

## BACKGROUND

First Choice Services Inc. ([www.firstchoiceservices.net](http://www.firstchoiceservices.net)), Duke Hicks Plumbing & Petroleum, and Future Era Construction is a group of three companies specializing in the distribution of well-known industry product lines, installation and service of commercial plumbing and petroleum systems, and commercial and residential electrical and general contracting work. Their mission is to sell the best equipment and offer the highest quality service. With the goal of optimizing their business, enhancing operational efficiency, and better integrating their office and field, First Choice came to the realization that their current software system was no longer going to meet their needs. With that being said, First Choice decided to partner with Vertical Market Software and have since seen marked improvements in their service management, inventory and equipment management, and better integration of their business overall. Since implementing Ventus in 2012, both sales and net profit are up by 10% and they have been able to reduce their costs by about \$60,000 per year.



**First Choice Services, Inc.**

## PREVIOUS SYSTEM

MAXWELL SYSTEMS

## INDUSTRY

PLUMBING, PETROLEUM, DISTRIBUTION, ELECTRICAL:  
COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL/INDUSTRIAL

## RECOGNIZING THE PROBLEM

Prior to implementing Ventus by Vertical Market Software, First Choice was using Colonial by Maxwell Systems as their software system. While Colonial performed adequately, the company was eventually bought out and problems began to arise with the software, for which First Choice was unable to attain any support for. As Michele Webb states, "We started to experience problems with payroll and inventory, ghosting would occur, and even when we would check balances the numbers would automatically change without us doing anything." While these problems were occurring, Maxwell did not want to help fix any of the issues which left First Choice dissatisfied. With a software system that was only making their lives more difficult, they decided it was time to make a change.

REDUCED WORK  
ORDER DATA ENTRY  
BY 4 HOURS  
PER DAY

## VERTICAL MARKET SOFTWARE TO THE RESCUE

Vertical Market Software has helped First Choice save time and money with regards to their inventory management, field service procedures, as well as the processing of information. With Ventus, First Choice has been able to reduce their work order data entry time by about 4 hours per day. A typical inventory count with their previous software would take about a day and a half to complete, as they had to manually enter each line item, which led to many data entry errors and huge discrepancies. With Ventus, they are able to scan the items directly into a live count and has eliminated human error and data inconsistencies, which has reduced the

overall count time to only 3 hours. With regards to their field service procedures, as Michele states, the process is much more efficient, "Having mobile solutions in field definitely saves us time in the back office, as each technician is responsible for entering their own work, which not only results in more accurate data, but also less information that needs to be entered into the system manually." Implementing VMS has also allowed First Choice to better understand their profit margins and track information in real time, which was something their previous software was simply unable to perform.

## BENEFITS

Since partnering with VMS, First Choice has greater access to real-time information with mobile solutions, enhanced dispatching capabilities, as well as an optimized inventory processes. One of the greatest benefits First Choice has realized is their enhanced mobile capabilities, "Thanks to VMS Mobile Field Service, we are able to dispatch a call directly to the technician on a tablet, they complete the work, enter the work completed, as well as their time and materials used, and they are able to complete the invoice right on site. The technician simply has to complete the required fields and the software automatically calculates and integrates all of the pertinent information into the system. This feature alone has saved us so much time and money." Another benefit First Choice has experienced is due to the dispatch board. First Choice is able to view and manage the dispatch board from any of their locations, which allows them to locate any technician and assign jobs directly to that technician at any given time. Additionally, the inventory functionality from VMS has allowed First Choice to implement a purchase order protocol, which gives them the ability to control and manage their inventory more effectively.



THANKS TO VMS MOBILE FIELD SERVICE, WE ARE ABLE TO DISPATCH A CALL DIRECTLY TO THE TECHNICIAN ON A TABLET, THEY COMPLETE THE WORK, ENTER THE WORK COMPLETED, AS WELL AS THEIR TIME AND MATERIALS USED, AND THEY ARE ABLE TO COMPLETE THE INVOICE RIGHT ON SITE."

## CONCLUSION

In the three years First Choice has been a partner with Vertical Market Software, the experience has been extremely positive. Not only has First Choice been able to grow as a company since implementing Ventus, they are also poised for further growth. Throughout the company, all of their employees like how user-friendly the software is, which has greatly enhanced employee satisfaction.

First Choice is now running a more efficient operation in all aspects of the business and are able to provide better service to their clients. Partnering with VMS has provided First Choice with a solid software solution that truly meets their needs and is there to support and grow with them into the future.

## ABOUT VERTICAL MARKET SOFTWARE

Vertical Market Software (VMS) is a leading provider of integrated business management software to the construction and service markets. The hallmark of our success has always been a complete integrated solution, a dedicated and knowledgeable support staff, and a training and development team that takes pride in knowing and understanding your business.

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