

Ease and Efficiency

VERTICAL SOFTWARE SAVES TIME AND MONEY FOR ATHERTON GRAIN

Using Vertical Software's (VSI) agribusiness suite of programs has made doing business easier and more efficient at Atherton Grain Co., Inc., Walnut, IL.

Ron Brokaw, manager at Atherton Grain since June 2007, says the company installed Vertical's programs on Sept. 1, 2011, just in time to start the elevator's fiscal year.

"It has been a definite improvement, for employees and customers both," Brokaw says. "It has helped us cut down on our costs by enabling us to combine the operations at our different locations. Instead of having four people in two offices, we now have just two people full-time during the year and a part-time employee during harvest season."

Atherton Grain has three locations: two in Walnut and one in Normandy, where the company's main office is located.

The elevator had been using Vertical's ScaleTrac scale integration program for three years. Scale management practices also included the use of three video cameras and a ticket printer at a remote country location.

The ScaleTrac program allows the



Ron Brokaw, manager of Atherton Grain.

company to track loads coming in and out of the elevator. "It's helped speed things up for our farmer-customers," Brokaw says. "It's quick and easy to generate a settlement."

When the elevator decided it needed to revamp its grain accounting software system, this past experience with Vertical led it to consider using more Vertical software programs.

"We checked out three or four other software programs that were out there, and we felt that Vertical would give us the best shot at helping us do what we needed to get done," says Brokaw.

GrainTrac Software

As a result, Atherton Grain installed GrainTrac, Vertical's Windows-based grain accounting program. Vertical customized the program for the company. "They tweaked it to fit our business," he says.

Farmer-customers can check on the loads they have delivered and on the status of their accounts using a password, so they know they are the only ones who can access their account.

Atherton Grain uses Vertical's AgPoint agronomy software for generating invoices for fertilizer and other inputs it sells such as dry fertilizer, grass seed, and corn screenings to a feed dealer.

Vertical's TurningPoint Accounting is used for the elevator's general ledger and for generating financial reports.

"You have to know where you've come from to know where you are going and that is what TurningPoint allows us to do," Brokaw says.

Vertical's customer service was another selling point, he says.

"Vertical always responds to our calls, sometimes on the very same call that we make, looking for an answer," Brokaw explains.

Grain Company

Atherton Grain Co., Inc.

Walnut, IL • 815-379-2144

www.athertongrain.com

Roy Atherton, Co-owner, President

Bruce Atherton, Co-owner, Vice President

Ron Brokaw, Manager

Cindy Foss, Bookkeeper

Founded: 1928

Annual sales: \$20.3 million (fiscal year ended Aug., 31, 2011)

Actual storage capacity: 5,765,000 bushels

Annual grain volume: 2.8 million bushels

Crops handled: Corn, soybeans, wheat, oats

Number of employees: 10

Software Vendor



Bartonville, IL • 309-633-0700

www.verticalsoftware.net

Patrick Gilroy, President

Dave Markley, Manager-

Installation Services

Ron Kimbrell, Manager-Information Services

Cynthia Williams, Manager-Software Support Services

Grain accounting software: GrainTrac.

Operating systems: Windows XP Pro, Windows 7, Windows 2010 Server, and Windows Terminal Services.

Software options: GrainTrac for Windows, ScaleTrac for Windows, TurningPoint Accounting, AgPoint, ScalePoint, MixPoint, and GrainTrac PASS.