

# ARTSYL

## Intelligent Process Automation

### Hirschfeld Industries Streamlines Inventory Control with docAlpha

“ By digitizing and automatically extracting data from bills of lading and material test reports, Hirschfeld boosts efficiency, compliance and quality ”

#### The Challenge

In his role as VP of Operational Technologies at Hirschfeld Industries, Danny Young is tasked with finding better, more efficient ways to do things that deliver a leg up over the competition.

When Young looked at the time and effort spent manually handling documents related to the company's purchases of steel used to fabricate steel bridges and structural components for buildings and power plants, he saw room for improvement.

Considering that the company fabricates more than 100,000 tons of steel annually, Young identified tremendous cost and labor savings that could come from digitizing bills of lading for the company's steel purchases, and material test reports used to ensure that the materials used in producing a finished product are up to spec.

As Young describes it, until recently, the company's processes were manual and paper-burdened.

“[In the past,] we received a bill of lading for an incoming rail car or truck, and then we would pull up the purchase order and write in the information on the bill of lading we received from the vendor, then transfer any information that wasn't on that bill of lading from the purchase order. And we would send that out to the shop and they would receive it, and then whenever it came back they would update the system with it.”

The time and effort required to handle this process manually required most of one employee's time, along with part-time support from employees in their east coast plant.

According to Young, the bill of lading process was simple compared to the work involved in maintaining material test reports. Review these reports to verify that chemical and physical specifications required for a finished deliverable matched the grade of purchased steel required three full time employees working with paper records.

“Looking at the hours we were spending going through documents and doing what they used to call coding and checking things, I felt like there had to be a better way,” Young said.



#### Client

Hirschfeld Industries

[www.hirschfeld.com](http://www.hirschfeld.com)

#### Industry

Manufacturing (steel fabrication)

#### Needs

- Streamline processing and tracking for bills of lading for purchased steel
- Digitize and streamline material test reports and purchase order matching

#### Solution

- docAlpha Transformation Platform
- Intelligent capture of bill of lading document data and automated routing
- Intelligent capture of material handling report document data

While the company had invested in a document management system in the past to manage their files, Young said the system had been under-utilized and didn't have the flexibility to meet their needs.

"[The DMS] we had was very static; any minor changes would mean that it would not pick up the information. Through my research I saw how docAlpha keyed off different items on a form to pull the data," Young said.

"That's why I explored Artsyl further."

## The Solution

Hirschfeld Industries chose to implement the docAlpha Transformation Platform from Artsyl Technologies to intelligently extract data from their bills of lading and material test reports, streamlining the flow of purchase/inventory data while ensuring that all documents were easy to access throughout the process.

Because Hirschfeld views its new process as a competitive advantage, he declined to divulge all of the details of how the new process was implemented.

The net result, however, is that the company is now able to quickly and efficiently digitize bills of lading and material test reports in a way that eliminates manual data entry and provides the flexibility and automated validation necessary to deliver timely, accurate results that boost efficiency while ensuring compliance and quality.

## The Results

By relying on docAlpha to support handling bills of lading, the company has radically reduced the time and effort required to manage and control their inventory. The work that was previously performed full time by one employee, with support from two others, has been reduced from 160 man hours/month to just 40 hours monthly.

At the same time, the company has begun to implement docAlpha for handling material test reports. To date, the company has a handle on newly-received test reports and has applied docAlpha to digitizing and extracting data from its back file of paper test reports.

"I expect us to go from three people down to one person when we're finished," Young said, "We're definitely making a lot of progress. We had a backlog of 16,000 old reports and docAlpha for MTRs is working the way we want it to."

Beyond efficiency gains, the real benefit to automating and digitizing material test reports is ensuring that finished products are always made from materials that conform to rigorous specifications.

"It's a quality issue," Young said, "And that's really, to me, the biggest competitive advantage, is we are not going to cut something out of the incorrect material, because of the system we have in place using docAlpha."

## Artsyl

For over a decade, Artsyl has delivered smart process automation solutions that begin with the most painful and inefficient step in any process — manual data entry. By leveraging data and documents to intelligently handle data capture, extraction, classification and routing, Artsyl streamlines end-to-end operations for improved efficiency, visibility, compliance and control.

Artsyl's docAlpha platform reduces manual document handling, eliminates data entry, increases data accuracy, accelerates workflows and ensures standards compliance. Supported by robust reporting that increases process transparency, Artsyl solutions empower organizations to monitor KPIs, eliminate approval bottlenecks and reduce cycle times while providing instant auditability.

## Results

- Reduction of man hours spent manually handling bills of lading and entering data from 160 man hours/month to 40 man hours
- Projected reduction in man hours for material test reports from three FTEs to one FTEs
- Immediate, digital retrieval of bill of lading and material test report data and documents
- Improved inventory control and automated compliance

## Hirschfeld Industries

Headquartered in San Angelo, Texas, Hirschfeld Industries is one of the largest fully integrated fabricators of highly engineered structural steel components in North America. Fabricating more than 100,000 tons of steel annually, Hirschfeld serves a wide range of end markets including transportation infrastructure, industrial development, commercial construction and power generation. With eleven facilities providing a national presence and an industry-leading footprint, Hirschfeld is a major participant in the expansion and redevelopment of the U.S. transportation and energy infrastructure systems, for both government-funded and private enterprises.

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