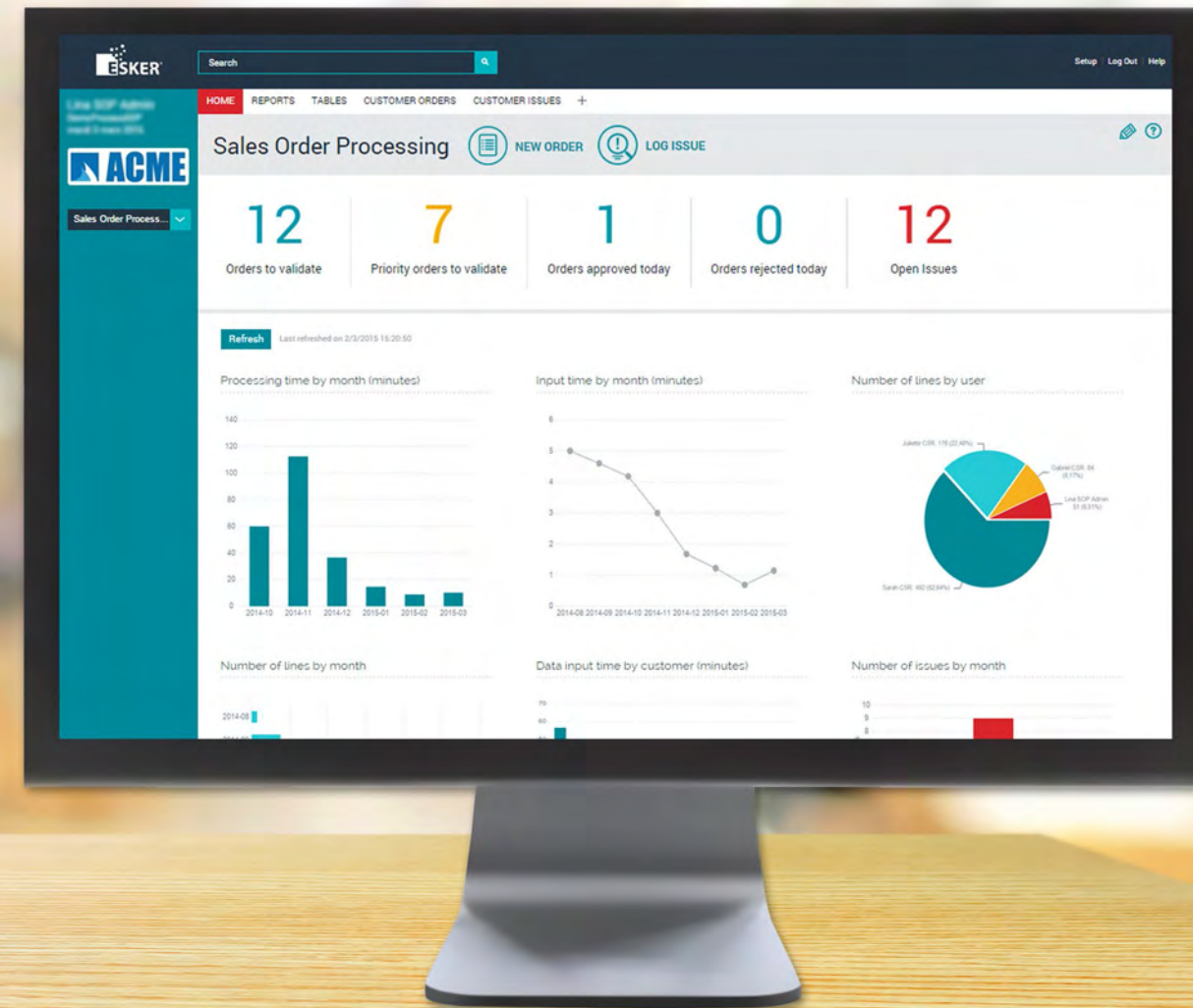
Fortunately, there's a way out. **Esker's Order Processing solution** allows companies to integrate any incoming sales order — whether it's fax, email or EDI — into our system so that orders get where they need to be as quickly and efficiently as possible without the typical manual bottlenecks.

How does Esker's solution work? Read on to find out.



ORDER PROCESSING AUTOMATION

The secret to Esker's success in the manufacturing industry



INTELLIGENT WORKFLOW TOOLS

Esker offers what few vendors can: a template-free solution for automating every stage of order and customer claims processing. Our intelligent workflow tools capture and validate data from incoming orders before archiving them — either inside of the Esker system, in an existing archive or both — and linking the order back to the ERP application.



INTEGRATION WITH ERP APPLICATIONS

Esker's Order Processing solution seamlessly integrates with virtually all ERP/business applications, including SAP® software systems. And, because our workflow functions operate independently of ERP infrastructures, connecting with multiple applications within different subsidiaries or departments is simplified.



ANALYTICS AND DASHBOARDS

Not only does Esker wipe out the manual aspects of order processing, orders are made visible at every stage for real-time tracking and reporting. Our easy-to-use dashboards put control in the hands of the user so that CSRs and CSR managers alike can get the valuable metrics they need to effectively perform their jobs.



COMPATIBILITY WITH EDI INFRASTRUCTURES

Even manufacturers that process EDI orders aren't immune to manual tasks like fixing exceptions. Thankfully, Esker complements existing EDI infrastructures so that any order not automatically processed by EDI is transformed into a human-readable order that can be corrected or completed by a CSR before being routed into the ERP system.

Read on to explore the stories of four manufacturers that automated order processing with Esker.

MSA

Doubling order processing speeds



The Safety Company

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing
COMPANY SIZE: 5,300 Employees
ERP SYSTEM: SAP

MSA's implementation of Esker was part of a comprehensive initiative that included consolidating all phases of order management into Esker's Order Processing on-premises offering and integrating the solution with its existing SAP software system.

THE CHALLENGE

MSA identified an opportunity to improve its order management process based on the lack of visibility and efficiency within its process. Previously, when orders came

in, they were manually entered into one system and then had to be placed in a "holding stage" within another to complete the order process. Not only did this create an unnecessary amount of work, the tracking of orders could be challenging and time consuming.

Issues to address:

- Limited process visibility and poor oversight
- Manual order data entry and the potential for related errors
- Improve staff productivity and increase order processing times

"Our goal was to find a more efficient and precise way to track orders," said MSA's Customer Service Supervisor. "Customers would call in with questions about their orders and, depending on the complexity of those orders, it could sometimes be a challenge to determine their exact status."

THE SOLUTION

Using Esker's SAP-certified solution, MSA's order management process is now completely automated. When an order arrives, the document is automatically entered into Esker where it's imaged and scanned into SAP — all with full visibility and while minimizing the risk for order entry errors.

CERTIFIED SAP PARTNER

As an established SAP software solution and technology partner with certified integration, and SAP customer itself, Esker has made serving the needs of SAP customers a top priority. This is demonstrated worldwide by SAP customers who have automated document processes with Esker as well as Esker's dedicated R&D team focusing on SAP applications.





USING THE **ESKER TEACH TOOL** HAS ALLOWED US TO CUT EVERYTHING BASICALLY IN **HALF** IN TERMS OF **TIME AND TASKS**.

CUSTOMER SERVICE
SUPERVISOR, MSA

“Esker delivered visibility into every order processed, across our entire department of 75-plus people,” said the Customer Service Supervisor. “We’re processing hundreds of orders through Esker per day, so you can imagine how much time, effort and resources this is saving us.”

The paperless process provides additional organizational benefits, and MSA continues to save money on fax machine equipment and unnecessary supplies. Esker also allows MSA to seamlessly manage order entry electronically in partnership with its Canadian office.

Teaching rules for faster processing

According to the Customer Service Supervisor, one of the biggest benefits of Esker has been MSA's use of the Teach functionality, where rules allow OCR to read the documents quicker even for orders with multiple line items, saying: “Using the Esker Teach tool has allowed us to cut everything basically in half in terms of time and tasks.”

THE RESULTS

- **Reduced order processing time:** Esker Teach functionality and OCR capability allow orders to be processed 50% faster.
- **Increased efficiency and staff productivity:** Rather than MSA staff members having to process an order in two different systems, it's now only done once through Esker.



WE'RE **PROCESSING HUNDREDS OF ORDERS** THROUGH **ESKER** PER DAY, SO YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW MUCH **TIME, EFFORT AND RESOURCES** THIS IS **SAVING US**.

- CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPERVISOR, MSA

- **More efficient archiving:** Instead of manual archiving, Esker electronically images and stores 100% of the orders, which helps for auditing purposes and saves time.
- **Improved visibility:** Orders can be tracked at any time in the process 24/7 year-round, helping management better understand resource allocation and workflow issues.

Part of the implementation involved the Esker Professional Services team creating customizations to help optimize the solution's performance. Coming up with a way to submit orders directly into Esker was one of these customizations.

ABOUT MSA

Founded in 1914, MSA is the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality safety products that protect people at work and facility infrastructures. MSA products are simple to use and maintain, but they are also highly sophisticated devices that are the result of countless R&D hours, relentless testing, and an unwavering commitment to quality. Many MSA products integrate multiple combinations of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to ensure that users around the world remain protected even in the most hazardous of situations.

MSA is headquartered in Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, with approximately 5,300 employees with manufacturing locations worldwide and a market reach that spans over 140 countries.

www.msasafety.com

NATIONAL OFFICE FURNITURE

Enhancing efficiency and accuracy of EDI and SAP infrastructures with order processing automation

NATIONAL

Furniture with Personality®

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing
COMPANY SIZE: 1,146 Employees
ERP SYSTEM: SAP

National Office Furniture, a brand unit of Kimball International, Inc. leveraged Esker's Order Processing automation solution to maintain a 99.6+% order entry accuracy rate.

THE CHALLENGE

National Office Furniture receives approximately 4,500 sales orders per month — the majority via fax, and many composed of multiple pages. Previously, after an order was processed, customer order care (COC) employees filed the documents into one of the 15 cabinets for access if needed at a later date.

At that time, the company was using a fax server to capture the incoming faxes and send them to a printer. From there, an employee manually delivered them to the appropriate COCs. National's COCs were assigned specific regions, making it very important for the person delivering the faxes to sort and distribute the documents carefully. The COCs keyed the information in by hand into the company's SAP system.

Business requirements

National needed a solution that wouldn't replace its existing IT infrastructure, increase overhead costs, or take long to implement and train employees. National outlined its business requirements for the fax automation initiative:

- Achieve a goal of 99.6+% accuracy of order entry into the SAP application
- Get all orders entered into system within 24 hours
- Support sales growth goals without increasing staff



IT IS DEFINITELY A PLUS TO HAVE THE ORDER AT OUR FINGERTIPS WHEN A CUSTOMER HAS AN ISSUE TO REPORT. WE ARE NOW ABLE TO PULL THE ORDER UP AND LOOK AT IT IMMEDIATELY.

— CUSTOMER SERVICE REP,
NATIONAL OFFICE FURNITURE

- Provide faster order processing for dealers unable to utilize EDI
- Identify and prioritize key product and high-priority dealer orders
- Improve customer experience through quicker response times and quicker COC order entry
- Retire unsupported fax software

THE SOLUTION

After determining the fax server product was not flexible enough to create a more automated order processing infrastructure, National searched for a new fax automation solution. After evaluating several vendors, the company selected Esker's Order Processing solution for automating the delivery of inbound fax orders.

National's Director of (IT) knew Esker was a good match, saying: "Our top priority was to find a solution that had the backend integration capabilities with our SAP system. Esker is a certified SAP partner, and could also integrate with our home-grown, EDI-based online order submission system."



THE TECHNOLOGY IS INCREDIBLY FLEXIBLE. ESKER, COMPARED WITH THE OTHER SOLUTIONS WE CONSIDERED, PROVIDES A COMPLETE WORKFLOW PLATFORM FOR AUTOMATION.

DIRECTOR OF IT, NATIONAL OFFICE FURNITURE

EDI ORDER PROCESSING WITH ESKER

No need to worry, manufacturers: We're not here to replace your EDI system! Esker can easily be configured to work with existing EDI installations so that every order is processed electronically, regardless of how it arrives, even if it contains errors. And, since all orders are in the same interface, EDI orders can be retrieved quickly since they are no longer "stuck" in the EDI workflow.

Two phases of implementation

National implemented Esker in two phases. In the first phase, Esker would capture the incoming fax electronically and deliver it to a queue within the software program. The second phase involved eliminating most manual order entry by leveraging its EDI system through Esker's OCR capabilities. This allowed the automatic input of orders received by Esker directly into the SAP system. Because Esker's OCR capabilities fit into the EDI architecture, there was no need to rewrite code or adjust customer behaviors.

THE RESULTS

Results of phase 1

- Reduction in cycle time: Approximately 90% of orders entered in 12 hours or less
- Accuracy rates remained consistent at +99.6%
- Ability to monitor order processing
- Priority order processing
- Ability for Customer Service to view order fax images in SAP and provide quick answers to customers

- Eliminated two printers (toner and paper for printing 4,500 sales orders each month)
- Eliminated roughly 15 file cabinets

Results of phase 2

- Leveraged existing OrderXchange EDI system/validations
- Validation against the SAP system
- Continued reduction in cycle time

Outstanding support

In addition to the great results, at the end of the project, National had beaten its planned timeline and kept costs under the expected budget. National was extremely pleased with Esker Professional Services. "Anytime you can deliver a project under budget and ahead of time, you bring smiles to people's faces," said the Director of IT. "Management was very happy and very excited about the progress. We are all eager to utilize the product in other ways."

ABOUT NATIONAL OFFICE FURNITURE

National Office Furniture, a brand unit of Kimball International, Inc., is a Jasper, Indiana-based manufacturer of high-quality office furnishings. Since 1980, National has built a reputation for excellence with stylish furniture of exceptional value, a dedication to personalized service, product designs that reflect a passion for the user's comfort and productivity, and a commitment to environmental responsibility. National operates manufacturing facilities in Indiana and Kentucky.

Kimball International, Inc. is a leading manufacturer of furniture for the office and hospitality industries, and electronic contract assemblies, providing engineering and manufacturing services utilizing common production and support capabilities to a variety of industries globally.

www.nationalofficefurniture.com

ESTERLINE

Improving overall efficiency and scalability in order processing

Esterline

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing

COMPANY SIZE: 12,050 Employees

ERP SYSTEM: MANMAN

Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility in Valencia, CA, successfully leveraged Esker's Order Processing automation solution to streamline the management of 12,000 annual orders.

THE CHALLENGE

Increasing competitive pressures in the aerospace industry have forced many to do more with less. Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility, a leading manufacturer of clamping systems for civilian and military aviation, set its sights on order

processing as an area with potential for eliminating waste and added-value gains.

Addressing manual processing

Prior to implementing Esker, every customer order received was printed out regardless of how it arrived (e.g., fax, email, etc.). From there, the hard copy PO was reviewed and the order was manually entered into the company's ERP system. Following order entry, the paper documents were moved to another individual for post-entry audit, where the order documents would be manually scanned and saved to an archive for a period of 10 years.

"Even though order storage was already digitized, we were still moving a lot of paper around when it came to document retrieval, printing, delivery and scanning," said the Customer Service Manager at Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility. "Our organization is very dedicated to 'lean' practices so it made sense to pursue a solution for improving order management."



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ORDER
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CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER,
ESTERLINE

THE SOLUTION

Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility in Valencia, CA, selected Esker's Order Processing automation solution as a way to streamline how it managed an annual volume of over 12,000 customer orders.

How it works

Using Esker's scan, file and archiving capabilities, Kirkhill-TA has eliminated the paper out of its process. Incoming information is captured by Esker and presented to the CSR in a dual-screen mode. At this point the CSR can verify the order is correct and key it into ERP system where it's linked to an order image for quick retrieval during audits.

CHOOSING ESKER

Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility looked at approximately five other vendors during the decision-making process, with Esker ultimately winning out.

For Esterline, one of the biggest deciding factors was attending the Esker Americas User Conference (EAUC) with the IT Manager at Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility. "It became clear very quickly that Esker was far and away superior to any other solution we looked into — particularly in terms of functionality and ease of use. EAUC was a great learning opportunity for us, and even led to an onsite visit to [Applied Medical](#) to see what Esker was doing for them."

THE RESULTS

- **Faster processing:** Based on its own internal studies of processing time, Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility is saving 4-5 minutes per order with Esker (a savings of 800-1,000 hours annually).
- **Improved productivity:** Fewer manual processing tasks allow employees to focus more time on meeting the aerospace industry's stringent compliance requirements.

- **Business scalability:** Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility has been able to handle increasing order activity while maintaining current staffing levels.
- **Future improvements:** With Esker's flexibility, Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility can expand the functions of the order processing system to actually include data capture for import into its ERP system. Other opportunities have been identified to extend its use of document automation to other areas of the business as needed.

Commenting on the solution delivery process, the Customer Service Manager said: "Implementation went very smoothly and satisfaction with the solution continues to be high. I don't remember the last IT project that was on time and within budget but Esker delivered. They exceeded our expectations."

FUTURE PLANS

Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility already plans to expand the use of Esker's Order Processing automation solution to its facility in Brea, CA, as well, which has a similar order process flow to Valencia but with larger order volumes (20,000-25,000 orders processed annually).

Esterline's Kirkhill-TA facility also recognizes opportunities to leverage Esker on the financial side for automation in AP and AR. The Customer Service Manager added: "The push to expand lean processes within the organization is going to continue. Esker has a high level of visibility now because of its benefits so the door for further process improvement is definitely still open."

ABOUT ESTERLINE

Esterline Corporation is a leading worldwide supplier to the aerospace and defense industry, specializing in three core areas: Avionics & Controls, Sensors & Systems, and Advanced Materials. Operations within the Avionics & Controls segment focus on high-technology electronics products for military and commercial aircraft and land- and sea-based military vehicles, secure communications receivers, systems and components, specialized medical equipment, and other industrial applications. The Sensors & Systems segment includes operations that produce high-precision temperature and pressure sensors, electrical power distribution equipment, harsh-environment connectors and other related systems principally for aerospace and defense customers. Operations within the Advanced Materials segment focus on technologies including high-temperature resistant materials and components used for a wide range of military and commercial aerospace purposes and combustible ordnance and electronic warfare countermeasure products.

www.esterline.com

PENTAIR

Extending the use of automation to keep order processing paper-free



INDUSTRY: Manufacturing
COMPANY SIZE: 30,000 Employees
ERP SYSTEM: SAP

After previously implementing Esker's on-premises platform to address recurring problems with its aging TOPCALL fax server to deliver POs out of its SAP system, Pentair decided to again leverage Esker to automate order processing documents into SAP to improve productivity and gain visibility.

THE CHALLENGE

With sales orders coming into eight fax machines from 20 different fax numbers, Pentair had, at any given time, about one-quarter of the order entry team roaming the room trying to find orders to answer customer inquiries. As a result, the company wanted to eliminate the paper and improve the overall process.

"Converting hard-copy documents into scanned images for archiving was another element of the process," said the Director of Customer Advocacy. "We had a separate data storage of the documents, so there was a fair amount of scanning required every day."

THE SOLUTION

Pentair already had an Esker product in place from a previous project that involved replacing an aging fax server to deliver POs out of its SAP system. Extending Esker to order processing proved to be a seamless transition with excellent results.

Now, Pentair staff can see the image of the order immediately and do not have to get up from their desks to chase down orders or wait a day for an order to be scanned in. Noting that Pentair staff is more productive, the Director of Customer Advocacy sees a better level of customer service as the real value of these gains, saying: "Our people now have the ability to provide quicker answers. One of our mottos is 'one call, one answer' and the Esker solution contributes to that."



ESKER IS A **HUGE STEP FORWARD** IN HOW WE MANAGE THE PROCESS. GOING FROM PILES TO PAPER TO BEING ABLE TO SEE THE VOLUME OF OPEN ORDERS IS WONDERFUL, **NOT ONLY FOR USERS BUT ALSO THE MANAGEMENT TEAM** WITHIN CUSTOMER SERVICE.

- DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER ADVOCACY,
PENTAIR

THE RESULTS

By automating order processing with Esker, Pentair has been able to:

- Reduce order processing time
- Eliminate the need to add headcount to manage order volumes
- Get document images into the SAP system 24 hours faster
- Gain instant visibility to find orders in the electronic queue

In delivering these benefits, Esker enabled Pentair to implement in phases and get quick, tangible wins for the business. “Our approach is to add value incrementally, and that’s what we did with Esker,” said the Director of Customer Advocacy.

OTHER PROCESSES

In addition to order processing, Pentair also leveraged Esker’s flexibility to automate its accounts payable (AP) process. The company had recently introduced a shared services model for AP

with invoices coming into the center via email, paper mail and fax. As invoice volumes increased, supplier payment times got pushed back and suppliers called to ask about their invoices. With Esker, Pentair is now positioned to meet its objectives for shared services.

“We had a lot of paper getting pushed around for approvals, so the automated workflow Esker brought means we don’t have all that manual communication and paper flow. We’ve seen reduced processing time with invoices that go through the electronic workflow versus moving paper, and the queue has given us real insight into how to improve the AP process,” said the Manager of Business Technology – Financial Applications. “There’s also a lot of value in the time savings when vendors have inquiries about invoices that have gone right into SAP.”

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT ESKER ...



WITH ESKER, WE’VE BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS THAT ARE ACTUALLY ENTERING ORDERS **FROM 100+ TO FOUR**, WHICH ALLOWS FOR A LOT **MORE CONSISTENCY**.

- CUSTOMER SERVICE SYSTEMS MANAGER, MOLEX

[VIEW VIDEO TESTIMONIAL](#)



ESKER HAS ENABLED US TO CONTINUE TO HAVE **AWARD-WINNING CUSTOMER SERVICE** LEVELS WITHOUT INCREASING OUR LABOR OR ADDING PEOPLE TO OUR STAFF.

- CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER, SIMONTON WINDOWS

[VIEW VIDEO TESTIMONIAL](#)



BEFORE, ASSOCIATES WERE HANDED A STACK OF ORDERS TO PROCESS AND REALLY DIDN’T INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER. NOW, WITH ESKER, THEY **MANAGE THE WORKLOAD** AS A TEAM, AND EVERYONE CAN **SEE THE WORK** AND KNOW IF AND WHEN THEY NEED TO DO SOMETHING.

- CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPPORT LEADER, MOEN

[VIEW VIDEO TESTIMONIAL](#)

ABOUT PENTAIR

Pentair, Inc. is a global diversified industrial company headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Its Water Group is a global leader in providing innovative products and systems used worldwide in the movement, treatment, storage and enjoyment of water. Pentair’s Technical Products Group is a leader in the global enclosures and thermal management markets, designing and manufacturing thermal management products and standard, modified, and custom enclosures that protect sensitive electronics and the people that use them. With current revenues of \$8 billion, Pentair employs over 30,000 people worldwide.

www.pentair.com

MAKING THE MOVE

Are you Esker's next success story?

Maintaining success in the manufacturing industry is not an easy task. But as you can see, overcoming today's biggest challenges — increasing workflow accuracy and efficiency, supporting lean growth, improving customer service — can be easily achieved with the help of Esker.

As a manufacturer, it's all about the tools you have at your disposal. And that's what makes Esker so effective: regardless of your organization's size or technical nuances, our Order Processing solution adapts to you, so you can achieve your goals as quickly and cost-effectively as possible.

If you think you're ready to be Esker's next manufacturing success story, you can call us toll-free at 1-800-368-5283 or send an email to info@esker.com.

WE ARE ESKER

Esker is a worldwide leader in cloud-based document process automation software.

Forward-thinking businesses use our solutions to automate accounts payable, order processing, accounts receivable, purchasing and more.

After 30 years of field experience, we have helped over 11,000 companies in their efforts to Quit Paper™ and streamline inbound and outbound communications.

Our headquarters are in Lyon, France, but we're located just about everywhere paper needs quitting.

Learn more online at www.esker.com.

SHARE THIS eBook



WHEN YOU'RE READY TO LEARN MORE ...

Buyer's Guide:

Order Processing Buyer's Guide: 16 Questions for Maximizing Your Order Processing Automation Investment

Video:

Esker Order Processing Customer Testimonials

Webinar on Demand:

Building a World-Class Customer Support Organization through People, Process and Technology

Plus, be sure to check out the **[Esker Blog](#)**, your connection to everything newsworthy in the world of automation.



1212 Deming Way, Suite 350 | Madison, WI 53717

Tel: 800.368.5283 | **Fax:** 608.828.6001

Email: info@esker.com | **Web:** www.esker.com