

# Stitching Together Success Seamlessly

When a small, family-owned business in Fall River, Massachusetts makes a big impact on the literal fabric of people's lives around the world, people pay attention.

Such has been the case for the Merrow Sewing Machine Company, in one incarnation after another, ever since the company began as Merrow Mills back in 1838—the country's first manufacturer of knitted cotton goods—some 175 years ago. A few years later, the company invented the overlock stitch—and the sewing machines to mass produce it—which is what still holds together most of the garments we wear in the 21st century.

## Changing the Game in the World of Textiles... and ERP

Now, by teaming with Kenandy for all its ERP needs, Merrow has been able to continue to innovate in amazing new ways, most recently by inventing the world's first branded stitch—the ActiveSeam—that is revolutionizing the manufacture of textiles and clothing of all shapes and sizes, including in the multi-billion-dollar active wear industry.

ActiveSeam is not only a brand new stitch, it's also an entirely new business model for the textile world, requiring customers to license its use. Well-known customers are signing up in droves, customizing the stitch to suit their own brands, requiring Merrow to have better-than-ever ERP functionality—seamless order tracking, robust reporting, and tight inventory control, for example.

“As an innovative company itself, Kenandy has been a great part of our successful innovations with ActiveSeam and other exciting business opportunities,” says Merrow CEO Charlie Merrow, who, with brother Owen, are the sixth generation of Merrows to run the pioneering company.

For a small business, Merrow is a complicated one. In addition to manufacturing thousands of different sewing machine parts that are distributed in 65 countries, it also is continually building custom sewing machines for a variety of customers and applications. The high levels of complexity and costs of customization were becoming economically challenging.

“Kenandy has made it possible for us to deal with all the challenges of a major, multinational company but with the structure of a small business,” says Charlie Merrow. “It's been an unbelievable change for us—a game change. We've been able to improve performance with a small staff, which simply wasn't possible with our prior ERP systems.”

“We're driven by our confidence in Kenandy...It really is transformative software.”

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Charlie Merrow,  
CEO, Merrow Sewing  
Machine Company

**MERROW®**

## No Programmers Necessary

With Kenandy, programmers also aren't necessary. Says Merrow, "With Kenandy, I don't need a C+ or a PHP guy—I just need someone smart. Kenandy not only lets us see our data more clearly, it lets us quickly react to things and customize the system ourselves. That's real value."

So much focus on innovation and customization means continual problem-solving and iterating new ideas. Failure is an inevitable part of the process that leads to success.

"We get things wrong all the time, and that's just fine," says Merrow. "The amazing change with Kenandy is that it lets us iterate through the failure points." As an example, Merrow mentions a repair program the company recently built on the Salesforce Platform and integrated with Kenandy. "It was a disaster in the beginning, but one of our smart guys, who doesn't have a programming bone in his body, easily made adjustments and it's now turned into an enormous asset for the company."

"One of the most remarkable things about Kenandy is that it lets us really see what's going on in our business."

## A Single System for Running— and Growing—Multiple Businesses

Merrow's success with Kenandy has been a significant factor in the decision to invest in other business opportunities under the Merrow Global banner—companies such as HydeStore.com, Boston Thread, and Patch Light, for example.

"The Merrow Global investments in these businesses are driven in large part by our confidence in Kenandy," says Merrow. "Because Kenandy is so easily extensible, we can build out the backend support for these new businesses quickly at a relatively low cost. This is, in fact, why these businesses are launching."

Rather than being constricted by the limitations and unwieldy requirements of their prior on-premise ERP systems, Merrow can use Kenandy to seamlessly leverage information and resources that enable the company to grow and prosper.

"Kenandy enables us to focus on the business challenges that allow us to grow and make money rather than on the problems of dealing with software," says Merrow. "For eight years after Owen and I took over running the company, it was hard to focus on anything other than what we had to do. Now, since we've implemented Kenandy, we've spent the last year focused on growth. It's a very different use—a far better use—of our resources, of our people."

Kenandy is the perfect fit for Merrow—with plenty of room to grow.