Founded in 1988, Grove Medical, Inc. has built a successful business by serving the elder care marketplace. As a distributor representing hundreds of name-brand manufacturers, Grove has become a “one-stop shopping” resource offering a complete line of medical services, supplies, equipment and technology solutions for nursing homes, home care services, DME dealers and other long-term care operators.

“We believe in building long-lasting relationships based on respect, honesty and integrity with customers, employees, manufacturers and partners,” said Michael Laico, Grove’s Vice President of Operations. “We pride ourselves on providing responsive, value-added services for our customers. We strive to ensure that all orders received by 6 p.m. each day are shipped that same day. Currently we are at 320 days in meeting that deadline, which is extremely important to us.”

Laico, a logistics automation expert with over 25 years of experience in high-volume distribution environments, was charged with implementing a next-generation technology platform that would position the company for future growth. As a first step, he and his team chose Epicor’s Prophet 21 system (P21), a fully integrated wholesale distribution software solution for distributors. According to Laico, Prophet 21 delivers a competitive advantage in terms of how Grove Medical services its customers and secures other key business.

“After an extensive analysis determined that the P21 system had the functionality and features we needed,” he said. “Also, the P21 customer base is distribution-focused, so it supports our supply chain challenges, provides functionality to increase efficiency by automating processes and provides information quickly to help us better make decisions.”

Laico’s next step was to identify a shipping system that would provide sophisticated freight cost management tools for small parcel and LTL shipments, increase warehouse shipment processing productivity and directly interface with Prophet 21.

“We’re constantly analyzing our delivery options to control our costs and develop freight discount incentives for our customers,” Laico said. “We wanted to embed customer-specific freight pricing scenarios into the shipping system, so they’re automatically applied on orders at the time of shipment and applied to invoices.” Laico also wanted to accelerate shipment processing by going hands-free. “Our goal was to increase shipment processing speed by a ratio of 10:1 compared to our legacy system.”
SOLUTION
Laico and his team chose ADSI's Ship-IT™ system and ConnectShip® multi-carrier shipping technology, integrated with Motorola finger scanners and Zebra printers, to address these challenges. ADSI’s integration specialists configured Ship-IT and worked closely with Grove to implement the system:

1. ADSI’s Ship-IT system is integrated with Prophet 21 to receive orders in real time.
2. Packed orders receive a barcoded “license plate” with embedded order & shipping data.
3. The shipping staff places the packed order on the scale and scans the license plate with the Motorola ring scanner to call up details.
4. Ship-IT pulls in the order and auto-routes it according to Grove’s shipping rules, considering national and regional small parcel and LTL carriers for deliveries.
5. Ship-IT passes the data to Zebra printers to print carrier-compliant labels and customized customer-specific packing lists.
6. Ship-IT passes the final shipping costs, package weights and tracking numbers back to P21 and auto-emails tracking details to customers who request them.
7. P21 auto-generates and prints invoices based on shipping data received from Ship-IT.

BENEFITS

- **Labor savings.** “We’ve reduced labor by 1.5 full-time employees by using Ship-IT and the ring scanners for hands-free shipping.”
- **Rapid shipping.** “We targeted 10:1, but we’ve actually improved processing speed by 12:1.”
- **Enhanced customer service.** “Our customers absolutely love the customized packing list that we’re able to create for them. It’s a huge feature in closing new business.” Ship-IT also produces customized dock labels, which have further streamlined processing.
- **Auto-generated invoices.** “I no longer need to dedicate staff to manually enter shipping data for invoicing. It’s auto-populated and the invoices are automatically printed.”
- **Sophisticated freight planning tools.** Ship-IT provides Grove with customized and complicated freight cost logic that can be assigned at the customer level. “We’re able to be creative with freight costs and build customer-specific shipping programs on Ship-IT.”
- **Reporting Tools.** “Ship-IT’s reporting tools are a huge benefit to Grove Medical. We are able to design our own reports and auto-email them to customers and carriers.”

SUMMARY

According to Laico, ADSI’s technical staff played a critical role in this successful implementation. Grove Medical has gained a hands-free shipping solution that can be scaled to support the company’s growing business.