

CASE STUDY **UPU Industries**

MICROSOFT DYNAMICS™ NAV

BACKGROUND

Steve Orr Limited is the leading manufacturer and supplier of baled crop packaging products in Ireland and the UK. Netwrap used in conserving round bales, silage stretch film and of course, baler twine make up the company's core products.

Steve Orr Limited was established in 1977 as a distribution business majoring on ropes and agricultural twines. By 1996, Steve Orr Limited had identified the changing trends within its sector and the opportunity to manufacture and supply Netwrap and the specialised big square plastic baler twines.

Innovation and technology from the baker manufacturers had driven the move away from conventional smaller bales and twines to bigger round and square bales required by more intensive farming techniques. Exploiting this opportunity Steve Orr Limited began manufacturing Netwrap and big square twine under the name UPU Industries Limited. Since then the company has grown its share of domestic markets in the UK and the ROI, as well as exporting to 23 countries globally. The company employs 44 and has created not only an innovative culture but a winning one also; awards include the Queens Award for Enterprise, DTI First Time Exporter and Enterprise 2000.



Philip Orr, Managing Director of UPU Industries, outside their Dromona plant

WHY MICROSOFT DYNAMICS™ NAV

With such rapid company growth, UPU soon out-grew their existing DOS-based Sage Line 100 system and the company found it no longer met the needs of the business. Any new information system would require strong integration capabilities covering all functions of the business; allow easy access to management information; and, would need to cope well with the international and seasonal nature of the business. Also, having used systems in the past that had been supported from mainland UK, geographical location of the solution provider was an important factor, so that if there ever was a problem, it could be sorted out easily.

As Mark Weir, Group Financial Controller said, "We needed to look for a system that was fully integrated, and that would grow with us. We drew up a list of requirements and began the search for a 'best fit' ERP system." Mark Weir having worked for PricewaterhouseCoopers, as a consultant, and also in the Finance Department of several large Northern Ireland companies had previously worked with many different business systems.

"Through an evaluation process we quickly identified two products that we felt would match our business needs. Sysco Software Solutions with its Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV product, very quickly established itself as the front-runner. Also the fact that Sysco were virtually on our door-step was a clear advantage," said Mark Weir.

Mark goes on to say, "We were looking for a professional company with an established business track record, who would offer good support and who had strong commercial knowledge. We were satisfied that the Sysco team possessed these essential qualities as well as the IT and accountancy knowledge required to make the implementation a success, and more importantly, they spoke our language."

IMPLEMENTATION

The decision to order Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV was made at the end of January 2001 with a 'go live' date set for 1st April 2001. As Mark says, "The system went in very quickly. In just two short months, we had Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV up and running with Sales, Accounts, Purchasing, Inventory Control, and of course reporting now all being accessible through one integrated system."

Mark adds, "We were very impressed with Sysco's systems methodology and with how smooth the implementation process went." With the Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV team on site for 8 days to ease the new system in, as Mark says "there really were no problems, and with the location of Sysco in Belfast being so close to us, we knew that within a half an hour someone from the team could be with us. The whole implementation went extremely smoothly."

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV is a fully integrated ERP package covering all areas of a business from CRM to Manufacturing. As Philip Orr, Managing Director of UPU Industries says, "From production to management accounts, we can see the business benefits that the Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV product has brought to our company. We now have immediate access to all sales statistics in real time, by customer, by product etc. which is imperative in a very short selling season. Working within one system gives reports when I need them, this is crucial for informed decision making." Philip goes on to say, "Within the system we can drill down and filter for the exact information we require to plan for the future development of our business. And of course it is vital that we have this information to hand right away due to the globally competitive nature of our business."

UPU Industries with its large number of international clients also needed a system with multi-currency capabilities, with clients all over the world, from North America and Eurozone to Australia and New Zealand, it was key that the software dealt easily with currency exchanges and has therefore turned what was under the previous system a laborious accounting procedure into an easy automated task.

The implementation of Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV has aided the business during peak periods. As with many businesses, seasonality is a major factor. There is a relatively short selling season within this particular area of agricultural product. With Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV, orders that have been placed by customers go on to the system that day, and are followed through to the various company departments, production, accounts and so on. The speed of this whole process through Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV makes the whole company more efficient particularly during peak periods. "The ease of use during peak periods and the ability to see in 'real time' the stock and order situation, has aided the efficiency of the business greatly," says Philip Orr.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

It was vital to UPU Industries that they had local support. Sysco Software Solutions with offices in Belfast and Dublin are in the position to immediately offer instant support. With the dedicated Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV Resource Team at hand to aid clients with whatever issues may arise. As Mark Weir comments, "The support has been great, problems have been few, the whole implementation process was very smooth with training taking place both at our end and also within the training rooms at Sysco. The Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV team at Sysco are with us every step of the way, even now if a problem crops up it's dealt with quickly."

THE FUTURE

UPU Industries Ltd went 'live' with Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV on 1 April 2001, however the relationship between Sysco and UPU has remained close. The Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV Team are on hand to aid UPU in any future parts of the business that may require further integration. With UPU currently looking at implementing new Manufacturing and CRM modules, the relationship between UPU and Sysco continues to grow.

"It was important to us to find a reliable solutions provider, who had an in depth knowledge of business, we found this in Sysco. We needed a 'best fit' ERP package that would grow with us, and we now have that with Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV. We look forward to a continued relationship with Sysco in the future."
Philip Orr, Managing Director

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV and Sysco Software Solutions, visit www.sysco-software.com