



Rock Materials Transforms Their Delivery Routing Operations With Automated Processes And Improved Efficiency



Introduction

Since 1999, Rock Materials has been serving the Texas residential and commercial building industries providing building stone and masonry materials.

In 2020, Rock Materials' rapid growth created a need for new technology to help manage the business. With branches in Houston and Dallas, they needed a flexible system that could handle the many nuances of the company. Since their inception, many of their processes have been paper-based, and the system they had was working against them.

Challenges

The company's two branches, in essence, act as separate businesses. Each manages its inventory, orders, and deliveries. Their customer base ranges from once-a-month orders to sixty orders daily, with deliveries ranging from 10 lbs. to 40,000 lbs. wherein they needed to maintain timely delivery. To cope with their expanding business and automate various



Company: Rock Materials

Website: www.rockmaterials.com

Industry: Building Materials

Country: Texas, United States

Product: NetScore Delivery Routing for NetSuite

processes, the company sought a scalable technology platform.

As the number of deliveries grew, managing and tracking drivers while upholding their commitment to exceptional customer service became overwhelming. Building daily delivery routes became a complex task due to numerous data points, leading to inefficiencies that incurred both time and monetary costs. The process required a dedicated employee for each branch.



"I think the biggest thing for us was the fact that it was so user-friendly. NetScore was willing to make changes and cater to how we wanted our system to look, which was the deciding factor."

Brooks Maak, General Manager, Rock Materials

Solution

After evaluating numerous platforms, in 2020 they implemented NetSuite. While NetSuite provided everything the back office needed, it was necessary to extend NetSuite to optimize Rock Materials' delivery routing process.

Brooks Maak, General Manager, managed the routing of their trucks and planning deliveries for his first seven years at Rock Materials. He also maintained an influential position with the management team.

Brooks' days involved manually organizing and planning the deliveries for their fleet each day. While his process was effective, it was time-consuming and not something that someone else could easily step into if needed. Each delivery required assessment based on factors such as order quantity, weight, truck capacity, and special equipment for handling materials. Additionally, certain orders were destined for new construction sites without established addresses, necessitating alternative methods to determine the delivery locations.

After deploying NetSuite, the next priority was finding a delivery routing solution to manage this fundamental aspect of their business. NetScore emerged as a recommended choice, as it offered a native delivery routing solution within the NetSuite platform and was renowned for its ability to tailor solutions to meet specific customer requirements.

After showcasing their solution and utilizing sample data to exhibit automation possibilities for Rock Materials' processes, NetScore was selected to digitally transform Rock Material's delivery routing process.

A New Plan

Certain professions require people to devise unique approaches to solving complex problems. When Brooks first took over planning routes, he had no technology tools. He had to cobble together a process built on logic, some expertise, and a little voodoo magic.

In building routes, Brooks had to consider weight, product dimensions, vehicle capacities, the number of orders destined for zones he established, traffic patterns, and road restrictions. While he was very successful in his approach, the problem becomes how we make the magic happen when Brooks is unavailable (he was allowed to be sick and take a vacation occasionally.)

However, when they implemented NetScore's Delivery Management solution, all these variables were now being considered by a computer. So when Brooks was promoted to General Manager, his replacement had a tool containing all the critical decision-making data points.

"I sorted through 300 orders per day, with five pieces of paper representing each order. On average, this process took 4 to 6 hours per day. Now that process is automated and takes half the time to complete."

Brooks Maak, General Manager, Rock Materials



Proof Positive Solution

When you deliver Rock Materials' product to a construction location that doesn't have an address, you need to have definite proof of where and when you delivered it. Even in the days of complete manual systems, the drivers would photograph where they dropped the load for proof. But the problem was that these pictures were unavailable until the driver returned and uploaded them. Customers also want to be notified of the delivery ASAP since construction sites are often not safe.

Using NetScore's mobile application, drivers now upload pictures in real-time when the delivery is completed, where customer service can instantly access them after the delivery. Customers can also be immediately notified of the delivery by text or email based on preference.

Suppose a customer calls and wants to confirm a delivery. In that case, all the information needed by a customer service representative is available on the delivery record. This includes electronic signatures, delivery photos, order details, and real-time delivery time stamps etc.

The Rock Material team can now confidently prove that they delivered the customer's ordered product to the correct location.

Its More Than Just Delivery

Under the previous manual processes, billing customers on the same day as delivery was not feasible. Delivery tickets often arrived the next day or later. However, with the real-time mobile application, deliveries are recorded and updated in NetSuite instantly. NetSuite promptly initiates the billing process after review and approval, resulting in faster invoicing and improved cash flow.

Real-time driver tracking is enabled through the NetScore app, providing customer service with immediate visibility of truck locations via a NetSuite dashboard.

Change is Hard, but not Impossible

Drivers now have mobile applications that equip them with all the necessary tools for their job. For some drivers, the digital transition has been challenging. Still, because the mobile app is intuitive and easy to use, driver adoption is progressing throughout the team.

Rock Materials has gone from primarily manual processes to cloud-based solutions with digital automation across its business in the last three years, especially in Delivery Routing. The success of these initiatives highlights the company's recognition of technology's value, leading to the exploration of automated solutions in other business areas.

"Our billing person no longer has to fumble and chase delivery tickets for 3 hours daily to determine if a house got delivered. She has everything right in front of her for 98% of the orders."

Brooks Maak, General Manager, Rock Materials