



Plastic Extrusion Manufacturer Realizes Double Digit Increase in Productivity with Microsoft Dynamics AX

Overview

Customer: Coroplast

Country: United States and Canada

Industry: Corrugated plastic products

Headquarters: Chicago, IL

Facilities: Granby, Quebec and
Vanceburg, KY

Customer Profile

Coroplast is the leading manufacturer of corrugated plastic sheet for the sign and returnable packaging markets in North America. The company's two manufacturing plants are located in Granby, Quebec and Vanceburg, KY.

Business Situation

The complexities and requirements for Coroplast increased substantially after they expanded their operations into the U.S. from Canada. After replacing their legacy system with Microsoft Dynamics AX, they now have increased functionality to better manage their business and processes, meet government-imposed requirements and have an enterprise view of their total organization.

Solutions

- Microsoft Dynamics AX
- Microsoft Dynamics CRM

Benefits

- Advanced financial reporting capabilities for single location and enterprise-wide views.
- Automated multi-language and multi-currency functionality out-of-the-box.
- Streamlined business processes through the elimination of several disparate systems.
- Systematic connection between the shop floor and the office operations.

Coroplast was founded in 1973 in Montreal selling corrugated plastic to the Canadian market. In 1975, the company opened its first manufacturing plant in Granby, Quebec. Fast forward 40 years, and the company now operates two manufacturing plants (Vanceburg, KY and Granby, Quebec) and is the leading manufacturer of corrugated plastic sheet for the sign and returnable packaging markets in North America.

Situation

Over the last 20 years, Coroplast grew the business through acquisitions. Although each growth initiative helped broaden their product line and strengthen their competencies, it also brought with it additional complexities and requirements



for managing the business, including the need for:

- Advanced financial reporting capabilities for a single location and enterprise-wide views.
- Automated multi-language and multi-currency functionality.
- More streamlined business processes.

With facilities in the U.S. and Canada, being able to systematically analyze data and generate reports for one of their sites or switching to an enterprise-wide view was a critical need. They were also at risk of being out of compliance with the Province of Quebec's requirement for software to have full multi-language functionality for screens, reports, documents, invoices, packing slips, etc.

Since their aging business management system was not architected to meet their growing list of requirements, they were forced to use multiple disparate systems to manage the business. This was not only cumbersome, but was increasingly impacting productivity and efficiency throughout the organization. Tasks such as the month end close and currency conversion were too time-consuming and labor-intensive.

Coroplast knew it was time to replace their ERP system with one that could meet their current and future business and industry requirements.

“The multi-currency conversion functionality in Microsoft Dynamics AX has saved me over eight hours per month.”

*Stacie Goheen
Manager of Finance & IT*



With the help of a business systems consultant, Coroplast reviewed several ERP systems. They wanted a system that not only met their key requirements, but also provided flexibility for future growth and could be managed by their internal resources.

After an extensive evaluation, Coroplast selected the Microsoft Dynamics AX Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. In addition to the key functionalities they required, Microsoft Dynamics AX would also provide them with expanded features, including:

- A seamless order entry process between the two companies in different countries.
- Integrated intra-company inventory, shipping, and purchasing decisions making.

The Implementation Process

The implementation process began with a series of interviews with select Coroplast employees. The interviews were designed to identify the current processes and workflows to properly set up the Microsoft Dynamics AX system. With Microsoft Dynamics AX's flexible architecture, the system is designed to conform to a company's processes versus the other way around. This feature and the intuitive user interface and menus make training easier, as well as promote a quicker adoption of the system.

During the implementation process, Coroplast realized the importance of working with a partner who not only had a strong Microsoft Dynamics AX competency and support system in place on both functional and technological levels, but also had a broad background in Extrusion Manufacturing.

They decided it was time to switch to another partner. Ultimately, they chose Ellipse Solutions as their new Partner of Record; a partnership that has proven to be very successful.

Benefits

Now that their Microsoft Dynamics AX system is implemented, Coroplast firmly believes moving from their legacy system to Microsoft Dynamics AX was the best decision for them. Not only is Microsoft Dynamics AX architected to meet their current business and industry requirements, but it has the flexibility and scalability to meet their future growth plans, as well.

“Being able to automatically email sales orders confirmations, invoices, and shipping documents to our customers has greatly improved our customer service.”

*Stacie Goheen
Manager of Finance & IT*



What benefits have they realized from their Microsoft Dynamics AX system?

- Advanced financial reporting capabilities for single location and enterprise-wide views.
- Automated multi-language and multi-currency functionality out-of-the-box.
- Systematic connection between the shop floor and the office operations.
- Streamlined business processes through the elimination of several disparate systems.
- Improved productivity, efficiencies, and capabilities, including:
 - Decrease in month-end close process by approximately 50%.
 - More efficient management of small, custom orders and stock items production more efficiently.
 - Ability to mix simple “measure and purchase” methodology with the complexity of full MRP.
 - Options to both automatically back flush resin and colorant among other materials along with manual shop floor level decisions on the usage of regrind.
- Increased customer satisfaction through automated notifications and extended visibility across the supply chain.

Another valuable decision Coroplast made was selecting Ellipse Solutions to complete their implementation. “Ellipse Solutions is proactive in contacting me about requests,” said Stacie Goheen, Coroplast’s Manager of Finance & IT. “Their follow-up is excellent, and their easy-to-use case management portal allows me to log and manage requests, check the status of projects, etc. on demand.”

What’s Next?

Coroplast plans to extend the ROI of their Microsoft Dynamics AX system in the future by implementing additional capabilities, including:

- Moving to a paperless environment.
- EDI for customers.
- Going wireless to record production and inventory movement.
- ACH processing for vendors.

Ultimately, their goal is to make it easier for their customers and extended supply chain to do business with them. With Microsoft Dynamics AX and Ellipse Solutions behind them, they are confident they will achieve their goals.

For More Information

Many enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems have never moved beyond managing the administration dimension of your business, tracking general ledger, payroll, and HR, while the real operation of the business is managed elsewhere. Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 is different, covering both the administrative and operational requirements. To do this, Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 delivers rich, prebuilt, industry-operational functionality out of the box, with proven functionality for manufacturing (process, discrete, and lean).

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics AX, go to:
<http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/dynamics/erp-ax-overview.aspx>

About Ellipse Solutions

Ellipse Solutions is a global Microsoft Dynamics® AX Gold ERP Partner specializing in business solutions, software development and implementation consulting for manufacturing, distribution, construction, and service companies.

Their experience with ERP solutions dates back to the beginning of Axapta (now known as Microsoft Dynamics AX) as a product in the U.S. marketplace, and includes successful implementations and upgrades of all Microsoft Dynamics AX versions, releases and hotfixes. Ellipse Solutions team offers expertise in business operations, analysis, process reengineering, custom software development, software testing, implementation services, and maintenance/support services.

For more information about Ellipse Solutions, call (937) 312-1547, email solutions@ellipsesolutions.com or visit www.ellipsesolutions.com.