

# VENTURA SCALING PRODUCTION WITH GREATER SPEED AND RELIABILITY

Case Study

## OVERVIEW

Ventura is an award-winning semi-automated assembly and production company that serves the automotive, office furniture, education seating, and molding and assembly of optical silicone industries globally. Headquartered in Zeeland, Michigan, the company has multiple plants in Zeeland in addition to plants in Budaörs, Hungary, Saltillo, Mexico and Shanghai, China.

As demand for Ventura's services grew and the company began attracting customers worldwide, it was apparent the dependency on a single ERP system on-premise in Zeeland, Michigan was becoming an impediment to faster growth. "Relying on a single system to manage our global plants was proving to be a huge scale challenge," said Joel Boyles, IT Team Lead at Ventura Manufacturing.

Ventura's customer base is globally-based and to serve them as responsively and effectively as possible, Ventura made the decision to open new production plants in Hungary and Shanghai, China.

## CHALLENGES

### Overcoming the Challenges of Improving Speed and Scale

With eight plants globally running from a single ERP instance on a server in Zeeland, Michigan, the IT team faced the challenges of scaling their systems to support the global growth fueling their company's expansion. The IT Teams at Ventura prides itself on offering live support to any plant, anywhere in the world that needs help, anytime. "When we just had the plants in Mexico and Hungary, our existing staff could scale to support the calls coming from plants for help with their IT systems and take care of ERP-related tasks," Joel said. When the Shanghai, China facility went online, Ventura was reaching the limits of scale and speed with their IT teams and the system running on-premise in Zeeland.

As demands increased on the system, so did concerns over Availability and Disaster Recovery Objectives the IT Team had defined. Two metrics that are of specific interest to Ventura's IT team are the Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and Recovery Point Objective (RPO). IT defined the RTO goal as 8 hours and the RPO as 15 minutes, achievable on a 24/7 basis. To accomplish these goals, Ventura would need to create an entirely new system platform that could scale more efficiently with their growing business. The new platform would also need to increase the speed of system updates, which had been a problematic area in the past for the single system to complete.

Joel Boyles, IT Team Lead, says the challenges of scalability and disaster recovery are what drove the urgency for Ventura to decide that Hosted Managed Services (HMS) from IQMS was the best possible solution. "Plant system updates including MRP were taking at least 2 hours per plant, which translated into our IT teams having 24/7 shifts in our Zeeland-based IT offices," Joel said. "Clearly we had to redefine our system architecture for greater scalability and speed."

Ventura chose IQMS' EnterpriseIQ delivered via Hosted Managed Services (HMS) because it was the most economical and fastest option for solving the system performance challenges and attaining the disaster recovery goals the company has. Under the IQMS HMS purchase option, software licenses are owned in perpetuity by Ventura and hardware and platform software is provided by the IQMS data center. IQMS is managing the Ventura systems today in a secure data center environment. Ventura's IT team can gain access to key system metrics and key performance indicators anytime via any browser-enabled laptop, tablet or smartphone.

**"Clearly, we had to redefine our system architecture for greater scalability and speed."**

— Joel BOYLES, IT Team Lead

## SOLUTION

### How Ventura Defined A Global Roadmap To Greater Speed And Reliability

Like many manufacturers, Ventura initially ran their operations using QuickBooks and Microsoft Excel, then transitioned to a single enterprise system to operate all production plants. That's often the first phase of many manufacturer's IT roadmap as the demands to scale to support greater production capacity in multiple locations forces the need for a new system architecture. Ventura's infrastructure had reached the end of its life. Supporting the Shanghai, China facility was just one of the new functional requirements, as are the RPO and RTO goals. "The combination of the staffing requirements and time it took to run reports supporting production operations showed our process and systems would have to change for us to keep up with the growth," Joel said. The next stage in the Ventura IT roadmap was the adoption of Hosted Managed Services.

“By choosing the HMS option we were able to accomplish a lifecycle upgrade to newer, more powerful servers that took corporate-wide MRP runs down from 2 hours to 8 minutes,” Joel explained. In running a consolidated MRP companywide to support all facilities Ventura had to find a 2-hour quiet time to do the MRP run. They had originally done this at night, but once the brought the Shanghai plant online, they no longer had a 2-hour quiet time. With several plants and the need to run MRP daily once at the corporate level, transitioning to the Cloud-based Hosted Managed Services also reduced the time it took to run reports, in some circumstances by 50%” The graphic below shows the locations of Ventura’s plant locations globally.



## LESSONS LEARNED

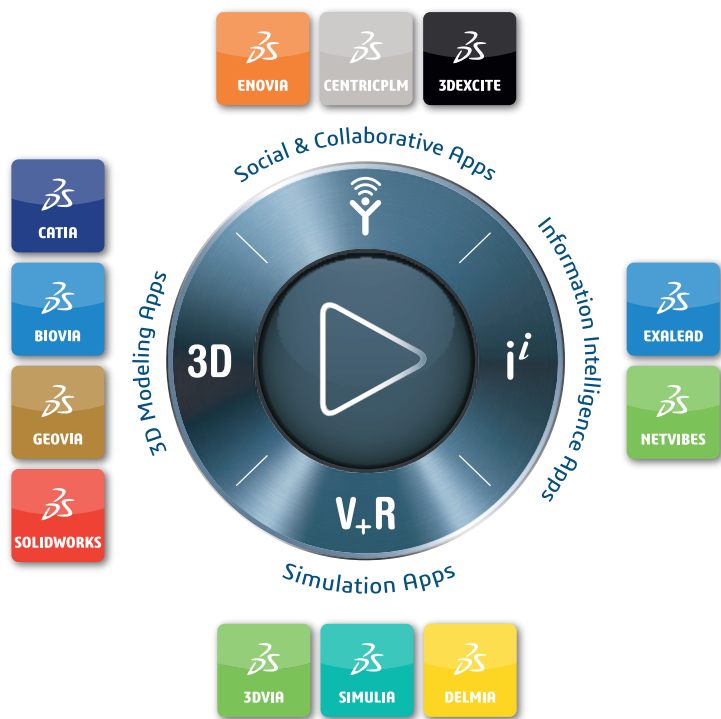
The greater scalability and speed Ventura has today is enabling the company to expand into entirely new areas of business on a global scale. “Our new system enables us to define custom Bills of Materials and schedule production in the plant that is the closest to the customer,” Joel said.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) is also a core aspect of their system requirements. On average, Ventura receives 1,000 EDI transactions a day. A key aspect of the new systems’ scalability is the need to provide greater expansion for EDI transaction support. Joel says that this is already beginning to scale up.

Joel says that Ventura considered several different options and stayed with IQMS. “We wanted to know best practices in our area of manufacturing, and the IQMS team was supportive and responsive to my requests for assistance as we completed the implementation,” Joel commented. IQMS provides a 24-hour hotline during the implementation, an Atlassian instance including planning tools, and a global team available to answer questions at any time. “It was the IQMS expertise on the topic that drove the value. That, and the manufacturing knowledgeable engineers I worked with at IQMS,” Joel said.

Ventura Manufacturing, Inc. provides manual and semiautomated manufacturing processes. The company provides fabricating assembly service, contract manufacturing, steel processing, and wire products. The company was founded in 1997 and is based in Zeeland, Michigan. Ventura Manufacturing, Inc. operates as a subsidiary of Innotec, Corp.





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