

# Sage ERP X3 | Case Study

## Blount Fine Foods is Positioned for Continued Growth with Sage ERP X3

### Background

Privately held, Blount Fine Foods has been a recognized leader in shellfish processing and marketing since 1946. Known for its commitment to superior quality in the production of value-added fresh and frozen seafood products, Blount has become a supplier of choice for some of America's best-known foodservice distributors, soup manufacturers, retailers and restaurants. The company operates production facilities in Fall River, MA and Warren, RI.

### System Evaluation

As Blount's business evolved from supplying soup manufacturers with chopped clam meat to being a full process manufacturer of an extensive line of gourmet soups, its legacy system could no longer support the company's growing operations. It had limited process manufacturing capabilities with formulas, recipes and work orders managed in Microsoft Access, which was administered by only a few people with knowledge of the software.

To maintain its leadership position in the seafood industry and to increase its penetration into the retail and foodservice marketplaces with its expanding soup and sauce lines, Blount needed a modern, integrated enterprise system designed specifically for process manufacturers.

"We wanted a system that was designed for a food processing company," said Phil Pitzer, Blount IS Director. "Since our product line had changed and we became a true food processor, we now had to better manage things like formulas, recipes and packing sizes." He added, "We also wanted a system designed for mid-sized companies. We'd heard horror stories about the costs and complications of implementing a tier one system. We wanted a system that could manage our business, yet be easily installed without spending a lot of money."

The evaluation team consisted of people representing various company disciplines and each was asked to define what requirements they had for the new system. Not only did the team have to find a solution that could best satisfy each department's requirements, they also needed to find a system that would enable an easy transition for employees, many of whom had "grown up" with the legacy system over more than 10 years.

**"Sage ERP X3 had the advanced technology, ease-of-use and right-sized implementation methodology we needed to help position us for continued growth."**

- Louise Goodman  
Controller  
Blount Fine Foods

(continued)



The team selected three vendors to evaluate and when reviewing software demos from each vendor, they invited as many people from the various levels of the company to participate. The goal was to get the insight from the actual users of the software and to facilitate better acceptance of the change.

In the end, Blount selected Sage ERP X3 for a number of reasons including its process manufacturing functionality, modern technology, integrated development environment, ease of use and price point. Additionally, the company felt that Sage was a true partner in the process. “The Sage ERP X3 team worked with us to understand our business and help us improve it,” said Louise Goodman, Blount Controller. “We knew we would be able to play a role in defining and designing our new system instead of the vendor telling us how they think it should be set up. We would be responsible for our destiny.” Pitzer added, “We felt like we’d developed a good relationship with the Sage team. We thought that would be important during the implementation when open communications and brainstorming to solve problems would be necessary.”

### The Implementation

With 2,500 SKUs and 250 customers, the Sage ERP X3 implementation was fairly simple and required only a few modifications to accommodate Blount’s business model. Utilizing the process manufacturing functionality, along with the integrated distribution and accounting modules, the system supports Blount’s lean manufacturing processes, production and capacity scheduling capabilities.

Blount also installed Sage ERP X3 Automated RF Data Collection, an optional add-on module that enables the seamless and secure processing of a broad array of shop floor and warehouse business transaction. The module takes data entered on the shop floor and warehouse from automated input devices, verifies its accuracy, and passes the data to Sage ERP X3 for immediate update. It also takes care of all the prompts on the collection devices, manages the entire network of devices, even ensuring that data is saved during system downtime.

Additionally, a third-party vendor helped Blount set up EDI enabling them to share sales documents with their trading partners and also to handle such projects like the migration of data from a website managed by its payroll service directly to the Sage ERP X3 general ledger through the use of system-provided import/export templates.

“Sage ERP X3 had the advanced technology, ease-of-use and right-sized implementation methodology we needed to help position us for continued growth,” said Goodman.

### Results

“One of our primary goals,” said Goodman, “was to be in control of our IT destiny. We didn’t want to be at the mercy of an outside programmer, or hire one, to make changes to the software as our business evolves.” With the Sage ERP X3 integrated development environment, Blount can tailor system behavior and content without making programming changes.

“Sage ERP X3 is providing the process manufacturing functionality we needed,” said Pitzer. “And with sales, inventory and financials integrated, we have access to real time information. We used to wait till the end of the month, make entries to the general ledger and hope everything was okay. Now, we know the status of our business at any given time.”

Pitzer added, “We’ve become much more efficient. Now, anyone with access to the system can run reports to get the information they need, instead of being at the mercy of a few people who know how to pull information from the Access database. They don’t have to be database savvy at all.”

Finally, training new employees is much easier. In just a day or so, they’re able to complete their day-to-day tasks, including generating reports. “It’s a very intuitive system,” said Pitzer. “It’s easy to figure out and there’s a lot of logic behind the screens. Our new employees don’t have to learn a whole lot about the system in order to use it.”

**Headquarters**  
Fall River, MA

**Industry**  
A custom food company producing a variety of gourmet soups as well as custom clam meat products and breaded seafood

**Employees**  
170

**Sage ERP X3 Licenses**  
30