



The Phillips Group: Managing Multiple Areas with ECi La Crosse

Lenny Brown, The Phillips Group



The Phillips Group has saved time and money by utilizing the various features of ECi La Crosse, including: Contract Billings, Reports, Barcode Readers, and Inventory.

“The barcoding process has really improved our accuracy. It’s improved that tremendously,” says Lenny Brown, director of service for The Phillips Group.

The Phillips Group is a multi-faceted company made up of multiple businesses and divisions with an annual revenue of \$65 million. One of those divisions is a \$22-million document management operation, managed by the ECi La Crosse business system.

The Middletown, Pa.-based company has six locations for document management, including a Baltimore location that exists as a separate entity and runs a separate La Crosse system.

This Sharp dealership was founded in 1940 by Walter Phillips, who started the business as a used typewriter store. The company was purchased by current owners, David and Peter Phillips (no relation to Walter, nice coincidence though), in 1984.

The Phillips Group is a large, stable business, and it trusts La Crosse to manage that business.

Contract Billings, Reports & Barcode Readers

Lenny Brown, director of service for The Phillips Group and La Crosse user, says some of the software’s best features are contract billings, barcode reading, Night Auditor, reports, and the overall flexibility of the software.

“To me, the strongest part of the software is that it has worked really well for us on the contract side.”

“To me, the strongest part of the software is that it has really worked well for us on the contract side,” says Brown. “Contracts and contract billings, that’s what really sold me on the system. We went from a system we were on for 13 years, which was really a supply package where they just added on a contract piece—it just wasn’t very flexible.”

Brown goes on to say about La Crosse, “It’s really tough to find a contract you can’t fit into it. Almost everything the sales team comes up with fits into one of the methods we’ve built. It’s solid, it works. Let’s face it, in today’s industry, if you can’t get your maintenance contracts billed properly—our maintenance contracts are probably 95 percent of what we bill in service—if you don’t have that locked down, you’re in trouble.”

The La Crosse contracts billing is just one of the features that has helped The Phillips Group save time and money—and headaches. The Phillips Group makes use of the automated reports and even keeps a full-time Crystal Reports writer on staff.

“We make good use of the Night Auditor, where we can get the standard reports every day. First thing in the morning, turn on the computer and there’s my inventory report. Whatever report I need is there waiting for me,” says Brown.

The Phillips Group is also taking advantage of barcode readers, and Brown says it has dramatically improved the inventory process.

“We’ve made pretty good use of the barcode readers,” says Brown. “Probably one of the biggest time-savers we have is the new cycle count and inventory process for parts. Before we had barcode readers, it would take us on average two-and-a-half hours to inventory a tech’s van—now we’re down to a half hour. It’s one of the biggest cost-savers we’ve seen. Our techs carry anywhere from \$8,000 to \$10,000 worth of parts in a van. Inventory used to just be a



