



Case Study: Bergin Fruit and Nut Company

A Single System Approach to Scale and Pivot in an
Unpredictable Environment



Deacom®

The Company

Founded in 1951, Bergin Fruit and Nut Company has a 70-year history of providing bulk nuts and dried fruit to businesses and local co-ops. The company's portfolio now includes confections, nut butters, and beans and grains, which are sold to large grocery chains, small co-ops, local restaurants, institutions, and manufacturers across the United States.



The Problem

When the pandemic hit in 2020, Bergin Fruit and Nut Company faced challenges it never had before, just as most other companies did. At the time, 40% of Bergin's sales were in bulk – the rest were in packaged goods. The company produced several bulk products that were distributed to grocery stores by the bin. But in a world of stay-at-home orders and social distancing guidelines, the demand for bulk dropped significantly as many restaurants had limited traffic or were closed entirely. This climate, along with a move to online grocery orders and curbside pickup, led to a decline in demand for bulk items. It ultimately changed the overall environment and shifted how the company looked at relationships with customers, vendors and employees.

In short, COVID-19 changed how Bergin went to market. The company needed to pivot to maintain operations and meet consumer needs, and it needed to do so as quickly as possible.



INDUSTRY
Food Manufacturing



WEBSITE
www.bergin.com



LOCATION
St Paul, MN



CRITICAL BUSINESS ISSUES
Scalability, Software
Flexibility, Centralizing
Operations and Data

The Solution

Under normal circumstances, Bergin would have been left scrambling, but the company had a lifeline: Deacom ERP. The manufacturer originally began implementation in 2015 to solve current problems – including limited scalability with its legacy system, software compatibility issues and the need for bolt-ons – and to better prepare for the future. However, Bergin did not realize at the time that the decision to adopt Deacom would enable the company to adapt and persevere through one of the most difficult years in modern history.

Deacom provided a single-system approach that enabled each area of the business to work cohesively together ensuring accurate data and strong decision making in real-time. This ensured that everyone was always on the same page and no one was referencing data from last month, last week, or even yesterday. With this insight, the team was able to make more confident decisions surrounding the business.

This ERP environment turned out to be the lifeline Bergin needed to navigate the unpredictability of COVID-19. When most industries were turned upside down, especially food and beverage, Bergin was able to make on-the-fly adjustments by using reliable, real-time data. Prior forecasting and demand history information became obsolete overnight, but with Deacom Bergin didn't skip a beat.

Deacom ERP functionality that Bergin Fruit and Nut Company relies on includes:

- ☑ Accounting
- ☑ Direct Store Delivery
- ☑ Document Generation
- ☑ Formulation
- ☑ Inventory Management
- ☑ Material Resource Planning
- ☑ Production
- ☑ Quality Control
- ☑ Reporting
- ☑ Warehouse Management



The Results

As a primarily made-to-order private label manufacturer, drastic and quick shifts in customer demands forced the company to make significant changes. With the help of Deacom ERP, Bergin's team was able to identify what adjustments needed to be made in order to stay profitable in a turbulent market and make those changes with minimal operational disruption.

"It's been critical to keep our individual department managers together, with no one in a silo. We never thought we would go into the COVID environment shortly after we launched the system. Who knows where we would be had we not had these tools to get good information in front of the executive and sales teams."

— Michael Finn, Finance Manager
at Bergin Fruit and Nut Company

Bergin pivoted its product mix from 60% packaged items to 90% packaged items. Nearly half of its bulk business was moved to other product lines and they introduced new labeling and packaging strategies, all while adhering to shelf life and quality requirements. Deacom's native [Warehouse Management System \(WMS\)](#) has been vital in ensuring that Bergin's rigorous quality control standards were met even as the company ramped up small-batch manufacturing products as a result of customer demand changes.

The challenges that the supply chain has been experiencing encouraged Bergin to move from just-in-time to a just-in-case operations. The company opened a new distribution facility to ensure they can carry enough inventory to keep shelves full at the retailer level.



By incorporating Deacom WMS into their operations, Bergin has been able to build [Hyper Tight Process Control™](#) and ensure that steps are always followed. "Previously, we did not use warehouse scanners but now we use them for issuing products to jobs and picking our orders. The reduction of manual labor and errors have been significant to our business. Since our team is not manually writing down pick tickets and issuing the product, we were able to expedite the process by 10% and reallocate those resources to assist in other areas of the business. Additionally, we almost never miss-ship product now because Deacom makes it virtually impossible to do so," said Finn.

"Right as our business was changing in the summer of 2020, we experienced a significant amount of shrink. We used Deacom to build a process internally that used lot reports with detailed expiration dates and recent usage – last 30, 60, and 90 days – to better predict if we were long on product. This then drove us to engage our sales teams so they could help us get the product out the door, so it was not wasted. That was not something we could do before Deacom."

Deacom ERP has helped ensure that Bergin's processes are as streamlined, tailored and efficient as possible so that the company is set up for resilience and success to survive any unprecedented event. This served Bergin well during the pandemic, and it will continue to do so in good times as well as during any black swan events that may occur in the future.

"Deacom has allowed us to mitigate losses at a time when we would have otherwise suffered the effects of changes in consumer preferences and the regulatory environment within retail," said Finn.



Contact us today to learn more.

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