

SUCCESS STORY



customer:
Fashion Biz



industry:
Wholesale Fashion



location:
Auckland



product:
Sage 300 ERP, XM Oxygen, Orchid IFS Smart Freight® Link

“We had made the investment and Sage 300 ERP was more than flexible enough to suit the business as it developed”

FRANK FULLER – NATIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGER FASHION BIZ

THE CHALLENGE

In an industry not always known for its use of information technology, Fashion Biz stands out. Over the past few years it has used technology to streamline business operations, creating an easy, accurate and paperless business process for clients.

Frank Fuller, National Operations Manager at Fashion Biz explains, “The only piece of paper we now print is the invoice at the end of the process. We take orders in any format, via web, fax or email. The orders are processed through our financial system which interfaces to our other software systems. From the original point of data entry, no other data input is required.”

The heart of the process is the Sage 300 ERP financial system. Fashion Biz has been using the software since the company’s inception and supported by Enabling for some years.

Four years ago, Fashion Biz conducted a comprehensive review of its business needs. Given the company’s growth, management wanted to check whether Sage 300 ERP was still the most appropriate solution, and ensuring their changing needs could be satisfied.

“At that stage, we decided to stay with the same system,” Fuller says. “We had made the investment and it was more than flexible enough to suit the business as it developed. A major focus was to smooth the supply chain; since that date we have been actively working on developing and extending the system,” Fuller says. The size of the operation is enormous, with one aircraft hangar-sized warehouse requiring 200km of warehouse bin labels. Due to this huge scale of inventory, a specialised warehouse management system is used. Sage 300 ERP provides the core of industry-leading financials, while facilitating integration to associated systems.

ABOUT FASHION BIZ

Fashion Biz is a New Zealand-based wholesaler of low cost, high quality garments such as woven T-shirts, polo shirts and business workwear. One of the largest suppliers of apparel to the Australasian market, it stocks around 15,000 items and has a 4,000 strong client base ranging from large companies to sole traders, from retailers and promotional product suppliers to embroiderers and silk screen printers. Fashion Biz maintains distribution centres in Auckland, Melbourne, Sydney and Vancouver.

ABOUT ENABLING

Enabling is the recognised leader in the provision and support of business management applications throughout New Zealand, especially in the areas of technical and development expertise, solution design and long-term customer service. With offices in Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin, we have both strength in numbers and depth of expertise to support organisations of all sizes with a multitude of requirement.

ABOUT SAGE

Sage is a global provider of end-to-end business management solutions covering areas including accounting, supply chain, point of sale, EDI, web store, manufacturing, construction, property management, business intelligence, CRM and hosting services.

The offering meets the unique requirements of mid-market Australian and New Zealand businesses. Sage's solutions cover a wide range of business disciplines to enhance a customer's competitive edge and provide seamless integration across its internationally recognised and award-winning solutions.

In addition, these solutions are designed to be comprehensive, scalable and cost-effective, ensuring that as a customer's business grows or needs change, so do the solutions.

SOFTWARE CHOICES

- Sage 300 ERP
- XM Oxygen
- Orchid IFS Smart Freight® Link

SOLUTION

Fuller began by logging any system issues and prioritising all future development work. Then, working with Enabling in Auckland, clear that their system could provide the wish list, the company began working through the list, addressing each item.

Fashion Biz has built up smart supply chain processes. A 2-way electronic interface to suppliers allows them to respond to orders with confirmation of manufacturing availability and timing, then updating with progress on completion, despatch, arrival and customs clearance. This partnership with their suppliers means Fashion Biz are in constant communication with their suppliers always, allowing them to maximise both efficiency and customer service. ETA visibility can be used both internally but also online by customers when placing orders through the Fashion Biz web store.

Customers normally enter orders via the web sales engine, XM Oxygen, which has inbuilt integration with Sage 300 ERP. If a customer order cannot be supplied from a single warehouse, enabling enhanced the system to handle this as a single order for the customer, despite being shipped from multiple locations, creating the transactions for a single seamless customer transaction. With data from the web store connecting to the financial system in real time, customers are assured that they are always dealing with accurate and up to date information.

At despatch time, the warehouse management system integration to Sage 300 ERP controls the creation of consignment notes and automated generation of invoices and manifests, thus removing the opportunity for errors, and eliminating many manual processes. This is achieved with Orchid IFS Smart Freight® Link which provides bi-directional linking with IFS Smart Freight, a multi carrier freight system, and means that address and consignment details are passed automatically to the freight company. The consignment note is printed upon scanning the barcode of the package to be dispatched and tracking information is updated into Sage 300 ERP automatically.

The wish list provided Fashion Biz with the benefits of a large system without the price tag. "We continued down that path until we got to the bottom of the list. This delivered both the required system stability improvements, but as importantly most the wish list stuff, such as a paperless office & warehouse and improved automation," Fuller adds.

RESULT

Fuller believes the typical Fashion Biz customer experience is very different now compared with four years ago,

"We have less than half the number of customer service people that we used to have. This is because we get the orders right, send them out on time and that leaves no reason for follow up calls. There are less exceptions, so fewer customers have a reason to ring us. We didn't necessarily set out to achieve a reduction in customer service staff, but by getting things right and improving our accuracy, it's been a natural outcome."

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Fuller hopes to further boost the company's IT capabilities and its ability to service customers, in the next 12 to 18 months. High on his list is the international deployment of a Sage CRM (customer relationship management) system.

Using Sage 300 ERP has allowed Fashion Biz to expand internationally, substantially increase efficiency using fewer staff, alongside a better customer service experience, using a strong and stable business system that has the flexibility to grow with their requirements, and proven in use.

“Using Enabling New Zealand and by working through a more structured process of issue identification and resolution, we have created a very stable platform from a business point of view, and one that works particularly well for us.”

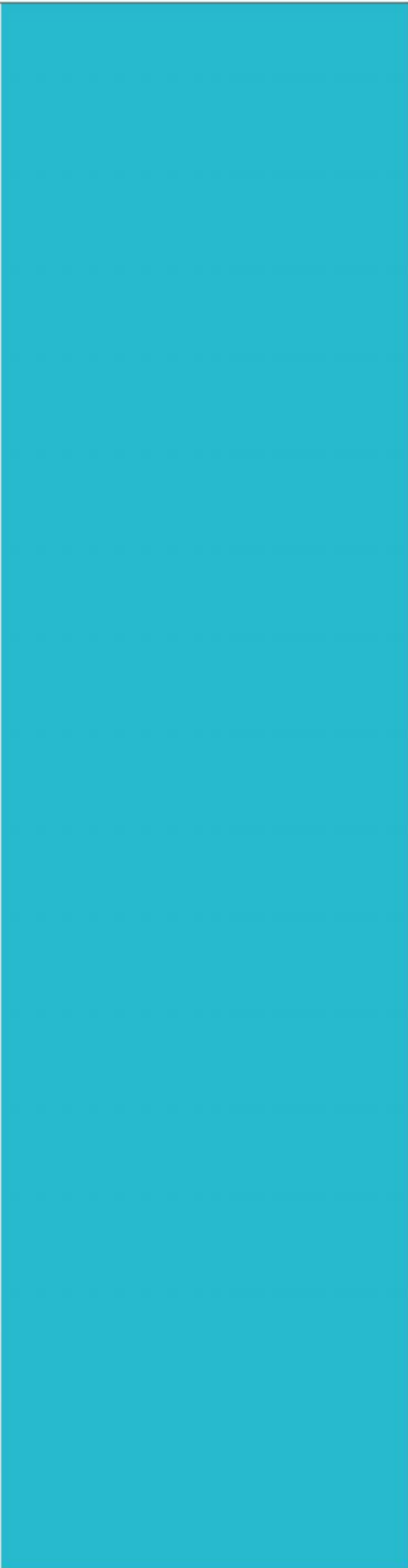
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