



Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study



Overview

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Manufacturing – packaging

Customer Profile

Founded in 1950 and headquartered in Orlando, Florida, Dusobox is an industry-leading full-service design and manufacturer of corrugated boxes and point-of-purchase displays for customers worldwide.

Business Situation

To meet growing customer demand for complex, multicomponent products and expanded fulfillment services, Dusobox needed to replace its aging Unix-based system with a comprehensive enterprise resource planning system.

Solution

Microsoft® Certified Partner CL International helped Dusobox implement Microsoft Dynamics™ AX and enhanced this solution with CLIPS, a proprietary tool designed for the paperboard packaging industry.

Benefits

- Enhanced business process control
- 50 percent faster market delivery
- 30 percent increase in production

To Changing Industry with ERP Solution

“With our entire business centralized in Microsoft Dynamics AX, all of our people can see and work with the same set of documents from start to finish, which has helped us speed up our execution.”

John Kelley, President, Dusobox

Dusobox is an industry-leading packaging solutions provider that designs and manufactures paperboard boxes and displays for customers worldwide, including “big box” retailers and club stores such as the Home Depot and Costco. The company used multiple systems to manage its business processes, but a lack of system integration caused production delays. This limited its ability to meet demand for faster delivery and sophisticated service levels. In 2006, Dusobox turned to Microsoft® Certified Partner CL International to facilitate implementation of Microsoft Dynamics™ AX. CL International enhanced this solution by integrating Microsoft Dynamics AX with CLIPS, a software tool designed for the paperboard packaging industry. Using Microsoft Dynamics AX with CLIPS, Dusobox has improved business process control, cut production time by 50 percent, and increased output by 30 percent per year.



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Situation

Founded in 1950, Dusobox is a full-service package design and manufacturing company that specializes in producing high-quality corrugated boxes and self-supportive displays. Following on decades of solid performance, the company is currently pursuing an aggressive growth strategy, including expanding its U.S. operations. Dusobox maintains 130,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehouse space in Orlando, Florida, and has a small production facility in Massachusetts, where the company was founded. The company now has 60 employees and annual revenue of U.S.\$12 million.

Like many companies in the packaging industry, Dusobox faces the challenge of meeting customer demand for faster market delivery and elevated service levels. In addition, the company has continuously upgraded its manufacturing capabilities to keep up with increasingly complex product design requirements.

“The industry has changed dramatically over the past two decades, and it continues to change. Our business used to focus on creating and delivering fairly basic corrugated boxes as a finished product. Now it’s nothing for us to have multiple components with intricate designs printed in six or seven colors that we have to deliver to the customer as a single SKU,” explains John Kelley, CEO of Dusobox.

But perhaps the most significant shift in packaging industry standards and practices over the last several years has been the surge in demand for fulfillment services. To meet the needs of the so-called “big box” retailers—national brands, such as Home Depot and Costco—Dusobox has repositioned itself as a full-service provider. Now, in addition to designing and manufacturing the packaging for a wide range of products, the

company is expected to create and stock elaborate point-of-purchase displays and ship them ready-made from its own warehouse for immediate retail use.

“Our whole business model has changed. Now we’re an integral part of the supply chain of the big consumer product companies and retailers,” says Kelley. “We’re taking client products into our own facilities, kitting it, and then distributing it. So we have a lot of ownership of products that we have to maintain and track, which adds a whole new layer of complexity to our business.”

Though Dusobox has successfully competed in the paperboard packaging industry for more than five decades, the company began to realize that its design, manufacturing, and business management systems were simply not equipped to handle these new requirements. The problem derived mainly from the company’s use of several different systems, none of which were integrated. For example, material specifications for new products contained in the company’s ArtiosCAD graphic design system could not be easily shared with sales or production personnel, who were using UNIX-based systems at their desktop workstations. On occasion, this led to production delays and costly errors, as customer requests for design changes were not always efficiently or accurately transmitted across departments.

“Because our production and business systems weren’t integrated, employees frequently walked around the building to communicate information,” says Kelley. “It got so bad that the carpet had to be replaced every couple of years because there was so much foot traffic between the design engineering area and the customer service department.”

To speed up market delivery of increasingly complex products and meet customer

demand for more sophisticated service levels, executives at Dusobox recognized the need for a more powerful business management system. In particular, they wanted a system with the capacity to integrate the company's design, manufacturing, and distribution activities with other critical business functions, such as accounting and customer service.

Solution

In June 2006, Dusobox turned to Microsoft® Certified Partner CL International to facilitate implementation of Microsoft Dynamics™ AX 4.0. The CL International team helped Dusobox enhance this solution with a proprietary system called CLIPS, a software tool designed for the paperboard packaging industry. CLIPS works with Microsoft Dynamics AX to streamline workflow management, enhance collaboration, and provide real-time access to critical business information. Paperboard-specific modules in CLIPS include a shop floor reporting tool that facilitates configuration of the Shop Floor Control module in Microsoft Dynamics AX and seamless integration of Microsoft Dynamics AX to the industry-standard ArtiosCAD graphic design system.

Dusobox considered several other enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions before choosing Microsoft Dynamics AX. But after consulting at length with experts from CL International, the company realized that the combined Microsoft Dynamics AX and CLIPS solution was the one best targeted to meet its specific business needs. Dusobox also valued CL International for its deep industry expertise and experience in helping growing companies in the paperboard packaging industry use Microsoft Dynamics AX to transform their operations.

"By taking the time to learn our business, CL International helped us leverage the power of

Microsoft Dynamics AX and customize it to meet our exact needs," says Kelley.

CL International worked closely with Dusobox to provide hands-on support and ensure maximum business continuity throughout the implementation process. During the intensive multimonth collaboration, the companies focused on three main areas.

Increasing System Integration

One of the most important solution requirements for Dusobox was to integrate its graphic design and business systems. Dusobox increasingly receives orders for design-intensive products with multiple components, and occasionally, customers want to make changes to designs several times before their project is complete. By integrating its graphic design system with Microsoft Dynamics AX, Dusobox has simplified and strengthened communication between employees throughout the company. Now business managers, sales staff, and customer service personnel can easily collaborate with the engineering and design teams. This results in faster delivery turn times and greater precision throughout the production process.

"Integrating the ArtiosCAD graphic design system with Microsoft Dynamics AX was a huge priority for Dusobox and a huge win," says Tom Boyer of CL International. "Now the engineers can push a button and the drawing they've created using the graphic design system is instantly available in Microsoft Dynamics AX."

Improving Business Process Visibility

Dusobox uses several built-in features of Microsoft Dynamics AX, including the Inventory Management module, to handle complex requirements for new orders. This includes taking receipt of client-owned inventory well in advance of designing and assembling the point-of-purchase displays

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that ultimately feature those products. Facing increased demand for services that require much more than just powerful production capacity, Dusobox relies on Microsoft Dynamics AX and the integrated CLIPS solution to gain enhanced shop floor visibility and inventory control. “Microsoft Dynamics AX gives us the ability to take in millions of units of customer-supplied products and manage and reconcile it each day for 45 or 60 days. It’s a complicated task, but now it’s so seamless that we hardly think about it. We never could have done it with our old system,” says Kelley

In addition to using its new solution for inventory management, Dusobox also takes advantage of the Master Planning module in Microsoft Dynamics AX. This feature enables the company to better manage bills of material, estimate costing, and plan purchasing and production activities to maximize its supply chain efficiency. And because more raw materials have to be sourced for each project—as packaging products become increasingly sophisticated and service-level expectations rise—visibility into the planning process has become more important.

“The Master Planning module makes it extremely easy to track and manage all of the details that go into creating a finished product. If specialized tooling is needed to build a product and it’s running a week late, we know right away how that affects all of the projects in our production pipeline. That kind of visibility into all aspects of our business makes us much more effective,” explains Kelley.

Gaining Better Business Intelligence

Dusobox uses Microsoft Dynamics AX together with the paperboard-specific CLIPS modules to gain consolidated, real-time information about every aspect of its operation—from production to financial

management. Although the company’s former system was sufficient for tracking data related to product specifications, it was simply not equipped to handle the workload requirements of a growing business in an increasingly fast-paced and competitive business environment. “Our old box-making system was definitely adequate to handle material requirements and track production details. And it even gave us static reports. But these reports were all box related. With Microsoft Dynamics AX, we’re able to quickly access production data, track inventory levels, and see our financials—and mine this data to produce meaningful reports,” says Kelley.

Benefits

Dusobox has successfully adapted to rapidly changing industry conditions, including the demand for expedited market delivery and the growing emphasis on fulfillment services. Using Microsoft Dynamics AX and CLIPS, the company has improved business process control, reduced its production time by 50 percent, and increased production volume by 30 percent per year.

Enhanced Business Process Control

Microsoft Dynamics AX and CLIPS provide Dusobox with clear visibility into its business processes, enabling the company to better manage activities, such as inventory control, purchasing, and production planning. Because managers can now access real-time data that reflects actual shop floor conditions, they can estimate costing with greater accuracy, make better informed purchasing decisions, and communicate with customers more confidently. In particular, Dusobox has infused better quality control into the early phases of its production process.

“Increased visibility into the design process lets us quickly verify that our sales people, our engineers, and everyone on the

management side has signed off on all the details before we move forward, which saves time and money down the line,” Kelley says.

50 Percent Faster Market Delivery

Using Microsoft Dynamics AX as its single-source ERP system, Dusobox has achieved 50 percent faster market delivery of its products. The company attributes this dramatic increase in production speed to the tight system integration enabled by Microsoft Dynamics AX. This integration has increased the frequency and quality of collaboration across all lines of business and eliminated redundant data entry.

“With our entire business centralized in Microsoft Dynamics AX, all of our employees can see and work with the same set of documents from start to finish. This has helped us speed up our execution,” says Kelley.

30 Percent Increase in Production

In addition to increased production speed, Dusobox has also improved its production capacity. Dusobox uses the Inventory Control and Master Planning modules in Microsoft Dynamics AX to optimize its supply chain efficiency. Now the company can take on much larger projects and meet the service-level demands of some of the largest names in the retail and club store market.

“Using our old system, we never would have been able to take in millions of units of customer-owned inventory and track it the way we can with Microsoft Dynamics AX. Using all of the tools Microsoft Dynamics AX gives us, we can now quote hundreds of these kinds of orders each week,” explains Kelley.

For More Information

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For more information about Dusobox products and services, call (407) 855-5120 or visit the Web site at: www.dusobox.com

For more information about CL International products and services, call (845) 918-1140 or visit the Web site at: www.clinternational.com

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to: www.microsoft.com/dynamics

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