



Master Group Cuts Payout Times from 90 Days to 24 Hours with Synchron

About Master Group

Heating and air-conditioning experts Master Group identified warranty management as one of the company's biggest challenges. Contractors often waited up to 90 days for reimbursement, and the company faced a backlog of more than 2,000 claims. After rolling out Synchron Warranty Management, approved claims are typically paid inside 24 hours, and the backlog is consistently under 10 (yes, you read that right!)

synchron Warranty

Headquarters

Canada

Division

Master Group

Industry

HVAC

Challenges

- Paper-based, slow warranty process causing payment delays up to 90 days
- Backlog of 2,000+ claims and significant manual workload
- Low visibility and inefficiency, impacting contractors and internal teams

Results

- Payments reduced to <24 hours and backlog cut to <10
- Manual work eliminated, enabling strategic focus and better contractor experience
- Data-driven insights improving forecasting, product analysis, and vendor collaboration



Based in St-Bruno-de-Montarville, Quebec, Master Group is the largest independent distributor of air conditioning, refrigeration, heating, and ventilation (HVAC) systems in Canada. With more than 1,800 employees, the company operates 55 branches and three distribution centers, as well as a further 30 branches in the US.

Master Group sells thousands of systems to its customers, the professional contractors who install and maintain residential, commercial, and industrial HVAC systems. Each new HVAC system comes with a manufacturer's warranty, and if a component fails within the warranty period, the contractor can reclaim repair expenses for time and materials from Master Group. To make warranty claims, contractors completed complex paper forms, delivered in person at each Master Group branch. Paperwork took months to reach the warranty team, and contractors waited months to get paid. On average, payments took up to 90 days to arrive, with a constant backlog of more than 2,000 claims awaiting resolution.

“All this paperwork cost time in the branches and at Master Group head office, impacting our relationships with the contractors. With Synchron Warranty Management, we have cut average time to payment to less than 24 hours and reduced the claims backlog to fewer than ten. And we're only just starting.”

Dave Englehutt

Vice President of Purchasing & Procurement | Master Group

Improving the Work Environment

Looking back at the warranty difficulties, Master Group had identified much more than a simple 'too much paper' problem. Slow timelines were creating a reputation that it was hard to do business with Master Group, with internal processes that were not scaling effectively or efficiently, and an unknown financial liability that was only visible after several months.

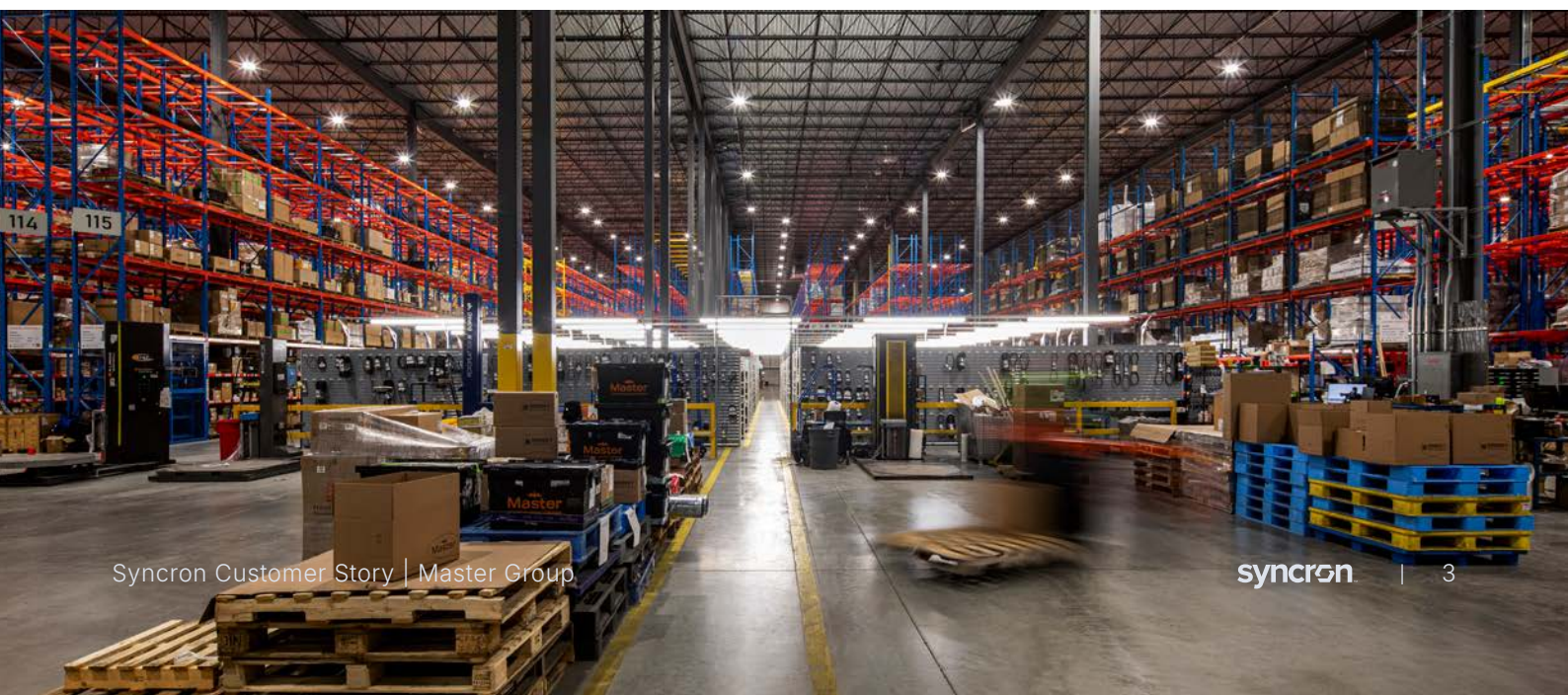
“We had surveyed our customers, and warranties came up as one of their challenges, (...) We saw that as an opportunity to work through how we could improve and knew that our tools offered only limited support. The plan was to make our customers' lives easier, and in turn improve our own lives.”

Dave Englehutt

Vice President of Purchasing & Procurement | Master Group

For the contractors who purchased and installed HVAC systems, submitting complex paper forms to the branches took considerable time. Because warranty claims are routed back to the original equipment vendor, claims could follow multiple different processes, producing a significant training workload for both Master Group staff and the contractors.

Delayed payment of up to three months directly impacted cashflow for the contractors. In a competitive industry where the same HVAC system can be sourced from many distributors, Master Group was aware that service levels — including warranties — were a key differentiator to win and retain customers.



Creating a Streamlined Workflow

Master Group looked for ways to streamline the entire warranty process, accelerate and standardize payment timelines, and reduce or even eliminate the manual workload both for contractors, and for in-house finance and branch teams.

After taking the decision to move to a digital solution, and with an eye on integration with existing ERP applications, Master Group selected Synchron Warranty Management. With a simple interface designed for web, tablet, and mobile app, Synchron Warranty Management enables the complete warranty cycle, from identifying valid claims through part returns and tracking, and supplier cost recovery.

Optimum Control and Efficiency

Rather than purely map the existing processes, Master Group reviewed how the best practices embedded in Synchron Warranty Management could be configured. As a first step, the company enabled claims for two major HVAC brands over one summer before expanding to additional products.

As contractors started to switch to Synchron, the previous torrent of paper soon dwindled to a trickle, releasing more time to deal with the existing paperwork. Within one quarter, the warranty team was able to clear the backlog, catch up with payments, and remove tedious manual chasing calls and emails.

The dramatic reduction in manual workload naturally released more time for the Master Group team to look at warranty and claims management as a strategic process.

For example, with data captured by Synchron Warranty Management, Master Group is already able to identify HVAC products that have higher-than-average claims, right down to a single part failure that might be causing issues. This level of detail can be shared with vendors, and the additional visibility enables Master Group to work more collaboratively with its suppliers, strengthening partnerships, improving product quality, and ultimately delivering better service to end-customers.



In addition, Master Group can use data captured by Synchron to build a picture over time that will contribute to forecasting, which was near impossible with the former manual workflows.

“In the past we were just processing claims and digging out specific information — it was too much heavy lifting. With Synchron, the data is being accumulated automatically, and we can pull stats, percentages, and quantities very easily. With Synchron we can track information, see if it’s improving or if we need to take action,” explains Englehutt.

“In addition, we can use the data in so many places. For example, if we bring in new products we will need to carry spare parts. With Synchron we can identify trends within a few months, adjust our stock levels, and get ahead of the curve. We can involve procurement, product management, technical services, and all the departments to help deliver an efficient service.”

Leveling Up Customer Experiences

As Master Group continues to roll out Synchron Warranty Management to encompass more vendor partners, the solution will bring new benefits around product analysis, finance, procurement, warranty, and customer relationship management. Arduous manual tasks have been replaced by automation, enabling talented staff to help technicians better serve customers, and banish the end-of-quarter stress.

Englehutt concludes, “Master Group is at the start of our Synchron journey. The efforts we dedicated are producing great KPIs, and we are seeing the benefits and future potential for Synchron to be a game-changer to take Master Group to the next level.”

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For more, visit synchron.com.