



jLAN Mobile

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**THRUWAY FASTENERS**  
*Incorporated*

## CASE STUDY

# Thruway Fasteners deploys jLAN Mobile Sales Tablet Edition

*Thruway's customized version of jLAN Mobile Tablet Edition provides their customers with an easy to use self ordering solution.*



## Overview

Is your Industrial Parts distributor's on time performance of concern? Do you know precisely what parts you will need, or how much of something you'll sell? Of course not, and that level of uncertainty can negatively impact your business.

Being unable to meet customer demand could cripple your company. Shutting down production due to missing components can create lost opportunity and eventually erode market share.

Thruway Fasteners understands this challenge that faces their customers. Thruway is a distributor of both Engineered and Standard components that are critical to OEM manufacturing companies. They need tight inventory control, data they can rely on, and practical stock-reorder times for both themselves and their customers.

Thruway has been in business since 1958 and serves customers in 40 states, as well as 28 countries. Thruway Fasteners created their niche in the marketplace by offering Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) systems. Specifically, they undertake to provide and maintain sufficient quantities of replacement parts, stocked at their customer's manufacturing facilities, for all their needs.

VMI saves the customer money by maintaining lean inventory, reducing staff commitment to inventory maintenance, and keeping adequate supplies on-hand to prevent costly process shutdowns due to lack of parts.

Thruway's remarkable reputation hinges on their ability to always deliver the right parts on-time. Their customers know they can rely on this high level of service to keep their manufacturing processes flowing.

## The Business

With over 100,000 parts available through Thruway Fasteners, the system always relied on knowledgeable representatives visiting their customers on a regular basis to make sure they had what they needed. Customers couldn't be spending time thumbing through massive volumes of potential parts, looking for something that might not be any bigger than a piece of aquarium gravel. Generally speaking, they only needed a very limited subset of all those parts. Their sales rep knew, or could find, what they needed.

In addition to expanded offerings and territories Thruway needed a system to handle twenty-four-seven requests for orders during non-core business hours.

Thruway has a vast selection of parts, many of which are quite similar, further complicated by the fact that some of them are small and often times difficult to differentiate minute differences. Each part has its own Thruway Fasteners identification number; these numbers can be completely different from the customized number which the individual company uses to identify its product.

Furthermore, customers also may have an annual Blanket Purchase Order that must be referenced every time an order is placed. Parts orders need to be created continuously throughout the day. As soon as a part gets low it must be ordered; failure to do so could shut down some portion of the manufacturing process at great expense.

## The Solution

jLAN Technologies has worked with Thruway Fasteners since 2006, streamlining and improving their inventory system. In close cooperation, jLAN developed a custom version of jLAN's Mobile Sales Tablet edition.

### CUSTOMER QUOTE

"This tool allows us process improvements in our daily activities. This has been an overwhelming success." *Steve St. Clair, General Manager*

*"We've invested heavily in developing the jLAN Mobile Sales Windows Tablet platform. Our ability to work with Thruway and quickly deliver a custom solution is a testament to the power and flexibility of the platform." Andy Link, President jLAN Technologies, Inc.*

The custom version was rolled out to select customer sites and thoroughly tested. With the completion of the successful pilot program, they are now prepared to roll it out to a larger customer base. By taking advantage of tablet technology, Thruway can now deploy Windows-based touch screen devices at the customer's location, each equipped with a bar code reader to simplify the order creation process.

Each station is fully configured with the customer's authorized parts lists, their blanket purchase order numbers, their contract pricing, and any other pertinent information for a particular Thruway customer. If desirable, customers can simply scan items periodically, over the course of the day, and seamlessly send to Thruways ERP system where it is fulfilled in real time.

## The Results

Customers don't have to know their own product numbers; they don't have to know Thruway's product numbers; all they need is the bar code on the item. At the end of the day they press "Send" and it's all taken care of, automatically.

The jLAN Mobile Sales system integrates with Thruway's back office, Microsoft Dynamics GP Sales Order Processing, for order fulfillment and shipping. The parts will be on their way the next day, or even the same day, if required. Sales reps can make fewer trips while ensuring the customers still get all the parts they need, when they need them.

The combined Lean Inventory system and the Just In Time strategy increases productivity, streamlines their processes, and assures zero stock-outs while reducing transactional and non-value added activities. jLAN Mobile software has made a difference for Thruway, their customers, and it can make a difference for you.