

Sage ERP X3 | Case Study

Satellite Industries Adds International Subsidiary in Less Than Eight Weeks

Satellite Industries, Inc., a Minneapolis-based manufacturer of portable restrooms, had been running Sage ERP X3 for over two years when the company acquired German competitors Thal GmbH and Thal UK Ltd. Satellite management set an aggressive goal of getting the Thal companies up and running on Sage ERP X3 in time for the start of the new fiscal calendar, which was approaching in less than eight weeks.

Background

With more than 50 years experience in meeting the needs of the global portable sanitation industry, Satellite is the number one supplier of portable sanitation equipment in the world. The company currently operates in 75 countries with sales offices located in the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Spain and Hong Kong.

Initially, Satellite had decided to operate three distinct Sage ERP X3 installations – one in the U.S., one in the U.K. and one encompassing the remainder of their European operations – from their worldwide headquarters in the U.S. With the acquisition of Thal, a company that was half the size of Satellite's current European operations, the time was right for Satellite to restructure its international business with the goal of combining and simplifying European operations under one Sage ERP X3 installation.

Implementation

Although Satellite had set an aggressive go-live deadline, the project team had an advantage in that it had integrated a U.S. subsidiary only a few months before. Now, armed with this experience they were able to manage the data conversion for Thal internally. In fact, Satellite's team handled nearly the entire implementation, with minor technical assistance from the Sage ERP X3 services team. "Sage ERP X3's ease of implementation was a key factor in the success of our project," said John Babcock, Satellite Vice President. "The project was conducted by our Sage ERP X3 users and the implementation team was able to meet the time table without expending resources for outside consultants."

With Sage ERP X3's import utilities, master files for business partners and products can be uploaded to the system through simple Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, and the SQL database structure permits easy and controlled data migration.

Installation wizards and configuration tools help configure the system to meet a company's unique business needs.

Additionally, Sage ERP X3 permits saving specific files in SVG format, which enables easy movement of files from one system to another, effectively transferring parameter settings, master data and related transaction history, if necessary.

"Sage ERP X3's ease of implementation was a key factor in the success of our project."

- John Babcock
Vice President
Satellite Industries

(continued)



Satellite's team was able to import the necessary files using the tools provided by Sage ERP X3. The Sage services team, having experience in assisting another Sage ERP X3 multi-national customer with combining databases for multiple country taxing, assisted with business process guidance and software testing. "While we were able to complete most of the installation internally, consulting with the Sage ERP X3 services team about the best way to combine our U.K. and European databases provided valuable insight," said Babcock.

Additionally, Sage ERP X3's multi-national capabilities supported all the languages that were in use at Thal (English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian) as well as multiple forms of currency (U.S. Dollars, Canadian Dollars, British Pounds and Euros).

Satellite was able to meet the eight-week deadline, and the system went live on the first day of the company's new fiscal year with a few minor issues, which according to Babcock, mostly concerned data that had not been set up because the need wasn't foreseen at the time. "We were able to cover between 80 to 90% of the foreseen needs upfront and are now in the process of cleaning up all the small details we missed."

Results

By restructuring their operations and consolidating their European Sage ERP X3 installations into one, Satellite is now able to run its international business more efficiently with better global visibility.

Reducing the number of databases eliminated duplication of data and minimized maintenance tasks. With the accounting responsibilities streamlined, the monthly closing has been reduced from five days to four.

Now poised to take greater advantage of Sage ERP X3's multi-national capabilities, Satellite has achieved greater inventory visibility, and now, movement of products from a warehouse in one country to another is managed by a simple inventory transfer as opposed to a buy/sell transaction. Sales offices can issue one sales order for multiple countries instead of creating one for each individual country.

Additionally, Satellite has gained deeper confidence in its disaster plans, knowing that if a catastrophe happens in one country, another can manage the operations with minimal disruption to the business.

"If another international expansion opportunity arises, we'll have confidence in adding the new business knowing our system can handle it," said Babcock. "With Sage ERP X3, Satellite is poised for future growth."

Headquarters
Minneapolis, MN

International Locations
Operates in 75 countries with sales offices located in the U.S., the U.K., Belgium, Spain and Hong Kong

Industry
Manufacturer of portable restrooms

Revenue
\$10 million

Employees
150

Sage ERP X3 Licenses
60