



### Company Profile

**Franklin Machine Products**, Lumberton, NJ  
www.fmponline.com

**Industry:** Food Service—Wholesale Distribution

**Varsity Products:** ShipSoft-Parcel™, ShipTalk™

**Shipping Volume:** 1,000 parcels per day

**Number of Shipping Locations:** Two

**Carriers:** UPS

**ERP:** DPS Extend

**“We have doubled our business in the last seven years and automated our shipping processes from the front-end to the back-end. We couldn’t have done it without Varsity.”**

*—Bob Fisher, Information Technology Director*

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## Franklin Machine Products Gets Five-Star Customer Service with Varsity ShipSoft

Franklin Machine Products (FMP) was founded in the early 1900’s as a manufacturer of components for coffee urns. Today, with an inventory of over 8,000 food service equipment parts, FMP is one of the largest wholesale distributors of food service equipment parts in North America. The company ships over 1,000 UPS parcels per day of time-sensitive parts to customers throughout the United States and around the world.

FMP credits their eight decades of continuous growth to an unwavering commitment to exceptional customer service. Fast, accurate parts delivery is critical to maintaining customer satisfaction. “We promise our customers that if we receive an order by 5:00 p.m., it will leave our warehouse the same day,” notes Bob Fisher, FMP’s IT Director.

Delivering on their customer service promise required several information technology investments, starting with an IBM iSeries server. Next, FMP deployed DPS Extend’s enterprise resource software to run their inventory management, order placement, customer service, and accounting departments. With their core business functions fully automated, the company turned their attention to eliminating their shipping bottleneck. FMP selected Varsity ShipSoft-Parcel to replace a labor intensive, stand-alone UPS shipping station. Designed for the iSeries, ShipSoft-Parcel enabled FMP to leverage the reliability of their iSeries and integrated seamlessly into DPS Extend.

The integration of DPS and Varsity ShipSoft-Parcel revolutionized the way FMP ships. They now operate two paperless warehouses in Nevada and New Jersey with a total of 15 shipping stations. According to Fisher, the integration has numerous advantages. “The integration is seamless; we spend zero time maintaining the interface and we have increased productivity in our sales, customer service, and shipping departments.”

From the DPS Extend order screen, estimated shipping charges are now accessed at the time the order is placed, eliminating guesstimates and calls to the shipping department for cost calculation. Seamless access to shipping charges in ShipSoft-Parcel gives FMP's customers the option of selecting the best shipping method based on cost and urgency. With one click, orders are electronically submitted through DPS Extend and ShipSoft-Parcel automatically prints a packing slip in the warehouse.

Productivity is enhanced in the warehouse as well. FMP integrated their pick and pack operations into one seamless process at each shipping station. One person is now responsible for the entire order. They select the merchandise using hand-held terminals connected to the iSeries via radio, then proceed to a shipping station where a ShipSoft-Parcel pack list is printed and used to verify the item. A shipping label is produced and the box is sealed. Shipping charges are automatically linked back to the order for invoicing through DPS Extend. Total elapsed time from the initial sales request to sealing the box is a few minutes. Manifests are submitted electronically as soon as the UPS truck departs FMP's dock. This ensures that when the truck arrives at UPS' warehouse, they have full shipment details to expedite processing. As a result of their investment in DPS Extend and ShipSoft-Parcel, FMP achieves same day shipment over 95% of the time.

Varsity software has improved the quality of customer support as well. Because repair parts are frequently critical to a restaurant's business, five percent of FMP's customers call to confirm delivery status—sometimes more than once. "Every hour is an eternity if your patrons are waiting for their dinner to come out of the kitchen, or you have a full freezer starting to defrost," notes Fisher. With seamless integration between ShipSoft-Parcel and DPS, the customer service department simply inputs the inquiring customer's order number and Varsity ShipTalk™ accesses UPS' host computer to provide real-time delivery status. "It helps alleviate our customer's anxiety," says Fisher.

Over time, Fisher's relationship with Varsity has evolved from pleased customer, to software testing partner. Since Varsity's software is critical to achieving their customer service goals, Fisher participates in Varsity's software beta test programs. This gives him a chance to influence product functionality and take advantage of the latest capabilities. Fisher's beta program participation provides insight into Varsity's development process. "Varsity works tirelessly to deliver a quality product. Most of the fixes that I identify during beta testing are cosmetic."

The partnership between FMP and Varsity is one that Fisher expects to continue. "Our initial investment in Varsity continues to payoff. I am confident that Varsity will continue to fit our needs as we expand into new products, new countries, and new markets."