

Window Film Manufacturer Replaces Sage 100 with Modern Acumatica Cloud ERP Connecting 7 Locations

OVERVIEW

Erickson International is a manufacturer of window films for the automotive, residential & commercial markets. Made in the USA, distributed worldwide, the company used legacy Sage 100 for financial operations, but as it grew, executives found the on-premises software ran slow and lacked the cloud capabilities it needed across its seven locations. Erickson International deployed Acumatica Cloud ERP, gaining access from anywhere, real-time data transparency, and inventory visibility in its distribution centers.

KEY RESULTS

- Connected disparate financial systems into one integrated solution, boosting customer service
- Gained real-time view of raw materials and inventory, improving visibility
- Unified 7 locations, streamlining processes at each location
- Eliminated data exports and imports, and batch processing of data, saving time
- Lowered technology infrastructure costs, eliminating several servers and software
- Improved communication between locations, eliminating email, time spent with spreadsheets exchanging data
- Gained a single, flexible platform for streamlined growth

CHALLENGES

Headquartered in Las Vegas, NV with six other distribution centers across the U.S., Erickson International makes window film and then turns the material into window coverings for residential and commercial use. The company runs two manufacturing lines; one that makes state-of-the-art window films, and a coating and laminating line where it produces its final products. Erickson sells to B2B customers in the automotive, commercial building, and other industries.

The corporate office upgraded its financial software from QuickBooks to Sage 100 to better track its manufacturing processes. Several of its distribution centers, however, remained on QuickBooks.

The legacy manufacturing module provided by Sage was difficult to implement, didn't provide the process manufacturing benefits the company needed, and ran terribly slow on the company's on-premises servers. Sage 100 also lacked the ability to handle Erickson's different entities; it only supported the headquarters' financials.

"There was a lot of data to move from one software to another just to manage inventory and sales," says Elena Mheidze, CFO. "We put a lot into big spreadsheets and then entered data into another system."

Needing better inventory transparency, cloud-based access, and greater operational efficiency, Mheidze, who also manages the company's IT infrastructure, searched for a modern ERP that could be accessed from anywhere. She wanted to eliminate the headaches and costs associated with on-site servers, and wanted an affordable system that was flexible and could grow with the company.

"Cloud was Number 1," she says, adding she also needed a single connected system that provided a high level of data visibility into every part of the business.

With her old system, she had to VPN in and out of the various distribution sites to figure out what was in inventory and what was being used to make products, which was very time consuming. She also had to communicate with each center exchanging information via spreadsheets rather than using Sage 100, she said.



Company

Erickson International, LLC / American Standard Window Film (ASWF)
www.aswf.com

Industry

Manufacturing and Distribution: Optical Quality Film Coatings and Lamination

Location


Las Vegas, Nevada with several National and International Distribution Centers


Products


Acumatica Advanced Financial Management with Distribution

Customer Social Sharing Details

 www.facebook.com/ASWFUSA

 www.instagram.com/aswfusa

 www.youtube.com/channel/UC0qwcdOZNe1Z5K_5DMjqCyA

 www.linkedin.com/company/erickson-international/

Partner Details



Information Integration Group, Inc. (IIG)
www.iigservices.com

SOLUTION

Working with technology partner Information Integration Group, Inc., Mheidze briefly considered upgrading Sage 100 but upon examination felt that it wasn't a true-cloud solution. "Sage Cloud is only semi-cloud, it's very cumbersome and time consuming," she says. "Correcting something required complex steps; one step forward then three steps back to correct. There was also a lot of batch processing, which meant a lot of waiting."

Sage 100 was still an on-premises solution that only offered "cloud-connected" integrations. Batch processing does not support real-time data. "With Sage 100 we had to maintain a server and that server had a lot of associated costs. So, removing the headache to maintain the on-premises system was the number one reason we chose to go with Acumatica," Mheidze says.

Information Integration Group introduced Erickson to Acumatica Cloud ERP, a single connected platform that offers a pricing model based on usage rather than per-seat. "The Sage price with additional users was at a bizarre amount," Mheidze says. "I liked that Acumatica doesn't care how many users you have but how much data you use. We don't have to worry that our data is going to grow exponentially but what if I have more people working for me? I don't have to worry about rapidly escalating costs."

With Information Integration Group's guidance, Mheidze handled the Acumatica Cloud ERP implementation from Erickson's side by herself while still handling her CFO duties on an aggressive 3-month schedule. "Everyone said I was crazy to try to do it that fast," she says. But Information Integration Group's expertise and Acumatica's ease of use made it easier, she says. "Now, it's like Sage never happened."

BENEFITS

One Connected Business Improves Operations

When asked about Acumatica Cloud ERP's top benefits, Mheidze doesn't hesitate: "Mobility, accessibility, unification," she says. Moving from managing disconnected systems in various locations to having all data in a single place "was a huge plus," she says. "We had to bring California and Ohio, which were still operating in QuickBooks, to Acumatica to unify everyone. Now everyone can access the ERP, and there's no more different coding or General Ledger systems."

Now, everyone is on the same page with aligned data across seven locations. "To see all the data really improves our ability to serve customers and in manufacturing," Mheidze says.

"We can see valid inventories, and if we need to know what we're making next week, we can see what's in stock and use this information. In Sage, the information wasn't on one screen, and we had to do a lot more manual assembly of the information to learn the same thing."

Secure ERP Inspires Confidence

Wearing her IT hat, Mheidze no longer worries how secure Internet connections are, how firewalls are holding up at various locations or increasing server maintenance costs. "Before there was a lot of cost, maintenance, and roadblocks about security," she says. "I was constantly worried. Now, all I need is a solid Internet connection to get to the ERP from anywhere." Acumatica Cloud ERP hosted on AWS provides automatic backup and security.

Mheidze likes that Acumatica Cloud ERP has an open API allowing third party applications to connect with ease. However, since she's still in the early stages of using the new platform, she hasn't added any additional applications. "Acumatica has everything I need."



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Intuitive Interface Makes Training Easier, Faster

Mheidze is the head software trainer for the manufacturer, and plowed through Acumatica Cloud ERP's manuals, online training, and then remotely trained employees. "Acumatica's user interface is absolutely fantastic, engaging, and intuitive," she says. "If you are moving between screens or places, it gets you back to the same place – you don't have to retype or remember something. Acumatica is very dynamic and intuitive and customizable; all our users are happy."

One of her larger challenges was the change management that comes with any new software implementation. "It's hard to break habits that people have," she says. "They are used to doing things in certain ways so I have to do a lot of explaining, which is hard and challenging for any business."

Employees like that they can customize Acumatica Cloud ERP's dashboards to present information important to their roles and easily move and modify columns. "It's like a Lego," she says.

Improved Communication

Erickson International has boosted communication because Acumatica Cloud ERP allows everyone to see data about any location instantly; data no longer needs to be manipulated or imported or exported outside of the system so conversations happen instantly.

"If you are a midsized business that desires to grow and has the need to unify your locations, Acumatica brings this amazing gain; it connects people. In today's world we need communication, and Acumatica provides the ability to have information at your fingertips that's unified and delivered fast," Mheidze says.



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