With more than 240 retail stores, four distribution centers and six manufacturing facilities, Menards, Inc. is an expert in managing complexity. Every night, Menards' IT and operations teams must ensure that sales and inventory data from across the company are processed and turned into orders that are delivered to their remote facilities for printing and fulfillment. Errors in processing or printing at any point can be costly in terms of time and money.

Menards' nightly processing involves thousands of tasks and hundreds of dependencies across systems and processes. Traditional tools such as CRON that do not support complex dependencies can allow a single error in one process to cascade and require a complete restart of that night's processing. Each remote facility is responsible for printing its own waybills, pick lists and barcodes. Output problems at any facility can lead to wasted forms materials, support calls or in the worst case, delayed orders.

To address these problems, Menards turned to job scheduling and output management solutions from ROC Software. For job scheduling, Menards chose ROC Maestro for Open Systems. "We wanted something that was more process driven than system driven," says Chris Roedger, UNIX Administrator for Menards. They found that in ROC Maestro, which lets them centralize all their processing tasks in an easy-to-use, small footprint solution. Maestro provides the ability to automate and monitor processes with reusable calendars, events and cross-platform dependencies, as well as immediate email notification of any processing error.

To ensure that orders are printed correctly at remote facilities, Menards chose ROC EasySpooler with its easy-to-use interface and precision control and recovery. With ROC EasySpooler, orders are automatically delivered to the correct facility and printed on the correct form.

ROC Maestro now manages over 750 different schedules encompassing over 2,000 individual tasks, and has resulted in tremendous time savings for Menards IT staff. Operators are able to spot errors as soon as they occur, and resolve them immediately. "Maestro lets us set up dependencies, and that creates a big time savings for us, especially with systems transfers," says Roedger. Before implementing Maestro, Menards had three full-time operators managing nightly processing. With Maestro's easy-to-use job scheduling, they have a more reliable system and only need one full-time operator.

ROC EasySpooler has been just as successful in ensuring efficient order fulfillment at remote facilities. With EasySpooler managing all the output, Menards has been able to save paper and reduce the burden on IT staff. "The best thing about EasySpooler is the simple user interface. At any of our remote sites, any team member can log in and reprint anything they need without a lot of training," says Chris Roedger. That means better results with fewer resources. Menards has since expanded its use of Easyspooler to other business-critical areas such as printing employee W-2's (~30,000 per year) and merchandise rebates (~125,000 checks per week).

Menards also raves about the support they receive from ROC Software. "They always provide a timely response, even in the wee hours of the morning, which is usually when we seem to need them the most."

About Menards, Inc

Menards Inc. is a home improvement retailer with more than 240 stores in the United States. Menard's sister company, Midwest Manufacturing, manufactures building materials and home improvement products, including leading brand names such as MasterCraft and Ultradeck. Menards, Inc. is headquartered in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

About ROC Software

ROC Software develops enterprise output management and job scheduling solutions to help IT organizations save valuable time and money in managing their business-critical operations. ROC solutions are easy to install on most major platforms including UNIX®, Linux®, Windows® and HP® e3000. More than 4,000 customers worldwide depend upon ROC Software for innovative enterprise solutions, rock-solid reliability and outstanding support. ROC Software is headquartered in Austin, Texas.

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