

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: DORLUX

Sage CS/3

springs into action for bed manufacturer



Enterprise Solutions

Client profile

Halifax-based Dorlux has been making beds for nearly 80 years. Every week, its 250 employees manufacture and distribute some 2,400 divans and 3,600 mattresses to the domestic and contract markets.

Although one of the UK's longest-established bed manufacturers, the company's approach to business is firmly focused on the future. Dorlux has been completely transformed in recent years, with a new management team in place, an expanded product range, and a £1 million investment in its factory, office and production facilities.

Not surprisingly in this environment of continuous innovation and change, Dorlux relies heavily on its IT systems to support the business.

"We've been able to cut delivery times from three weeks to as little as ten days from the order being placed to delivery of the product to the customer."

Jonathan Whiteley,
Finance Director, Dorlux

The challenge

Back in 1997, the search began to replace an ageing and unwieldy proprietary legacy system. The main criteria were a proven track record for the supplier; an established pedigree for the system; full year 2000 and euro compliance; easy maintenance; and low cost of ownership.

The ultimate objective was to achieve end-to-end integration across the company's operations, from real-time sales order processing with on-line credit checking and enquiry, through interfacing to production, to timely, accurate delivery to the customer.

Management needed ready access to sophisticated business intelligence, such

as data on customers and product profitability, along with simple-to-use financial information for increased control. For employees, low levels of IT awareness meant the new system had to be simple to use and easy to adopt, especially as Dorlux wanted to avoid the added cost of employing an IT manager.

Solution summary

Sage software:	Sage CS/3 – Finance/Distribution/Manufacturing modules, integrated with DPS LogiX
Operating system:	IBM AIX and Windows NT®
Database:	C-ISAM integrated with Microsoft® SQL Server
Hardware:	IBM RS/6000, desktop PCs and laptops
No. of users:	40

The solution

From an initial line-up of 30 potential solutions, Dorlux selected Sage CS/3 from Sage Enterprise Solutions.



Managing Director Peter Hewitt comments, "We finally chose Sage Enterprise Solutions because they satisfied all our main requirements. I was impressed by their philosophy of maintaining a straightforward, packaged core product and using specialist programmes for the areas which would normally be bespoke."

The Sage CS/3 solution offered a range of functions, from accounting to comprehensive business management tools. Integrated modules for finance, services, distribution and manufacturing allowed the system to be tailored to specific user needs, without having to develop new software.

The close relationship of Sage Enterprise Solutions and Microsoft meant that the integration of the Dorlux front-office system was seamlessly integrated to the Sage CS/3 solution via ODBC. This was crucial to Dorlux as they use Microsoft Office running over NT, and was only made possible through their working closely with one of Sage Enterprise Solutions' partners.

The benefits

Operating a business on the scale of Dorlux could mean 'sleepless nights' for the management, but the Sage CS/3 solution gives 'end-to-end support' to the business. With powerful third-party products also integrated, including DPS LogiX, a specialist logistics planning product, the solution is now in use across virtually all Dorlux operations: finance, sales, production, purchasing and distribution. All users of the system are convinced it makes their job easier.

Reporting has been greatly improved, while an additional benefit has been provided through a specially developed data warehousing solution. Using a SQL Server database, this solution collates data residing on several disparate systems.

Departments within the company now work more closely together, resulting in greater productivity and improved communication both internally and with customers. Communications have been enhanced further through the introduction of both Microsoft Outlook and integrated fax, which enables Dorlux to fax through confirmation of order to customers on receipt of order. This automated process uses a SQL database to collate and intelligently interpret order status. Phase 2 of the integrated fax solution will confirm delivery date to customers.

Dorlux has seen a rapid return on its investment in technology, with savings in key areas such as stock control and raw material ordering. Integrated barcoding has been

introduced, bringing increased efficiencies to the production process. The loading bay is now automated and the production flow from goods received to dispatch has been improved through Work in Progress tracking. Barcoding has also increased the accuracy of products dispatched, significantly reducing the cost of returns. Dorlux estimates that this technology paid for itself in just six months.

DPS LogiX has created greater efficiencies in load planning through seamless links to production works orders or 'cutting sheets'. It also enables Dorlux to calculate accurate delivery dates for its customers, further enhancing service levels.

As Jonathan Whiteley, Finance Director, stresses, the end result is improved service to the Dorlux customer base. He says, "Dorlux now delivers a better product on promised dates. We've been able to cut delivery times from three weeks to as little as ten days from the order being placed to delivery of the product to the customer."

The future

An Available to Promise module will allow Dorlux to check production capacity when orders are placed. This module is written in Visual Basic, and will link directly to a Microsoft SQL Server database.

Dorlux is also currently considering its business-to-business internet options, particularly as a way of getting even closer to and sharing more information with its customers.

Jonathan Whiteley concludes: "This solution will undoubtedly keep improving, and keep moving Dorlux forward."



For more details of the solution provided for Dorlux, please contact Sage Enterprise Solutions.

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