



# In Conversation with **Rick Tisi, General Manager** **Bickle Main Industrial Supply Inc.**

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## About **Bickle Main Industrial Supply Inc.**

Bickle Main Industrial Supply Inc. was established in 1919 by Henry Bickle, who moved his family to Niagara Falls from Alberta where he previously operated a lumber mill supply company.

In 1955, Henry passed the business to his son, Henry Jr., who changed the name to H.W. Bickle Company. In 2007, Victor DeCaria bought the business, which is now known as Bickle Main Industrial Supply Inc.

In 2019, the company celebrated their 100 years and unveiled their new storefront symbolizing the “working shoulder-to-shoulder” motto of the store.

Interviewer

How many touchpoints do you have in your supply chain?

With all those touchpoints, what would you outline as your largest obstacle?

When and why did you select the Tecsys Streamline Enterprise software solution?

How has the solution helped your business?

How has the solution helped you grow and expand?

Rick Tisi

We have five main touchpoints: Customer walk-ins, phone, email, website, as well as e-catalogues.

We have an extensive inventory and large customer base, therefore, getting prepared for online sales is huge. However, our biggest hurdle is in communicating vendor performance through the shipping process. We are turning the leaf to better measure ETA dates and integrate the advance shipping notices in order to improve communications with both our suppliers and the end consumer.

We selected the Tecsys system back in 2012–13. We wanted a system that could handle our growth for warehouse management. We felt that Tecsys Streamline had the best all-around solution that answered many of our questions while helping us define what our future management needs would look like.

Tecsys Streamline has helped tremendously – specifically inventory control, vendor performance and order insights have been huge successes. We look forward to utilizing some of the more advanced features and have defined a clear vision of both long-term and short-term goals. We are working toward education and use-case training within our company to further our knowledge and get the most out of the platform. As the company has grown, we have faced many obstacles from a procedural standpoint and the software has been able to help us overcome those issues. It is noteworthy to say that the Tecsys team has been great to work with and has helped us better understand how to utilize and train for the unique demands we have on the system.

We have been able to trust the information that the system gives us from an inventory standpoint. This has helped us grow because we can buy smarter and sell quicker, as well as plan our purchases with greater measurable insights.

We utilize the system to record and communicate the expected dates for shipments and line items. As a result, the confidence in our company has elevated from some of our most demanding customers. We can provide better data to our customers from both an accounting and inventory control standpoint. As we move toward our goal of having more than an 80,000-item inventory list barcoded, we can quickly meet the demands of items that move through the inventory and shipping process. All these seemingly small tasks took us a while to get under control. Remember, we are a 100-year-old company and bringing our business into the new era had its challenges. We feel that Tecsys has been a great strategic partner in this process.

Interviewer

How has it reduced your cost of operations?

Rick Tisi

The solution has enabled us to streamline and improve our processes and approaches in how we handle our business operations. The ongoing training sessions have helped us get – and keep – everyone up to speed on how to do many tasks within the company. We can easily say that without Tecsys Streamline, we would have needed to add more staff to facilitate consumer demands.

What has the solution helped you do that you could not previously do – and how is this important to your customers?

We have recently acquired a very large and demanding customer. Their needs are business critical and the items we sell to them must be met, delivered and reported heavily. We utilize the software's ability to track and manage inventory, as well as facilitate communications from quote, to order and final shipping. We believe that the system's capabilities enabled us to win the customer's business. As our strategic partnership grows with this customer, so does our relationship with Tecsys. It's no coincidence that these two relationships have grown hand in hand.

How does it allow you to be more competitive?

The system has helped us understand our business in ways it would have taken us years to recognize. We can answer the high demand of our customers. In this era of e-commerce, meeting demands and expectations have grown tremendously. Tecsys Streamline has allowed us to keep our finger on the pulse of our customers. We know we're still a bit young when it comes to these new processes, however, it helps bridge the gap and allows us to focus on what we do exceptionally well, which is service the needs of our customers.

After implementing Tecsys Streamline, you decided to implement the Tecsys warehouse management system. Why?

This was a no-brainer for us. The advanced capabilities of such a system will allow us to further grow our capabilities while keeping our staff size down. Being able to do more – quickly and effectively – was the main reason we decided on this solution. After many meetings regarding our vision and how we wanted the company to shape and grow, we reflected on how Tecsys has already helped us. We chose the right company, built reliability within the current system and defined a future that once seemed so far away. We knew that further enhancing our software system through Tecsys solutions would help us reach our true potential.

Interviewer

How has the distribution industry changed over the years?

What advice would you give other leaders in your industry?

Rick Tisi

The world has become a smaller place, yet the distance has remained the same. E-commerce has raised the bar on how we are expected to react and the timeframe in which we need to react. Customers demand instant gratification and communication. This influences our industry as we sell and source items that you can't readily find on the shelf. As the middleman we have to be savvy as the industry continues to advance.

As the world gets smaller it is easy to get trapped in the "me" vision – what is good for "me" today, what works for "my" goals. I believe this mentality is a trap. Industry leaders need to step back and look at how "we" as an industry serve the customers. It is a disservice to our customers to let other industries dictate how we do things. This doesn't mean we hold back as a group; it really means we help each other move forward. Recently we have seen a huge push toward standardization of data and the need for more collaboration with our supplier partners to help us better serve our customers.



L to R: Victor DeCaria, Owner and Rick Tisi, General Manager

**Cost of Operations**



**Strategic Partnerships**



**Profitability and Growth**



**Customer Satisfaction**

