

# Success Stories



**A.A. OLIVER & SON, INC.**  
IMPROVED ORDER FULFILLMENT RATE BY 20%

“Our customers appreciate that we are efficient, accurate and able to answer questions immediately. We get any information we need easily and quickly.”

**Mike Oliver**, President  
A.A. Oliver & Son, Inc.

## AT A GLANCE

### COMPANY

- Name: A.A. Oliver & Son, Inc. Conover, NC & High Point, NC
- Industry: Supplier of sewing products and soft goods to upholstery furniture manufacturers.
- Employees: 35
- Implementation Partner: Carolina Cipher, Greensboro, NC

### CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Merge activities performed on two platforms to one
- Improve customer communication through updated channels
- Move toward a more paperless operation
- Account reps need for information

### OBJECTIVES

- Combine all computer operations into one integrated platform
- Improve inventory management
- Better customer service
- More efficient front and back end operations”

### IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

- Project managed by top management
- Structured implementation with realistic goals

### WHY SAP

- Flexibility to modify and connect the software for our needs
- iPhone / iPad app included
- SAP commitment to B1 innovation and development
- SAP size and stability

### BENEFITS

- Reduced administrative overhead of general filing and paper handling
- Reduced processing costs for purchasing
- Reduced inventory
- Improved order fulfillment rate by 20%
- Account reps access quotes, orders & pricing using iPads, reducing customer service burden
- Automatic emailing of invoices saves \$400 / month postage
- Eliminated cumbersome month-end closing processes
- Eliminated all custom printed forms
- Reduced overall paper consumption by 75%





**“Our previous software was not going to take us where we wanted to go. With Carolina Cipher’s implementation of SAP Business One we have made significant improvements in all facets of our business. There are no ‘month-end surprises.’”**

**Mike Oliver, President**  
A.A. Oliver & Son Inc.

Founded in 1924 by A. A. Oliver & Son the company has grown consistently over the years. Their products include fiber filling material, padding, thread, zippers and buttons. The company has strong competitors in their market area, but they have carved out a niche that is both defensible and profitable, offering specialized expertise rather than just price. The company has been managing customers’ inventories for 40 years, providing “JIT” (just-in-time) delivery before it had a name. Their salesmen go in the back door, count the inventory, and make deliveries sometimes two or three times a week.

**“When we started using the new software, I thought that inventory levels would rise modestly, then work back down as employees became more proficient with the system. But, in fact, levels never did rise, but gradually declined, even as our stock-outs were also going down.”**

**Mike Oliver, President**

A. A. Oliver & Son specializes in serving the needs of upholstery furniture manufacturers. As this industry has felt the market price pressure and foreign competition, price sensitivity and efficiency are critical to maintaining a strong business. A. A. Oliver had managed this highly competitive market but was looking to better position themselves in the market. To move forward, they looked for ways to improve existing processes and systems.

“Our previous software had served us well, but it was antiquated and was not going to take us where we wanted to go. My primary focus was inventory.” say Mike Oliver, president of the company. “Our inventory turns were already acceptable, but service levels were not where we wanted them. With Carolina Cipher’s implementation of SAP Business One and the Valogix Inventory Planner, the company has made significant improvements, ranging from inventory, to financials and beyond.”

When the company started using the new software, Oliver thought that inventory levels would rise modestly, then work back down as employees became more proficient with the system. But, in fact, levels never did rise, but gradually declined, even as the company’s stock-outs were also going down.



**Mike Jones,**  
Warehouse Manager

Before SAP Business One arrived, Mike Jones ran the warehouse using paperwork that others produced and sent to him. Picking lists were printed as sales orders were entered, regardless of inventory availability. Now, Jones can accurately manage all aspects of the warehouse using Business One’s Pick /Pack Manager.

If customers make changes to their orders, there is no paperwork to revise. Everything he needs to keep product moving out the doors is available in one place, up-to-date and accurate. Jones recalls having some initial anxiety in implementing the new system, but notes, “It has made me computer literate and more efficient. I can handle 85-90% of my job right at this desk. It’s a team effort around here and SAP Business One is a fantastic part of the team.”



Annette Suddreth is the Inventory Planner / Buyer at the company. “Just planning purchases and processing the resulting orders occupied all of my time.” says Suddreth. With SAP Business One and Valogix, Annette has more time to handle related tasks such as NAFTA and OSHA compliance regulations, which are being mandated by many of their larger customers. Suddreth says, “If I were on the old system, I would never be able to keep up.”

Asked what was the biggest change she noticed when upgrading to SAP Business One, she said, “Trust! When we started, I thought the software was nice, but I couldn’t bring myself to depend on it. Well, it wasn’t long before I saw an order recommendation that was four times what I normally order. I investigated to see how the software could have made such a ‘mistake’. Well, the recommendation was right. I thought, ‘Wow, it knows more than I do.’ It’s my guide now. I depend on it.”



**Annette Suddreth – In-**  
ventory Planner / Buyer

Another area of major improvement that AA Oliver benefited from was their financials. “Postings are real-time, so I can run a meaningful Income Statement any time I want. There are no ‘month-end surprises’, and no period-end closing processes to deal with.” This time-saving benefit frees up key staff and lets us focus more on strategic operations and the bottom line and less time on ‘running reports’.”

Part of Carolina Cipher’s solution was the implementation of Boyum Print and Delivery. This software allows the company to automatically email about 90% of their invoices eliminating another routine task, and providing significant savings in postage and supplies.