SEKISUI Aerospace Soars to New Heights with Epicor Advanced Requisition Management: A Procurement Transformation Story

50%

increase in spend processed
through purchase orders

10%

savings by reducing
unnecessary purchases

"Previously, you could put in a ticket to say, 'Hey, I want to buy this.' But that's where it ended. There were no approvals, there was nothing connected to the ERP, it didn't generate a purchase order... someone had to go in, look at that [separate] system, and then take manual actions from it. And so, we looked for a solution."

Jessica Hasbrook,
Senior Value Stream Manager,
SEKISUI Aerospace Corporation.

SEKISUI

SEKISUI AEROSPACE.

SEKISUI Aerospace is a leading aerospace manufacturer specializing in advanced composite materials and technologies for lightweight, high-performance commercial and military components.

HIGHLIGHTS

CHALLENGES

- Manual, disconnected purchasing processes
- Poor visibility into approval status and required actions
- Time-consuming manual entry from supplier websites

SOLUTION

- Epicor ARM seamlessly integrated to Kinetic
- Real-time, automated approval workflows and budget checks
- Direct supplier catalogue integration with Supplier PunchOut module

RESULTS

- Over **50% INCREASE** in the level of spend through purchase orders
- **10% SAVINGS** through improved spend control
- **IMPROVED AS9100** spend authority compliance

Challenges

MANUAL TIME-CONSUMING PROCESSES WITH LIMITED VISIBILITY AND CONTROL

SEKISUI Aerospace have been part of the Aerospace and Defense industry for three decades, a business sector that is responsible for massive technological innovation but often lacks that same innovation within their own business operations. In a bid to remain both efficient and on the cutting-edge of the industry, SEKISUI was already using Epicor Kinetic ERP successfully, but still faced some critical pain points they needed to address.

Jessica Hasbrook, Senior Value Stream Manager, who championed the project said, "We found ourselves in a position where we were about a decade behind in our ERP system. We decided to focus on our indirect activities in our ERP system and how we can streamline them and make them more efficient."

These pain points primarily revolved around the time-consuming, manual processes faced in entering and approving purchase requests and creating purchase orders, which were previously managed outside the Epicor ecosystem.

SEKISUI also wanted enhanced visibility into request statuses at all stages, for both approvers and buyers to see actions needed, and the generation of notifications and reminders to keep things moving.

They also required a solution to help enforce their documented corporate procurement policy in alignment with AS9100 compliance requirements.

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Specifically, they needed to ensure that materials used in their sellable products were sourced exclusively from their approved supplier list while maintaining a comprehensive electronic audit trail for all purchase approvals.

> "That's when we started looking into [ARM](#), and I think the biggest draw was that it brought us back into the ERP system. It allowed us to remove this extra software that we were paying for, and it was fully connected. We didn't have to put something in one system and then also put it into the ERP. We were fully connected and could turn that [approved] purchase requisition directly into a purchase order," Jessica explained.

Lastly, they faced a problem when entering requests for Maintenance, Repair, and Operations (MRO) items. As these were not managed in Epicor Kinetic, users would need to visit third-party suppliers' websites to obtain relevant parts and details, then manually copy these into Epicor Purchase Orders. This was a slow and tedious manual task for users, fraught with the risk of errors that would cause issues further down the process.

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Solution

FULL-SUITE PURCHASE APPROVAL WORKFLOWS THAT INTEGRATE SEAMLESSLY WITH THEIR EXISTING EPICOR KINETIC PRODUCT

SEKISUI Aerospace has been an Epicor customer since 2009, utilizing various on-premise products. However, due to evolving business environments, there were significant gaps between upgrades. In March 2022, they initiated a phased digital transformation by upgrading to the Epicor Kinetic cloud-based product to modernize their business operations.

> "Phase one was all about moving us to the cloud, getting us into the latest version of Kinetic and taking our current processes and upgrading. Phase two was all about improving and rethinking the way that we do each of those processes. So, we identified pain points and then worked with Epicor, Precise and others on how we might streamline those processes." Jessica noted.

It was during this initiative that SEKISUI identified a pressing need to ensure that purchase requests were as connected to the underlying ERP system as possible, rather than working through separate software. This kicked off Phase 2 of their modernization drive.

> "During that migration, we really took the time to look at our business as a whole and redesign how we run our operations. We looked at everything we were doing—all the various transactions—and one of those was purchase requisitions. Our thought process was: How do we get as much as possible into the ERP system, connected to the ERP system, rather than these separate pieces of software that are in no way integrated with the ERP?" Jessica highlighted.

With Epicor Kinetic already in use, the addition of Epicor Advanced Requisition Management (ARM) and its Supplier PunchOut module was considered the ideal solution to provide the extended functionality that SEKISUI needed to overhaul their purchasing processes.

Epicor ARM offers an advanced requisition management platform with embedded approvals and automated line-level approval routing. All users have visibility into the status of a request, as well as the necessary next steps and automated reminders of actions needed to keep purchasing cycles smooth. This also enables SEKISUI to maintain their AS9100 spend authority compliance requirements.

ARM provides a flexible, efficient way to capture all necessary requisition information required to convert purchase recommendations into purchase orders while remaining within the wider ERP system. This functionality was particularly important to SEKISUI Aerospace, as it avoided duplicate software costs for the same effective results.

Looking forward, the roll-out of Supplier PunchOut will further enhance and streamline SEKISUI's procurement process for MRO items. Teams across all SEKISUI operations will be able to directly access any enabled supplier's online store to select the items they need. When they check out, the shopping cart will automatically be returned directly to the requisition in ARM, ready for approval and purchase order creation. This will provide a more streamlined user experience and minimize errors when creating requests for MRO items.

Results

A FULLY INTEGRATED PROCUREMENT SOLUTION ADDRESSING KEY PAIN POINTS FOR THE AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE INDUSTRY

With Epicor ARM and Supplier Punchout integrated with Epicor Kinetic, SEKISUI Aerospace has seen significant reductions in requisition and purchase order processing times, especially for managers and approvers, while ensuring they remain in line with AS9100 spend authority compliance. They have greater transparency and efficacy in their workflow controls.

> "I think the ARM implementation was probably the easiest thing we did. I don't remember any major stumbling blocks with ARM... [it] was the smoothest one of all of them," Jessica reflected.

Additionally, SEKISUI Aerospace identified another notable benefit of using ARM. Previously, they had no budget accountability within their ERP system and instead relied on manual processes. With ARM, they have real-time visibility into their budget as they approve purchase requests, further enhancing visibility and control in their purchasing process.

Ensuring purchases align with financial constraints was a significant benefit to SEKISUI. Jessica observed, "Historically, at our business, we've not had accountability to budget within the ERP system. And most of the time, as a department manager, you don't really know how you're performing to your budget. With ARM and the purchase side of it, we can create our approval trees to consider the budget as we're approving."

SEKISUI Aerospace noted some particular success metrics worth highlighting.

On non-purchase order spend, they saw a 10% reduction in costs. This has allowed them to better control business spending and implement tighter budget controls. They achieved this through the introduction of approval trees into their business processes with Epicor ARM.

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The rollout of ARM has also led to far greater control over indirect spend, with all purchases now systematically tracked and managed. This ensures that every request is properly approved and coded, minimizing the risk and cost of unauthorized spending.

The approval workflows have been a massive revolution in how SEKISUI Aerospace controls and manages the purchase requisition cycle. They also saw a considerable improvement in AS9100-related controls and compliance. The formalized approval process for their purchase requisitions, now tracked and documented automatically, makes maintaining this compliance significantly easier.

Stepping away from their informal, separate, and non-integrated ticketing software to ARM has significantly streamlined their workflows.

The use of ARM has also delivered benefits to the Accounts Payable (AP) team. With more purchase requests going through approvals – and the resulting purchase orders being more accurate – there are no surprises when supplier invoices are received. This significantly reduces the level of invoice approvals required, and there's little to no manual coding for invoices since everything is entered upfront. As a result, matching invoices to POs and receipts has become a much less tedious and time-consuming task.

> "While requisitioners have to add a little bit more information to requests—which is a good thing in itself—the purchasing team faces fewer steps, and the Accounts Payable team has seen vastly reduced errors, ensuring considerable time savings." Jessica noted.

The response from the end users has also been very positive. Though initially, the additional information they were required to provide seemed like more work, a strong emphasis on managing the change has seen broad adoption throughout the business and, for requesters, the transparency around their request at every stage of the process has been a significant benefit.

SEKISUI Aerospace is immensely satisfied with the many benefits that Epicor ARM has brought to the table. It has significantly helped them progress toward their goal of demonstrating the value of technological innovation within the Aerospace and Defense sector.

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"It's not just about our digital strategy moving forward; it's also about exposing a lot of people to what could be. We're striving to look at ourselves not as a manufacturer, but as an innovative technology business."

Why Choose Epicor ARM?

Epicor Advanced Requisition Management transforms procurement operations by eliminating manual processes and streamlining purchase workflows. It seamlessly integrates with Epicor Kinetic ERP, providing automated approval routing and complete visibility into request statuses.

The solution enables precise budget control through customizable approval trees while maintaining compliance requirements through automated documentation. With the addition of the Supplier PunchOut module, teams can directly access supplier catalogs, view real-time pricing and availability, and instantly import shopping cart details into ARM requisitions—streamlining procurement, ensuring pricing compliance, and reducing manual data entry errors.

Organizations using ARM gain significant benefits, including fewer processing errors, considerable time savings across purchasing and AP teams, and overall improved visibility and control over their spend. The system's automated workflows ensure that purchase requests contain complete information upfront, significantly reducing the need for manual follow-ups.

For businesses seeking to modernize their procurement processes, Epicor ARM offers a comprehensive solution that improves visibility and enhances process efficiency while maintaining control over spending.

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Get a complete procure-to-pay solution seamlessly integrated with your Epicor Kinetic system.

Contact your Epicor customer account manager to see a demonstration.

[Contact Epicor]

Epicor Advanced Requisition Management is developed by Precise Business Solutions, one of Epicor's longest-serving, premium channel partners.

As a trusted Platinum ISV partner, Precise develops integrated companion products that extend the core functionality of Kinetic with advanced solutions for project management, procurement, AP Automation, and counter sales.

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