



CASE STUDY

The Right Fit for a Complex Lumber Business
How The Buying Source Relies on RDB Solutions



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OVERVIEW

Customer

THE BUYING SOURCE

Independent, employee-owned
lumber buying organization

Industry

Lumber Purchasing & Distribution

RDB Solutions

Lumber Expert
Trader Expert

BACKGROUND

The Buying Source has a unique place in the lumber and building products industry. The company grew out of the dissolution of BMA and Guardian Building Products roughly two decades ago, when founder David Jackson recognized an opportunity to build a different kind of business model.

Today, The Buying Source is an employee-owned company generating approximately **\$130 million** in annual sales. Its business is built around connecting customers with the lumber products they need and sourcing those products from the right suppliers and mills.

Unlike a traditional lumberyard, The Buying Source does not maintain a large physical inventory. That makes visibility, order management, logistics, and communication

especially important. The team needs to know not only what has been ordered, but whether an order is ready at the mill, when it can be shipped, where a truck is, and whether the transaction has been properly invoiced and recorded.

RDB Solutions' Lumber Expert and our integrated sales module, Trader Expert, have been part of that equation since approximately 2008.

Kurt Shuey, Purchasing Agent, joined The Buying Source in March 2020 after working in the lumber and building products industry for 17 years, including positions with an independent lumberyard and Huttig Building Products. When he arrived, Lumber Expert was already an established part of the company's operations.

He immediately appreciated why.

"It's simple. It does what we need it to do."

BEFORE RDB SOLUTIONS

Before adopting Lumber Expert, The Buying Source (TBS) was using another software system to manage its business. As the company evolved, it needed a system that could better support the way it actually operated, not a generic platform loaded with functionality that didn't apply to its business model.

For TBS, the goal wasn't simply to automate tasks. The system needed to connect the company's purchasing, sales, accounting, order processing, and transportation workflows while giving employees a clear picture of what was happening with every order.



That became particularly important because TBS operates without traditional physical inventory.

The company has to coordinate lumber purchases from suppliers and mills, track orders as they move through the process, determine whether material is ready, and coordinate transportation. A system that created additional complexity, or required employees to work around it, quickly became a liability.

THE CHALLENGE

TBS's business model creates a number of unique operational challenges.

The team is constantly coordinating between customers, suppliers, mills, and trucking. Once an order is placed, employees need to know where it stands and what needs to happen next.

One of the most important tools is the truck dispatch system within Lumber Expert and Trader Expert. Kurt relies heavily on the system to filter orders,



monitor bookings versus invoices, and keep track of the logistical side of the business.

For a company that doesn't maintain physical inventory, knowing whether material is ready at the mill is critical.

THE SEARCH FOR THE RIGHT SOLUTION

For Kurt, one of the biggest strengths of Lumber Expert is that it doesn't try to be more complicated than it needs to be.

Coming from environments where he had experienced highly automated, corporate software systems, Kurt initially expected that more automation and more complexity would automatically mean a better system.

His experience at TBS changed that perspective.

He found that Lumber Expert's simplicity actually helps the team work more efficiently. Employees can learn the system, understand the workflow, and get their work done without navigating layers of unnecessary functionality.

That matters because TBS is not looking for software simply because it has the

longest list of features. The company wants tools it will actually use.

And according to Kurt, that's where Lumber Expert delivers significant value.

TBS uses a substantial percentage of the functionality available to it, rather than paying for a large suite of features that sit unused.

"We're not paying for a bunch of stuff we don't use."

The result is a system that provides the functionality the company needs at a price that makes sense for its business.



ONBOARDING

Because Lumber Expert and Trader Expert had already been in place for many years when Kurt joined TBS, his onboarding experience was less about implementing a new system and more about learning how the company used its existing tools. That made the software's ease of use especially valuable.

Kurt was able to become comfortable with the system relatively quickly and develop a strong understanding of how it supported the company's day-to-day workflow.

More recently, TBS completed a **migration to the cloud**.

Cloud access allows employees to work with the system remotely when circumstances require it. For a business dependent on transportation and logistics, that flexibility can be critical.

If an urgent logistical question arises outside normal business hours, the team can access the information it needs without being tied to a physical office.

The cloud also provides an additional layer of security and reliability for the company's business-critical information.

RESULTS & IMPACT

After more than 15 years using Lumber Expert and Trader Expert, TBS has built its daily workflow around the platform.

The system supports the company's core processes, from purchase orders and order processing to accounting and financial management, while also providing the logistical visibility needed to coordinate shipments.

For Kurt, the most important measure of success is straightforward: **the software doesn't get in the way**. It supports the business without creating unnecessary friction.

The truck dispatch functionality is one of the clearest examples. The ability to filter orders, track bookings and invoices, and monitor the status of material helps the team manage a complicated logistics operation without maintaining physical inventory.

The software also provides a foundation for identifying additional opportunities to improve efficiency. As Kurt and his team learn more about the capabilities already available within Lumber Expert and Trader Expert, they can evaluate whether existing tools can replace spreadsheets and other manual processes.

SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP

Technology is only as valuable as the support behind it, and Kurt speaks highly of the RDB Solutions success team.

One experience stands out.

After a former office manager left the company, TBS encountered an issue with bank reconciliation. Rather than simply providing instructions and leaving the team to figure it out, Jan Kimble from the RDB Solutions success team worked directly with Kurt and his colleagues.

Jan reviewed the bank statements, helped identify where the errors had occurred, and then trained the team on the correct process so they could avoid similar problems in the future.

For Kurt, that kind of hands-on assistance is what makes a software company a true partner.



WHY RDB SOLUTIONS

For TBS, the relationship with RDB Solutions ultimately comes down to fit.

The software **fits the company's business model**. It provides the tools needed to manage purchasing, sales, accounting, logistics, and financial operations without burying employees in unnecessary complexity.

The pricing fits. TBS can use a significant portion of the functionality available without paying for an oversized system filled with features it doesn't need.

And perhaps most importantly, **the partnership fits.**

Both TBS and RDB Solutions are small companies. That creates a level of alignment that Kurt says is difficult to find

with large corporate software providers.

He values being able to communicate directly with people at RDB, including leadership like Kevin, rather than getting caught in layers of corporate bureaucracy.

For a company that moves millions of dollars of lumber through a complex network of customers, suppliers, mills, and trucks, having a responsive technology partner matters.

After nearly two decades, The Buying Source isn't simply still using Lumber Expert and Trader Expert. They're continuously building on a partnership with RDB Solutions where both companies strive for excellence.

"I feel like we use a bigger percentage of what the system can do at an affordable cost."

--Kurt Shuey, Purchasing Agent, The Buying Source

"When we need something done, it happens. It's not this corporate chain that you've got to run up and run down and everything's slow because the big machine has to get moving."

– Kurt Shuey, Purchasing Agent, The Buying Source

A PARTNERSHIP THAT KEEPS EVOLVING

The Buying Source's experience with Lumber Expert demonstrates that the right ERP system doesn't have to be the most complicated one. It needs to be built for the industry, support the way a company actually operates, and evolve alongside its customers.

From truck dispatch and order management to accounting, cloud access, and hands-on support, RDB Solutions continues to provide The Buying Source with a practical, industry-focused platform, and a partner they can count on when they need help.

For The Buying Source, that's what makes the relationship work: the software does what they need, the support is there when they need it, and the partnership feels personal.

Inspired by The Buying Source's success story?

Get in touch with us to start your journey toward outstanding results.



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