

GlobalSearch® Drives Efficient Deliveries for Established Beverage Distributor

Throughout Oregon's restaurant, bar and hospitality scene, Fick Cigar Company may be an unfamiliar name, but it holds great significance to these businesses today. Dating back to 1933, Fick Cigar Co. distributed candy, cigarettes and cigars – that is, until prohibition was repealed. Located in a warehouse in downtown Portland, the company began selling Olympia beer. With just three delivery trucks, and three drivers, Fick Cigar Co. transformed into General Distributors, Inc., one of today's leading west coast beverage distributors. Currently located in Oregon City, General Distributors employs over 120 people, making around-the-clock deliveries daily with a robust product offering from over 70 beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverage suppliers.

Much has changed over the years yet the beliefs of the company have remained the same: General Distributors is a company committed to providing superior service to their customers and suppliers. Staying relevant with the constant evolution of advancements in technology, General Distributors uses GlobalSearch document management to help them provide the best quality products to better serve their community.

A proven solution to streamline internal processes, for General Distributors, GlobalSearch has unleashed the benefits of Electronic Content Management within a paper-intensive industry.

Delivering beverages throughout the Portland, Oregon metro area, General Distributors is a very active company, with multiple drivers making numerous stops daily to local stores, restaurants and bars. The amount of paperwork generated by these deliveries alone is enormous. With each customer purchase, a three-part invoice is created: one for the buyer, one for record keeping at General Distributors and an extra if needed.

General Distributors sends out 25-30 drivers daily who each service anywhere from 10-30 customers, thus generating the majority of the company's paper bulk. "We keep copies of all parts of each invoice in our files and archive them for approximately seven years," explained Elaine DeBois, Accounts Receivables Specialist at General Distributors, Inc. **With GlobalSearch, workflows can be easily set to**

Snapshot

Industry:

Beverage Distributor

Departments Impacted:

Accounting and Human Resources

Featured Products:

GlobalSearch

Objectives:

Diminish the amount of physical papers handled within the accounting dept.; quickly and easily retrieve older archived documents; greatly reduce internal storage expenses while improving the organization of delivery driver's paperwork

automatically purge stored documents after their specific retention period has passed, eliminating yet another manual administrative task. DeBois continued, "On top of customer deliveries, our salesmen and our "public dock" also sell additional products daily, adding extra invoices for generating such sales."

When searching for a software solution, General Distributors recognized their need to greatly reduce time spent on document retrieval. Many times a customer will call needing a copy of an invoice, or with a question concerning the price they were charged. "Our previous software system only let us go back approximately two months and that was clearly not sufficient enough," DeBois explained. "Plus, we needed a simple, manageable system that anyone could use without a lot of training."

General Distributors fully engaged GlobalSearch into their daily accounting processes in May of 2013. **In less than a full year of use, the distributing company has already seen great improvements,** DeBois exclaimed: "Our daily processes have changed tremendously!" The Accounting department now scans driver paperwork directly into the GlobalSearch system as soon as the corresponding delivery process has been complete, reducing the chance of



A Proven Solution

Eliminate Admin Tasks



misplacing or losing a document. Routinely each morning, General Distributors scan all invoices from the sales team, plus all inbound checks which allows for secure and reliable storage of payments prior to their bank deposit.

A completely customizable database, General Distributors can capture all of their accounting related documents into GlobalSearch through company specific Archive and Inbox organizational methods. In fact, they created five daily categories where scanned documents are indexed and filed into. These categories include Drivers Route A, Drivers Route B, Daily Work, Checks and Salesmen. Each category holds around 300 files and is heavily accessed by the staff at General Distributors daily. "Creating these categories has proven extremely helpful in our search efforts, especially when we are trying to retrieve information at a much later date," DeBois said.

Due to the copious amount of departmental paperwork, General Distributors currently uses GlobalSearch solely in their Accounting division, but with a potential plan to expand its use into Human Resources. One of the company's main goals is to create opportunities and provide employees with a strong support foundation. Rolling out GlobalSearch to Human Resources will help to streamline employee requests and associated documentation from the hiring process straight through retirement.

In under a year, the beverage distributor has already eliminated the daily consumption of storage envelopes, previously used for filing driver invoices. The storage reduction alone will be huge enough to truly capture the organization's return on investment. "We have three large file cabinets which we are slowly but surely emptying and will no longer need once we are all caught up and complete with scanning," said DeBois. "We also previously stored each full day of paperwork into plastic bags which were put into large cardboard file boxes and then moved upstairs into storage – we no longer need to complete this process or order any of these items."

searching for that day's work, looking up the driver, finding his work and then locating the invoice and taking a copy of it or scanning it to my email. I can now put in the invoice number and the file will automatically pop up, allowing me to print, save a copy to my desktop or email a copy directly to the customer from within GlobalSearch."

Among the gains in efficiency GlobalSearch has awarded General Distributors, the company has also created an internal environment that fosters collaborative efforts among staff and management through simple-to-use workflow commands and document accessibility. GlobalSearch has helped encourage employees to be considerate and cooperative in working with each other and with customers. Through their professionalism, dedication to customer service and implementation of innovative document management solutions, General Distributors continues to positively influence their company, industry and the communities of the Northwestern U.S.

To learn more about General Distributors, please visit www.generaldistributors.com.

According to DeBois, the process of looking up multiple files to provide customers with purchase specific information now takes about 1/6 of the time that it used to. "There is no more

