AN END-TO-END SOLUTION

DISPLAYS2GO UNIFIES OPERATIONS ON MICROSOFT DYNAMICS NAV

Displays2go offers a range of marketing and trade show display products, most in stock and ready to ship the same day. Since its founding in 1974, the company has grown into a global presence and today ships as many as 2,400 packages a day from their warehouse in Fall River, Massachusetts.

Rapid growth threatened to overwhelm the company's legacy systems and processes, which were not designed for the volume of transactions nor the complexity of their expanding import, manufacturing, and distribution business. In addition, the formerly family-owned company was acquired in 2012, and the publicly traded parent company required a more rigorous approach to financial reporting and accounting controls.

Displays2go realized that it was time to implement an enterprise-class ERP solution. It began the search for a solution that would provide the sophisticated financial capabilities as well as allow them to consolidate many disparate applications and automate manual and paper-based processes. As part of an intensive selection process, Displays2go evaluated 15 ERP packages before narrowing the list to three: SAP All-In-One, Infor SyteLine, and Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2015. After onsite demonstrations from each vendor, Displays2go selected Dynamics NAV, using Western Computer as its implementation partner.

"At the end of the day, everyone in the room favored Dynamics NAV and Western Computer," recalls Erol Fikri, Director of Supply Chain and Logistics. "The software was easiest to use, and our Finance department felt like it was the strongest in terms of the way it handles financials. But more importantly, Western Computer stood out from the other vendors. Western was clearly the most knowledgeable and the most transparent, and had the best references of everyone we considered."

Fikri also notes that both Displays2go and Western Computer sought to minimize the degree of customization the solution would entail. Dynamics NAV came closest to meeting the company's business requirements with out-of-the-box functionality and best practices. This emphasis on configurability over custom coding sped the implementation and will make the system easier to maintain over the long term.

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With additional third-party components recommended by Western Computer, the Dynamics NAV solution has united the enterprise from end to end. Information now flows seamlessly from customer-facing websites to the warehouse floor.

PROJECT GOALS

- Implement rigorous financial reporting and accounting controls

- Automate manual and paper-based processes

- Consolidate applications on a centralized ERP platform

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>
> Erol Fikri, Director
> Supply Chain and Logistics
> Displays2go

WESTERN COMPUTER

CASE STUDY:
DISPLAYS2GO

INDUSTRY:
DISTRIBUTION

REGION:
NORTH AMERICA

Automated Workflow from Order to Ship

The new ERP solution has eliminated paper-based order processing and manual re-entry of orders received from various channels. The vast majority of orders are generated by one of 25 web properties operated by Displays2go, or received through a third-party ecommerce platform, such as Amazon.com. The websites operate on a single platform, which now passes orders directly to Dynamics NAV. Likewise, an EDI component automates order processing from Amazon and will soon connect to other third-party commerce platforms.

When an order is received from any source, Dynamics NAV orchestrates workflows that dramatically streamline the order-to-cash process. Previously, paper order forms traveled from point to point in order to initiate order fulfilment. Today, each stage of the process is triggered automatically.

Further, Solochain warehouse management system automates many of the warehouse tasks, driving significant gains in efficiency. In particular, the ability to split an order by line into separate pick jobs has eliminated several sortation processes and reduced the number of orders being repacked from 42 percent to 10 percent. With orders flowing from the website to Dynamics NAV to Solochain, Fikri estimates that Displays2go has reduced the average time from order to shipping by at least 34 percent.

A Single Version of the Truth

In addition to speeding warehouse and shipping operations, Dynamics NAV provides better control over financial management and offers a degree of visibility into operations that was impossible with the previous systems.

Rigorous financial controls introduced by the parent company are met using role-based security, which can restrict users' access to certain records at the table level. All Purchasing is tied back to the General Ledger, which ensures that Dynamics NAV shows a complete, up-to-date picture of financial performance at all times.

Centralizing all financial and purchasing activities in Dynamics NAV also speeds closing cycles and enables more comprehensive analysis of financial data. This means that monthly closes or complex reports no longer require that analysts aggregate data manually from a number of secondary systems and spreadsheets. This information is all contained in Dynamics NAV.

"Having a 'single source of truth' is a huge advantage," says Fikri. "We're no longer relying on so many disparate systems. Everyone in the company is looking at the same data sets. That's one of the biggest benefits."

Improved Customer Intelligence

The benefits of centrally managed operational information also extend to marketing and customer service roles at Displays2go.

The company has started using Dynamics NAV to manage sales campaigns. This allows marketers to better target campaigns and special offers to specific segments or even specific customers. And, because promotions or coupons are associated with sales orders, the company can measure the performance of a particular campaign or offer and use this data to improve subsequent offerings.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Daily status calls between Western Computer and Displays2go ensured that the deployment stayed on schedule.
- Western Computer brought the new ERP system online with no interruption to service or order processing.
- Third-party components provide specialized capabilities for warehouse automation, EDI, and credit card processing.

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In the Contact Center, customer service representatives rely on Dynamics NAV to serve customers more quickly. The availability of complete customer and order information and the ability to search on multiple fields—from within a single screen—make it much easier to locate information and track orders. In the past, answering customer inquiries frequently required representatives to access multiple systems or worse, they had to track down a paper order in the warehouse.

"Microsoft Dynamics NAV truly touches every aspect of the business," says Fikri. "Every functional area is seeing benefits: logistics, finance, marketing—even our merchandisers are using it. Before, each department maintained their own spreadsheets and applications. Now, everyone can look to Dynamics NAV."

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Both the team at Displays2go and Western Computer view the Dynamics NAV implementation as one of the smoothest projects they've ever been a part of. They attribute their success to the deep level of engagement on both sides. Daily status calls with Displays2go executives and Western project managers ensured that everyone understood priorities and that issues were addressed before they could impact the deployment schedule. Western engaged third-party software vendors as needed to discuss integration issues, while Displays2go executive team's top-down support ensured acceptance of the solution.

"We cut over to the new system with no interruption in service," says Fikri. "Our first day live on Dynamics NAV, we shipped 1400 orders. It's remarkable; our operations continued and we were able to meet our customers' expectations immediately once we went live."

ABOUT DISPLAYS2GO

Displays2go manufactures and distributes supplies, fixtures, and presentation materials for retail and trade show displays. A subsidiary of TAKKT AG, the company sells more than 7,000 products through catalog and e-commerce channels. Displays2go prides itself on its broad product selection and fast shipping, offering same-day shipping on most of its in-stock products.

PROJECT RESULTS

- Automated order processing speeds order-to-ship cycle by 40 percent.

- Solution automates pick, pack, and ship activities for up to 2,400 transactions per day.

- Centralizing financials speeds closing cycles.

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