



POUPART LIMITED

BUSINESS PROFILE

BASED IN BROXBOURNE, HERTFORDSHIRE, POUPART IS ONE OF THE UK'S LARGEST SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY SOFT-FRUIT, TOP-FRUIT, STONE-FRUIT, CITRUS, CHERRIES, GRAPES AND A HOST OF OTHER PRODUCTS TO LEADING MULTIPLE RETAILERS AND INDEPENDENTS.

BUSINESS/IT CHALLENGE

OPERATING DISPARATE AND SILOED SYSTEMS FOR FINANCE AND SALES ORDER PROCESSING, FORECASTING, STOCK PLANNING, PROMOTION PLANNING AND MARKET SHARE ANALYSIS MEANT THAT THE TIMELY AND ACCURATE INFORMATION THAT IS KEY TO MANAGING THEIR BUSINESS WAS NOT AVAILABLE.

SOLUTION

- MICROSOFT DYNAMICS NAV
- MICROSOFT BIZTALK SERVER 2006
- MICROSOFT SQL SERVER 2005 WITH REPORTING SERVICES
- MICROSOFT COMMERCE GATEWAY
- MICROSOFT INTERNET INFORMATION SERVER V6.0

BENEFITS

- IMPROVED BUSINESS DECISIONS BASED ON CENTRALISED, INTEGRATED DATA
- ENHANCED CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS
- STREAMLINED PRODUCT MANAGEMENT
- REDUCED TIME SPENT ON REPORTING
- INCREASED EFFICIENCY AND MANAGED SUPPLY CHAIN MORE EFFECTIVELY

POUPART IMPLEMENTS MICROSOFT DYNAMICS NAV TO DRIVE GROWTH AND INCREASE REVENUE

Based in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire, Poupart is one of the UK's largest suppliers of quality soft-fruit, top-fruit, stone-fruit, citrus, cherries, grapes and a host of other products to multiple retailers and independents.

Poupart has been trading successfully since the middle of the 19th century and became a wholly-owned subsidiary of Argent Group Europe Ltd in 1997. To improve control of management information and enable better business decision-making based on accurate, up-to-date data, Poupart turned to Tectura to deploy Microsoft Dynamics® NAV.

TIMELY INFORMATION CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

Dealing with the seasonal variations and limited shelf life of fresh produce presents Poupart with some unique ongoing challenges. Forecasting accurately is inherently difficult, yet ensuring the right levels of stock are in the right place at the right time is vital, as is adhering to customers' standards in respect of quality, food safety and value. Poupart's buyers need to understand what fruit will be available from each of their growers by season, by week and then by day, as the season progresses. "We are the interface between hundreds of fruit growers worldwide and some of the UK's biggest supermarkets," says Robin Dawson, Finance Director at Poupart. "Without timely and accurate information, we can't promise them what produce they will receive and when. We simply can't afford to make mistakes."

Rapid advances in supply chain management technology meant Poupart's systems were under increasing strain. Operating disparate and siloed systems for finance and sales order processing, forecasting, stock planning, promotion planning and market share analysis compounded problems caused by forecasts arriving by email, fax or telephone. "Forecasts often arrived late – if at all – and with a number of people re-keying information, both time and accuracy became a concern," admits Dawson. "In addition, some of our produce arrives via third party pack houses and gaining visibility of that stock was impossible."

Supplying fresh fruit is only part of the service Poupart provides. "Our business changed a few years ago when the supermarkets asked us to help them manage products as well as supplying fruit," says Laurence Olins, Executive Chairman of Poupart. "Now, on behalf of our customers, we advise on wastage at shelf level and help to manage targets for achieving gross profits and increasing sales."

AN INFORMED CHOICE

Poupart began researching solutions that could deliver reliable and accurate information for effective sales, stock control and promotional planning - the business processes key to Poupart's success. "We based our decision on key criteria, which included flexibility and scalability," says Matthew Butlin, IT Manager and project manager at Poupart. The company's search included industry specific suppliers as well as global players such as SAP, Oracle and Microsoft.

The solution which most comprehensively addressed Poupart's requirements was Microsoft Dynamics NAV, delivered by Tectura, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner. "We looked at the financial status of all the vendors, the track record and expertise of the partners and, of course, how we felt about working with them," continues Butlin. "The Microsoft solution ensured strong integration with the rest of our IT infrastructure and Tectura, with their excellent methodology, disciplined and thorough approach and general industry expertise, were simply head and shoulders above the rest."

At the outset of the engagement, Tectura's consultants invested time to thoroughly analyse Poupart's business. "From day one, Tectura understood our business and requirements extremely well," says Butlin. "Their analysis documentation is exceptional and they have an impressively

thorough and proactive approach.

The communication between us was outstanding throughout the project."

Microsoft Dynamics NAV is at the heart of the solution, which also includes Microsoft BizTalk Server and Microsoft SQL Server, standardising business processes across the group. The company-wide project involved 80 users in finance, sales and marketing, product management, technical, operations and purchasing. In addition, Tectura installed Microsoft Commerce Gateway to automate the exchange of data with the supermarkets using EDI, and with the pack houses and growers, via a web-based XML application. "The project was delivered on time and within budget," confirms Butlin. "Tectura adopted a phased project approach and focused on resolving any problems as they arose, to cause as little disruption as possible. We see these as critical components of an implementation that was successful from the day we went live."

INTEGRATING BEYOND ENTERPRISE BOUNDARIES

Poupart can now see the exact stock situation at each pack house using Microsoft BizTalk Server. Once the stock has been assessed, a shipment order is instantly available to the pack house. 100% of shipment order confirmations are now being returned to Poupart and received into Microsoft Dynamics NAV automatically. As a result, Poupart can monitor each shipment and return exactly, enabling

"Information management is fundamental to our business, to ensure we meet customer and supplier requirements," explains Robin Dawson, Finance Director, Poupart. "Our IT system had become unwieldy, making it difficult to get access to the information on which we base strategic business decisions, so we knew we had to review our internal processes and begin to use IT as a tool to gain competitive advantage."

"Our buyers know, to the day, exactly what each grower is forecasting and, because the suppliers have direct access to our system, our processing overheads have been reduced and the re-keying errors have been eliminated."

Robin Dawson
Finance Director
Poupart

more accurate planning. "Our service to the supermarkets has improved through increased visibility," says Dawson. "In fact, the system now provides complete tracking and traceability of all products. This means if we are asked to compensate our clients for damaged goods, we can check the handling process of those goods from original receipt to final delivery."

In a market where prices are under continual negotiation, attracting new suppliers and customers by offering an

optimal service is essential. Crucially, management information is now available on demand through integrated and reliable reporting capability. In addition, Poupart is now able to draw on an increasing bank of historical data, thereby enhancing its specialist product management service. "Microsoft Dynamics NAV has allowed us to provide product management and promotion planning much more effectively, and in a much more joined up manner, than we were ever able to do before," says Olins. This is borne out by financial results. "In the year after implementing Microsoft Dynamics NAV our sales increased by 35%, with no additional headcount," confirms Olins.

AN ON-GOING RELATIONSHIP

Since the initial implementation, the relationship between Poupart and Tectura has continued to blossom. Poupart is now using the latest version of Microsoft Dynamics NAV, version 5.0, to exploit new functionality. The use of Microsoft BizTalk Server and Commerce Gateway has been expanded for example; details about the pallets and trays used in relation to the sales orders processed are updated automatically as well as purchase invoices from suppliers.

As well as the upgrade itself, Tectura helped Poupart expand their usage of Microsoft Dynamics NAV's rich functionality. All transactions are now lot-tracked through the system at consignment line level, allowing for better traceability

and reporting. Poupart can also monitor charges and costs associated with the pallets and trays used to transport their deliveries. "The end result was a seamless upgrade with no interruption to the business," confirms Butlin.

Butlin sees several benefits from the long term partnership with Tectura. He is able to use Tectura as a sounding board for requests from the business to ensure enhancements will be feasible for future upgrades. "High quality of any modification is a given," he concludes. "We have also established an easy and accurate budgeting process, as we are able to work with Tectura to plan our systems years in advance based on the business requirements."

A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Since Poupart started working with Tectura, the business has continued to grow year on year, with annual turnover doubling in that time. Olins couldn't be happier. "Our investment in Microsoft Dynamics NAV and our partnership with Tectura enabled us to exploit new opportunities, including acquisitions, which were never available to us before," he says. "We have expanded our business and we have enormous confidence that we have a platform for growth for at least 10 years."

"The project was delivered on time and within budget. Tectura adopted a phased project approach and focused on resolving any problems as they arose, to cause as little disruption as possible. We see these as critical components of an implementation that was successful from the day we went live."

Matthew Butlin
IT Manager
Poupart

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Laurence Olins
Executive Chairman
Poupart

POUPART AT A GLANCE	
NAME	Poupart Limited
LOCATION	Hertfordshire, UK
INDUSTRY	Food Distribution
PRODUCTS/SERVICES	Fresh Produce
WEBSITE	www.poupart.co.uk
CHALLENGES/ OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace disparate systems, operation in silos • Improve visibility of future stock availability • Eliminate error-prone manual transfer of information • Streamline communication channels with suppliers and customers
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate and standardise business processes company-wide • Improve forecasting capability and more accurately resource future demand • Automate collaboration with suppliers
TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Dynamics NAV • Microsoft BizTalk Server 2006 • Microsoft SQL Server 2005 with Reporting Services • Microsoft Commerce Gateway • Microsoft Internet Information Server V6.0
BENEFITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled business growth by acquisition • Improved business decisions based on centralised, integrated data • Enhanced customer relationships • Streamlined product management • Reduced time spent on reporting • Increased efficiency and managed supply chain more effectively • Saved time and eliminated errors with portal for growers and pack houses • Up-to-date accurate daily, weekly and seasonal forecasts from growers

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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