



## Case Study

**Client:**

### **Nicholas and Company**

*Headquartered in Salt Lake City, Nicholas and Company operates a food service distribution company with a geographic range extending across the mountains West to Utah, Wyoming, Nevada, Arizona, Washington, and Montana.*

*From beverages and daily fresh cuts of meat to 24/7 equipment support and employee training, Nicholas offers a truly comprehensive set of services for its clients in the food service and restaurant industries.*

### **The Challenge:**

#### Supporting a Business-Critical Custom IBM i Solution

Providing customers distributed across a wide geographic area with perishable food and responsive services requires extensive, highly time-sensitive coordination of logistics—with trucks ready to roll by 4 AM to get fresh food to far-flung locations.

Chefs depend on Nicholas for the food they need to feed their customers everyday, and that imperative is passed on to Nicholas and Company's warehouse management software, DataTech, a custom RPG software implementation. Nicholas' operations personnel depend on this technology to avoid late or mistaken shipments (and the wrath of chefs across their sales territories).

Daily operations depend on DataTech processing orders and preparing trucks to be loaded by the early morning hours for timely delivery to a broadly distributed client base. This mission-critical software was experiencing an increasing volume of errors, such as customer orders failing to be automatically processed by the warehousing system.

DataTech was supported by a single in-house administrator who applied ad hoc fixes to keep the system running. But Nicholas needed a dependable technology partner to expand its knowledge base beyond this single resource, develop long-term fixes for chronic issues, and provide highly responsive support for a truly business-critical application.

The need for a technology service provider had become more acute with the impending retirement of the only resource with knowledge of the custom software built out over a decade-plus.



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**“I honestly don’t think we could have made it through this transition without the PSGi team. They would take calls in the middle of the night to make sure we didn’t fall behind.”**

## **The Solution:**

### **A Plan for Systematic Knowledge Transfer and Support**

Nicholas and Company selected Precision Solutions Group (PSGi) as a service provider with deep IBM i knowledge and proven understanding of the distribution business. With a deep roster of RPG-proficient professionals, PSGi demonstrated the capability to extend 24/7 support while fixing nagging long-term issues.

Nicholas and Company defined a timetable where PSGi would work with their internal developer for one year to begin enhanced support and knowledge transfer. After this initial one-year period, PSGi would assume full responsibility for DataTech.

Shortly after PSGi was engaged to support this transition, the client suddenly lost access to their sole internal developer. Nicholas and Company now faced a sudden evaporation of accumulated expertise on a unique and essential IBM i implementation.

PSGi’s task was now more urgent than ever before: Nicholas and Company’s ability to continue providing high-quality client service depended on it.

## **The Results:**

### **Support and Stability in the Face of an Acute Threat to Business Continuity**

PSGi now needed to step in and immediately assume complete responsibility to support DataTech and the business. Without Nicholas and Company’s internal developer providing ad hoc fixes, issues stemming from chronic DataTech errors began pouring in.

PSGi’s team had to ramp up building a knowledge base on this custom implementation almost overnight, often pouring over source code to find solutions in direct response to urgent



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*“We feel like PSGi really cares about our organization. We still have a lot of work to do, but we’ve found the right partners to do it.”*

operational issues such as customer orders failing to process to pick lists and shipping instructions. PSGi kept technical support staff on-site when necessary to learn the system and its ground-level role in the business, with ongoing online code access to enable responsive remote support.

This emergency effort required extensive on-demand support from PSGi to ward off threats to business continuity, even as custom development efforts were employed to improve stability, ensure orders processed completely, and provide long-term resolution for chronic problems.

With great strides made toward a more stabilized system, Nicholas and Company has navigated past a serious risk to the outstanding planning and customer service that make its business successful.

## **Next Steps:** From Fire Fighting to Optimizing

Initial efforts focused on stabilization and issue resolution are now beginning to wind down. While continuing to provide 24/7 support, Nicholas and Company/PSGi can now begin identifying opportunities for DataTech to drive more value for this food distribution network.

Potential project-based work has begun with integrating a warehouse scanning system to DataTech to dramatically streamline and increase accuracy for order processing. Additional projects are planned and the Nicholas and Company - PSGi team look forward to continued successful execution.