



NGK Spark Plugs USA Speeds Up Shipping and Improves Customer Satisfaction With the Help of ProcessWeaver

NGK Spark Plugs USA, originally a Japanese company, first came to the U.S. in the 1960s to support the new Honda and Nissan dealers in the U.S. Now it manufactures aftermarket spark plugs, ignition wire sets and oxygen sensors for virtually every automotive, motorcycle, marine and small-engine application.

Speed to meet the needs of its customers

U.S. headquarters for NGK are in Wixom, Mich., which is also home to one of their three distribution centers. They're a business-to-business shipper with a wide range of shipping demands. A shipment may be as small as single box with an oxygen sensor, or as large as several pallets of parts for a distributor. The company strives for a 24- to 48-hour turnaround for every shipment. Many of their customers have very specific dates when they can receive delivery, which NGK meets using FedEx® shipping services. "You can always rely on FedEx service times and delivery performance. FedEx gets it there with 100 percent integrity. We have very few damage claims," said Mark Pratt, general manager of aftermarket distribution.

A new system demands new processes

When NGK migrated to a new enterprise resource planning (ERP) system in 2010, they realized they had an opportunity to improve their shipping efficiency, too. "We were using Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing (SAP) to create a delivery note that lived in the warehouse to let our workers know what to pick and pack. It saved all the information in SAP, but then you had to toggle out of it to go to FedEx Ship Manager® Server to coordinate the actual shipment," said Pratt.

NGK started looking for a better way to ship, and they found it at the 2011 SAP user conference: ProcessWeaver, a FedEx Compatible provider. NGK chose ProcessWeaver for its ability to integrate



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NGK General Manager of
After-Market Distribution*

completely and seamlessly with SAP. Even ProcessWeaver's interface matches SAP's, making the switch for employees easy and fast. "The changeover for users took just a couple hours of training," said Pratt.

In addition to the low cost of ownership and a short training cycle, ProcessWeaver also promised a quick installation. The changeover was smooth from the start — ProcessWeaver was up and running within the predicted time frame.

More visibility means better customer service

Before implementing ProcessWeaver, NGK didn't have visibility into all the available FedEx services and associated pricing. They wanted to compare all their shipping options. "ProcessWeaver enables us to get that information right away, along with our contracted pricing. So when we scan that label, weight and ship-to information is automatically loaded and we can choose the most expeditious shipping service," said Pratt.

Customer service at NGK has improved as well. Now staff can enter the tracking number into the SAP program on their computers while they're on the phone with customers, and ProcessWeaver serves up all the relevant FedEx tracking information. Customers can get their questions answered immediately instead of waiting for a call back. "We're saving money and we're saving a lot of time at the customer service level, and we've improved our customer satisfaction significantly," said Pratt.

Making the most of integration

Implemented in NGK's three U.S. distribution sites in September 2011, ProcessWeaver has already made a big difference — impressive enough for NGK in both Europe and Japan to consider using the same integration when they migrate to SAP. It has also convinced NGK U.S. to increase their use of FedEx Freight for their less-than-truckload (LTL) shipments. "ProcessWeaver has enabled us to integrate FedEx services and SAP's services together into one very nice, seamless process," said Pratt.



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