

Allston Supply Co., Inc.

Growing with Today's Technology Advances

In 1945, Albert Cohen was looking to start a business with the \$2,000 he won playing cards while returning from the war. Albert opened Oderite Sanitation Service, cleaning bars from the back of his truck. Albert's one man operation continued to grow, bringing in additional family members, changing its name and moving to different locations along the way. Now lead by the 2nd and 3rd generation, Allston Supply in Springfield, MA is one of the largest janitorial supply houses in the northeast.

"I think the system is great! It's the complete antithesis of StanPak."

Bob Cohen
Executive Vice President



Last year, Allston Supply realized it was time to upgrade their technology, their current company was increasing support fees and heavily charging for upgrades. They wanted a system to reduce costs, streamline operations, and take advantage of progressive software features available today.

Switching from StanPak to DDI's Inform Software

After checking with other distributors, Allston Supply decided to upgrade their existing Activant StanPak software to DDI System's **inform** windows software. Making the switch just 6 years after their last conversion seemed too soon, however, according to Bob Cohen, Executive Vice President, the new software choice was a much needed change. "A lot of people we knew were pushing us to DDI instead of remaining with Activant. Fellow Triple S members and friendly competitors alike were all utilizing DDI's **inform** software and raving about it, the choice was a no brainer!"

When asked about the conversion Roger Cohen, President and Treasurer, couldn't have been more positive. "DDI's team came in and converted our data in one afternoon! It was so refreshing to have them here for an entire week. They spent time with everyone, in all departments. DDI's customer service during and after implementation has truly been a joy to work with."



To learn more visit www.ddisys.com or call us at 877-599-4334.

The **inform** windows software has proven to be intuitive providing a shortened learning curve for all employees. DDI's customer support is also well received. Allston Supply can answer their own questions by referring to **inform's** built-in help manual. Questions that remain are emailed or phoned into DDI System's support queue. These messages are given to a system support expert who returns the call, in most cases within 20 minutes. "With DDI, we always get a response from customer service technicians that know what they are doing. It has made it much easier to learn the many different facets of the system."

A Welcomed Change

"I love the transparency of the system. If I see something strange I can easily backtrack in the system and see where I went wrong and correct the mistake. There are no longer the "unknown consequences" we had with our old system," says Bob. Eric Johnson, Shipping & Receiving Clerk, fully agrees "This system is definitely more intuitive – I can now figure out what I don't know and find the reports I need. Before, if I didn't know an answer there was no way to find out. The flow makes more sense and we have cut down on manually driven mistakes."

Features Making a Difference

Integrated features are helping to drive the business in a more modern fashion. These features are adding to Allston Supply's "Dedicated to Clean Living" motto and green initiatives.

Paperless and File-Free Workflows - Allston Supply is quickly adapting to **inform's** paperless and file-free workflows. Cutting down on paperwork between placing PO's and receiving product has been just one of the many benefits. Costly forms are no longer ordered and items that were previously printed are now easily found and reviewed on the computer screen.

Electronic Signature Capture - The use of electronic signature capture is now present in both delivery trucks and at the counter. The ability to email or fax customer invoices, with these signatures, is proving to be an effective way of cutting out paperwork, time and costs. In fact, Allston Supply has been pro-actively speaking with their customers to get everyone on board with their new paperless system!

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) - Moving all of the company's calendar events into **inform** has alleviated manual upkeep and confusion. Now, everyone is able to see who's on vacation, upcoming trainings, holidays and general company information. Additional CRM features have already allowed this progressive company the ability to email and mail special offers to their customers. "We are building our customer

contact information everyday and are excited about using the **inform** software to communicate with customers and prospects to drive more sales," according to Bob.

Service With a Smile - Formerly, an extra module was necessary to organize and run the service area. The module never integrated properly and Allston Supply eventually gave up on using it, creating additional paperwork and manual processes. Now, DDI includes all of the information they need to run the service department electronically – increasing efficiency and accuracy.

"Fellow Triple S members and friendly competitors alike were all utilizing DDI's **inform** software and raving about it, the choice was a no brainer!"

User Driven Reporting – On-screen stock reports within **inform** are benefitting many departments at Allston Supply. Bob raves about the simplicity to pull relevant reports, "The stock reports have all of the necessary information I'm looking for without adding the clutter of unnecessary information." "I love the executive summary and daily order reports. I still can't believe I can pull sales history reports on previous year's sales! I couldn't get that information from StanPak while we were on it – now the information has been converted and is accessible to view on-screen at any time" adds Kent Dornfried, Sales Manager.

Excited About the Future

Although Allston Supply has only been on DDI System's **inform** for a short time, they are already seeing the many benefits and experiencing a strong ROI. Sales data is building and they look forward to using integrated features such as business intelligence and the salesperson dashboards. "I think the system is great! It's the complete antithesis of StanPak," concludes Bob Cohen. Roger and Kent wholeheartedly agree. Kent smiles as he tells the story of his customer service manager, "You should talk to Tania, she was the most hesitant to change since she knew StanPak so well. Just 9 days after our switch to DDI she came to me and said "Don't ever take DDI away from me" – it just validated what we all were thinking!"

To learn more visit www.ddisys.com or call us at 877-599-4334.