



FORTRESS PRODUCTS LLC.



Overview

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Trading

Company Profile:

Fortress Products imports, markets and supplies work gloves, socks and work apparel to a variety of stores across the USA.

Scenario:

Fortress Products needed a system that provided accurate, real-time information to increase efficiencies while saving time and money.

Microsoft Business Solution Partner :
Maison Consulting & Solutions

Software Used:

Microsoft Business Solutions-
Great Plains

Financial Series

Supply Chain

Landed Cost

Business Portal

SmartList Builder

Microsoft SQL Server 2000


Microsoft Windows 2003 Server



Microsoft Visual Basic

Fortress Products growth was challenged by the company's internal operations requirement to coordinate the disparate planning, sales and financial systems through cut and paste spreadsheets.

Fortress Products manufactures, imports, markets and sells work gloves, socks and work apparel for men and women. Fortress offers a complete line of work gloves. The gloves line include a wide variety of goatskin gloves serving the premium market; a wide variety of cow grain and cow split leather gloves and synthetic leather gloves serving the standard market, and a wide variety of cotton chore gloves serving the commodity market. Additionally, the company sells string net and chemical resistant gloves.

Fortress Products was originally organized in 1992 as a sales representative for IJAZ Enterprises, as well as for Khas Traders, a non-affiliated tannery and glove

manufacturer in Pakistan. During this period, Fortress continued to serve  Ace Hardware and Memphis Gloves accounts, but was also awarded the contract to supply private label gloves to commercial and industrial distributors.

In 2000, the Company negotiated a licensing agreement with  Williamson-Dickie Manufacturing Co. to design, manufacture, advertise, distribute, and sell  DICKIES™ gloves. Today Fortress services a number of the largest retailers in the United States with high quality work gloves.

Situation:

Fortress Products is a manufacturing and trading organization which imports gloves from different countries like China and Pakistan. Initially they had an MDS system for keeping the records of its Sales and Purchase. That system was not providing them all the advantages of a fully integrated system. They needed robust, multi-faceted views of their sales, employees, deliveries and vendors. Timely, comprehensive, and

analytical reporting was paramount.

Solution:

Fortress Products was looking for a system which could provide them with fully integrated processes and powerful reporting capabilities. The Maison Sales team contacted Fortress Products and introduced them to Microsoft Business Solutions. After a year of communications and presentations, Maison succeeded in convincing Fortress Products of the Microsoft Business Solutions platform. It was at this point that the company turned to Microsoft Business Solutions. The intuitive nature and flexibility of Microsoft Business Solutions -Great Plains helped to convince Fortress that they had found the solution to fulfill their requirements. After the implementation, Fortress Products immediately saw a vast difference in usability between MDS and Microsoft Business Solutions. The practical, real time results of the new solution became apparent within two months of implementation, as the accounting team was up and running with confidence.

“In MICROSOFT BUSINESS SOLUTIONS-Great Plains user satisfaction and system functionality is vastly superior to MDS” COO, Fortress Products.

Before MBS, Excel sheets were being used to store the information of containers. Maison deployed a VB.net based application for containerization. It stores the records for each container with respect to its size and capacity and suggests the most suitable containers according to the shipment quantity. Since all the employees of Fortress are US based, a successful training was conducted remotely through WebEx and Skype. Maison provided tight integration between Order Management, Inventory, and Purchasing with EDI Edition.

“Microsoft Great Plains gives us the ability to report the contribution of each business unit to the business as a whole, which means we can establish key performance indicators”, Mr. Waqar said. “This allows us to identify and differentiate between those units that need our management attention and those that are running well”

Business Alerts were also configured by the Maison team according to the needs of Fortress. In the previous system, there was no such solution available in which automatic mail/alerts could be generated for specific employees. Before MBS whenever new sales order were entered in the system, no mails were generated if that certain item reached its minimum stock level. Microsoft Business Solution made this possible through Business Alerts.

Benefits:

Microsoft Business Solutions-Great Plains gives Fortress Products greater control over Inventory and orders while speeding up financial processes because of increased accuracy.

Key Results:

- Fewer IT personnel required to deliver faster results.
- Significantly reduced total cost of ownership
- Staff customizes ad-hoc reports without consultants
- Smoother interconnects among systems—and among future solutions
- Using SmartList Builder, they are able to customize reports according to their needs

“The flexibility of Microsoft Great Plains reporting is an essential asset to our business”, Fortress Products.

Benefits:**Improved Ability to Make Key Decisions**

With Microsoft Business Portal, executives now had the tools they needed to make informed decision quickly. With Microsoft FRx financial reports, executives now had a greater visibility into the organization's fiscal health.

Simplicity and Ease of Use:

Getting an order into the system is now much easier with the Sales Order Processing module, and all modules have proven to be easily adaptable by Fortress. Simplified, Real Time Reporting: Fortress can now use Report Writer to create customized reports, modify existing reports, and create entirely new reports. They are also using it to pull information from multiple data tables and sort the information in unique ways. With the previous system, reports had the disadvantage of not being in real time. Now reports reflect accurate and up-to-date information.

Reporting made easier-and more accurate:

By using Microsoft FRx, which works efficiently with Microsoft Great Plains, Fortress can get the detailed information that it needs. And by using the SmartList feature, employees can easily and quickly creates custom reports.

Enhanced Security with Controlled access:

Fortress now can easily control the levels of access for employees, limiting them to the areas directly related to their jobs, thus providing improved and increased security.

Increased Speed:

Period end closings are now quicker than ever.

Simplified Business Processes:

By contrast, due to the intuitive nature of Microsoft Business Solutions, its implementation has triggered the simplification of processes that had always been overly complex. For example, due to the Landed Cost module they can get accurate item costs while in previous system they had to make adjustment entries to balance their inventory accounts.