



SOLUTION BRIEF

Customer Profile

A.W. Hastings distributes Marvin and Integrity windows and doors, and other millwork products to the building industry. A.W. Hastings & Co. is a family-owned company known for their dedication to customer service, and supporting independent retail dealers and industry professionals throughout New England and the northeastern counties of New York.

Business Situation

To enhance their commitment to customers, A.W. Hastings sought to replace their legacy system with an enterprise-wide solution that would streamline business practices and improve access to information throughout the organization. In addition, the solution needed to interact with Marvin's software, share order, pricing and shipping information with customers and be flexible enough to create integrated, custom software solutions.

Solution

> Microsoft Dynamics GP:

Benefits

A.W. Hastings selected Microsoft Dynamics GP as their core financial and ERP solution. Additionally, a number of custom applications were developed to augment these systems and streamline operations throughout the business. As a result, they enjoy a much higher level of customer service and more efficiently manage employee-related costs. Data processing time has decreased and they are able to provide meaningful real-time reporting that enables better decision-making throughout the organization.

Industry

Building Supplies

ePartners Success Story

A.W. Hastings & Co. Streamline Its Business Processes and Set New Standards for Excellent Customer Service



Founded in 1854 in Boston, Massachusetts, to supply doors, windows and other millwork products to the building industry, A.W. Hastings & Co. is a family-owned company known for their dedication to customer service.

Now headquartered in Enfield, Connecticut, A.W. Hastings distributes Marvin and Integrity windows and doors, supporting independent retail dealers and industry professionals throughout New England and the northeastern counties of New York. Marvin's window and door products are distinctive by virtue of their "made to order" custom philosophy. This custom approach means that every order is unique and requires innovative services and creative solutions to support A.W. Hastings' corporate vision, "Make it easy to buy Marvin."

A.W. Hastings has distributed Marvin products for more than 20 years. This focus affords A.W. Hastings the opportunity to work closely with its customers to develop a positive experience for the decision makers. Recently, the company constructed a state-of-the-art facility dedicated exclusively to training. A.W. Hastings not only provides education on the Marvin product line for their retail partners, but also on Marvin software tools deployed at retail sites.

To enhance this commitment to customers, A.W. Hastings sought to replace its legacy system with an enterprise-wide solution that would streamline business practices and improve access to information throughout the organization. In addition, the solution needed to interact with Marvin's software, share order, pricing and shipping information with customers and be flexible enough to create integrated, custom software solutions.

A.W. Hastings' commitment to innovation influenced the decision to choose Microsoft Dynamics GP® software as their business application. Combined with a range of Microsoft applications, tools and custom applications, the solution allows A.W. Hastings to provide a level of customer service that exceeds expectations.

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The Solution

A.W. Hastings' IT team developed several custom applications designed to augment the functionality of the company's solution. One program, GP View, was written using Microsoft Visual Basic® development system and the full complement of Microsoft Web tools. A robust and user-friendly Web reference, research, and reporting tool, GP View ties all sales, purchase, customer, shipping, receiving and routing information together in one place. AWH Events ensures that customers receive all pertinent order information as soon as possible, in their preferred format, consistently, and professionally. Additionally, information related to sales and purchases is available to team members via a single screen, providing them the information to quickly and accurately answer customer inquiries.

One of the challenges faced in the development of the new business solution was facilitating the rapid yet smooth flow of diverse types of information. Orders are created utilizing Marvin's proprietary software either directly by the A.W. Hastings sales team or received from customers through Microsoft Exchange Server. The order information is then placed utilizing the company's order entry system Hastings Orders Made Easy (HOME). From there, the information is integrated via a custom middleware application into the financial solution. The sales order event triggers an acknowledgement that is automatically sent to the customer via e-mail. The application Order Events gives A.W. Hastings the ability to trigger a notice that is sent to the customer based on criteria such as: expected delivery date, pricing, or change orders. These event notifications are tracked in a customer event log.

On-line order status, open orders, and shipping information are available via HOME for A.W. Hastings' retail customers. This allows customers to view their open orders and the shipping information at any time of the day, and in real-time via the Internet. The on-line order status module is integrated directly with Microsoft Dynamics GP®.

Return on Investment

A.W. Hastings' investment in Microsoft Dynamics GP® is paying off in many ways:

- Enhanced customer service. Access to a single source of information with the ability to quickly drill down into customer, order, or purchase data enhances the customer service professionals' responsiveness to inquiries.
- Managing costs and accommodating growth. A.W. Hastings' solution helps the company manage employee-related costs through increased efficiency. Microsoft Dynamics GP® reduces the need for additional personnel as A.W. Hastings continues to grow.
- Information for better decisions. Sales management information is now available in real time. In the past, periodic reports had to be prepared and distributed. Financial management reports are now available in real time, allowing A.W. Hastings' management team to monitor the pulse of the business and quickly spot trends or issues without waiting to receive end-of-period reports.
- Faster data processing. All customer paperwork has been developed as a Crystal Report. This provides professional, consistent, and easy-to-read paperwork for customers. GP Helper generates all customer paperwork by batch or individual number, and creates both a printed and electronic version. In addition, GP Helper can e-mail or fax the paperwork to the customer automatically. This automation is essential as A.W. Hastings' accounting team processes several thousand sales invoices and purchase orders per month.
- Improved business practices. Combined with A.W. Hastings' custom applications, the solution has improved the company's business practices. Information is entered only once and flows smoothly from Marvin's proprietary software to the financial system, where it is instantly available to all users. This process is continually documented and the seamless flow of information greatly reduces the opportunity for errors.



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