Lippert Components & Kinro

Lippert Components, Inc. (Lippert; also known as LCI) and Kinro, Inc. (Kinro) are wholly owned subsidiaries of Drew Industries Incorporated (NYSE: DW). Together, Lippert and Kinro supply a broad array of components for recreational vehicles and manufactured homes. Products include:

- Vinyl and aluminum windows and doors
- Thermoformed products
- Steel chassis
- Chassis components
- RV slide-out mechanisms and solutions
- Manual, electric and hydraulic stabilizer and lifting systems
- Entry and baggage doors
- Axles and suspension solutions
- Toy hauler ramp doors
- Specialty trailers

With 27 factories across the U.S., Lippert and Kinro are important suppliers to nearly all of the leading producers of RVs and manufactured homes.

Learn more about Lippert, Kinro, and Drew Industries at www.drewindustries.com.

"The BuyDesign Configurator add-on brings much greater depth to Microsoft Dynamics NAV in terms of support for customized products. It gives us a practical way to capture knowledge about our products into easily maintained product models we can use to guide order entry, ensure valid products, and generate manufacturing information."

Seth DeBriere
Director of IT Applications
Lippert Components & Kinro

Lippert/Kinro goals:

- Move Kinro to Lippert's Microsoft Dynamics® NAV Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system while supporting their need for strong product configuration capabilities.
- Make product configuration fast and intuitive for sales and order entry personnel.
- Automatically generate detailed bills of material (BOMs) and manufacturing instructions (routings) to drive production in Microsoft Dynamics NAV.
- Reduce the time required to build and maintain configuration models.

BuyDesign® capabilities:

- Easy product modeling and maintenance with the Design Studio.
- Interactive product configuration within Microsoft Dynamics NAV sales and production documents.
- Rapid configuration with dynamic defaults using the configurator engine and web services.
- Seamless integration with Microsoft Dynamics NAV using the BuyDesign Sales and Manufacturing Configuration Granules.

Results to date:

- First major product line (RV baggage doors) fully implemented in just over 60 days.
- Product model development time is now just 25-50% of what was required using previous configuration tools.
- Over 1,400 BOMs generated using BuyDesign in just a week and a half to support the transition of previously taken OEM orders to Microsoft Dynamics NAV.
- Order entry, manufacturing planning, and product data management processes have been streamlined vs. using Microsoft Dynamics NAV without a product configurator.

Challenge

Many Lippert and Kinro products are designed to be highly configurable so they can be manufactured to match the requirements of a given travel trailer, RV, or home. Dimensions, materials, and options can vary widely from one application to another. Because of this, Kinro has had product configuration capabilities within the company's business and manufacturing systems for some time. Lippert, on the other hand, has manually maintained BOMs for individual configurations in Microsoft Dynamics NAV.

When Kinro set out to move to the Microsoft Dynamics NAV ERP system already used by Lippert, it was clear that a product configurator was needed to support the Kinro products, but the needs across the two companies were diverse. In addition to the requirement to handle products ranging from windows and doors to axles and suspensions, both companies needed a configuration solution that was easy to learn and use.

Why TDCI's BuyDesign®?

After evaluating product configurators compatible with Microsoft Dynamics NAV, representatives from both Lippert and Kinro concluded that BuyDesign Configurator was, by far, the best solution to support their respective needs and was selected because:

- The BuyDesign Configurator is tightly-integrated with Microsoft Dynamics NAV, providing:
  - A seamless user experience in Microsoft Dynamics NAV order entry and other functions.
  - Dynamically generated manufacturing information such as BOMs and routings delivered to the NAV database in real-time to drive production.
  - Integration components that are available as registered Microsoft Dynamics NAV add-on granules.
- The highly intuitive BuyDesign product configuration process supports rapid specification of both simple and complex products.
- BuyDesign's graphical point & click Design Studio enables rapid development of product models and provides for easy maintenance over time.

Results

"Our people picked up the BuyDesign rules development process very quickly," says Seth DeBriere, Lippert Director of IT Applications. "Their early experience is that they can develop rules in 25-50% of the time it took them with the tools previously used by Kinro."

As part of the transition to Microsoft Dynamics NAV, Kinro used BuyDesign Configurator with the newly built product models to configure and generate 1,400 BOMs to support previously taken OEM orders. This approach enabled Kinro to test their configuration models, train their order entry staff on the use of the configurator, and leverage the configurator outputs to provide BOMs for existing orders, all in a week and a half.

BuyDesign is now being used within Microsoft Dynamics NAV for the first product line (RV baggage doors). BuyDesign is used to guide order entry personnel through the configuration process, then automatically generate BOMs and routings for use in production planning.

With this success under their belts, Kinro and Lippert are now preparing to leverage BuyDesign for RV and manufactured home windows, entry doors, axles and other products. DeBriere outlines the benefits, saying: "For Kinro, BuyDesign offers a more powerful and intuitive product configuration process than what they had before. For Lippert, using a product configurator will significantly reduce the time and effort currently involved in maintaining hundreds of different BOMs and routings. It will also eliminate the errors all that data maintenance inevitably causes."

In summarizing the strategic value of BuyDesign, DeBriere says: "The BuyDesign Configurator add-on brings much greater depth to Microsoft Dynamics NAV in terms of support for customized products. It gives us a practical way to capture knowledge about our products into easily maintained product models we can use to guide order entry, ensure valid products, and generate manufacturing information."