Agribusiness Switches from Legacy Dynamics to Acumatica, Reduces ERP-Related Programs from 14 To 4

IMG has used 14 different programs in conjunction with Dynamics SL, paying for maintenance on all of them. With Acumatica, they will go from 14 down to 4.

OVERVIEW

Founded in 1979, IMG Enterprises, Inc. includes citrus operations, ornamental tree farming and a landscape construction firm. IMG has 395 full-time employees at 8 locations, plus 115 seasonal employees. Last year's net sales totaled $60 million; $72 million in net sales forecasted this year.

SITUATION

IMG Enterprises, Inc. began in 1979 as a small citrus operation in central Florida, and has grown into a complex and diversified organization with nearly 400 full-time employees and annual revenues surpassing $60 million.

When freezes killed off the citrus in central Florida in the early 1980's, IMG Enterprises replaced that citrus grove with a new endeavor, "tree farming." They maintained their citrus operation, but relocated it further south in a region less susceptible to freezes. IMG Enterprises' Director of Planning and IT, Jim Lieffort, explains that Cherry Lake Tree Farm has grown into one of the largest tree farms in the southeast U.S., offering "1,800 acres of ornamental trees, shrubs and palms in sizes ranging from small one-gallon up to 1,400-gallon pots."

In 2005, IMG Enterprises created a landscape construction division to further diversify their operations. LegacyScapes provides landscape and irrigation construction services to some of the most demanding and prestigious projects in Central Florida. Their clients include the major theme parks such as Walt Disney World, SeaWorld, and Universal as well as premium general contractors and developers.

Lieffort says their third operation, IMG Citrus, in southern Florida, manages "over 5,000 acres of citrus production and a very large packing facility, one of largest in the state. We sell fresh citrus all over the world, and focus on providing exceptional taste and quality."

The complexity of IMG Enterprises' operations led to a complicated IT situation. Lieffort reports the company started using Solomon in the 1990's and re-implemented Dynamics SL again in 2004.

Now, Lieffort says, "We have one of the most customized versions of Dynamics SL implementations anywhere." Lieffort believes that the customizations were no longer benefiting the organizations, and instead had become a burden. He explains, "Upgrades were few and far between; and because of the customizations, upgrading SL was a long drawn-out process in order to ensure all our systems would work with the new version. There were also a lot of things we just couldn't use anymore such as CRM."

COMPANY

- **Location:** Headquarters in Groveland, FL, US

- **Industry:** Agribusiness

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Reduction of ERP-related programs from 14 to 4

- Improved connectivity and roductivity for staff through remote access

- Time and money savings from greater operational efficiency

- Web-based system will allow quicker disaster recovery

Lieffort reports they also wanted to bring in a manufacturing component, including work orders and material resource planning. When they looked for add-on software, they came to a realization: "We didn't feel there were many good manufacturing programs that worked with SL and could fulfill our needs." A year ago, Lieffort says, they made a decision: "We really needed to get a more out-of-the-box system for ERP; we couldn't move forward; we were stuck." They also wanted to move the IT systems "off-site, into the hands of people who are experts in their field." Hosting off-site was also a benefit in case of potential disaster, Lieffort says. "We are located in Florida where lightning and hurricanes are prevalent— so disaster recovery is definitely an issue."

Lieffort reports they researched Acumatica and other options: "We looked at pretty much everything that was out there—what we really liked about Acumatica was that it was web-based." He adds, "We felt like if we had a webbased system, we could really improve the processes in our organizations. We could bring the system to the people, and that was going to be a huge advantage for us in a lot of different ways because of the size of our operation here."

SOLUTION

IMG Enterprises decided to purchase Acumatica on a perpetual license and activate the annual maintenance plan for ongoing support and services. They plan to host on-premise at first and later move hosting off-site. IMG Enterprises plans to use all of the available suites (Financial Management, Customer Management, Distribution Management, and Project Accounting), plus two add-on programs: JAMS for the manufacturing component and SpitFire, a project management software. With the help of Acumatica Partner SBS Group, the implementation is starting with Cherry Lake Tree Farm and LegacyScapes, and will be followed by IMG Citrus. They intend to complete the implementation of Acumatica at IMG Citrus in the fall of 2015.

IMG Enterprises has used 14 different programs in conjunction with SL, paying for maintenance on all of them. With Acumatica, Lieffort expects to go from 14 down to 4.

They had another reason for choosing Acumatica, Lieffort says, "We've always been on the cutting edge of automation and technology for our industries—we actually have robots on the farm that move trees automatically. Acumatica appears to be aligned with the innovative, forwardthinking culture that we have here in our companies."

BENEFITS

Acumatica will save IMG Enterprises time and money, Lieffort says: "From being able to enter orders and production information directly in the field, to minimizing travel time, saving on vehicles, saving on fuel, there's a lot of things Acumatica will make a big difference with." He adds, "We are a huge company, and there's a lot of communication needed. There's purchasing, there's selling, there's inventory management, there's manufacturing, outsourcing and construction. We need systems that are reliable." Lieffort notes, "I think Acumatica will help us grow in a lot of different ways. It will make us more efficient and any money we're not spending on IT infrastructure and wasted time is time and money that could be spent towards buying more robots to do more work!"

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