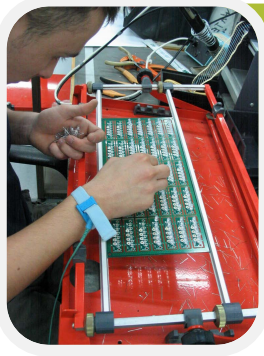


SUCCESS STORY – Drallim



Drallim Saves Over 4,400 Hours a Year and Cuts Support Costs by 21% with Epicor

Company Facts

- Location: St Leonards on Sea, UK
- Industry: Manufacturing
- Number of Locations: 2
- Web site: www.drallim.com



Success Highlights

Challenges and Opportunities

- Avante ERP systems no longer meeting business needs
- Acquisition strategy would increase complexity of business
- Margins being squeezed demanding greater efficiency

Epicor Solution and Services

- Epicor ERP

Benefits

- Over 4,400 hours saved per year through process improvements
- Total visibility of manufacturing costs by product
- Improved agility of business
- 21% cut in support costs

“Agility is key to our success. Epicor allows us to move quickly and quote for projects in a way that will make us profitable, and remain competitive in terms of cost, quality and delivery timescales.”

Dave Mooney, managing director

Formed in 1958, Drallim Industries is a British engineering and manufacturing company with a turnover approaching £7m, growing at 15% year on year, over the last five years. It has long pursued innovative product development and business expansion, and serves a diverse range of industries.

Originally focused on fluid controls, it has now expanded to a global customer base with pneumatic pressurisation and automation equipment, as well as monitoring systems for communications and high voltage applications. The new Aerospace Division produces a wide range of products, ranging from helicopter cargo hooks and load weighing systems to custom designed rigs, test equipment and restraint systems.

Drallim's industry has changed significantly over the years and in 2006 it began the search to replace its ageing Avante enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution. After several years of closely reviewing the solutions available, Drallim selected Epicor and went live during mid-2010.

About Epicor

Epicor is a global leader delivering business software solutions to the manufacturing, distribution, retail and services industries. Epicor serves more than 33,000 customers in over 150 countries.

When Systems Hold you Back

By 2006, Drallim Industries' existing ERP system was beginning to show its age. It was less able to respond to changes the company needed to remain competitive and expand its business into new areas. As with all manufacturers, Drallim was dealing with margin pressures on its products, so a quick reaction to changes in demand was needed to turn orders around faster.

Over the course of the project, Drallim was also implementing an acquisition strategy that would result in four companies being purchased by the projected go live date. The new system needed to accommodate this plan, as with acquisitions would come greater complexity. The new system had to ensure total visibility of the business to inform decision makers, as well as add advanced CRM and project management features for the larger organisation.

"For us, updating our ERP system was central to solving these problems and becoming more efficient," says managing director Dave Mooney. "The future of the company would only be secured by remaining competitive, so we wanted a solution that would solve the challenges we had now and help us build the business in the future."

Epicor Driving Drallim Forward

Drallim selected Epicor because of its advanced financials and the level of functionality available "out of the box" for businesses in its markets. Epicor also provides a direct upgrade path for customers on earlier versions of the product family, such as Avante. The Drallim project team was assembled from representatives in all areas of the business, and the deployment was managed almost entirely in-house.

Because the acquisition of three companies was taking place during the course of the project, the team made an early decision to integrate those businesses into the existing Avante installation, as each company had considerably less functional systems at the time of acquisition. Drallim's IT Manager, John Routledge, used the routines in the old Avante system to export the data in comma separated format, then using Microsoft Access, the data was cleansed and manipulated to suit Epicor's next generation ERP solution. The final stage was to use the Epicor Data Management Tool (DMT) to import over 29,000 parts into the new Epicor database. Final adjustments were made directly in the database using SQL. This process was one of the key elements in the success of the project as it meant that the project team could work on "real data" very early in the training and pilot stages. It allowed them to weed out any data conflicts and gain early confirmation that the solution would meet their needs.

The Drallim team worked immediately with the Epicor software to prove that it could get from quote to cash, using its standard business processes without any customisations to the system. Drallim made extensive use of e-learning training modules provided by Epicor to achieve this, and was the first company to make the move from Avante to Epicor, making the achievement of the internal team all the more impressive.

Part of the preparation for Epicor going live focused on comparing Drallim's existing processes across the business against many of the industry best practice workflows Epicor provides out of the box. This library of workflows covers many vertical markets with specialist needs, and is constantly enhanced to reflect the experiences of customers and Epicor's consultants.

"This was a useful exercise for us, and allowed us to look at how some processes in our industry have moved on, taking advantage of them where appropriate very easily," adds Mooney. "This level of flexibility out of the box makes Epicor extremely powerful."

On the evening of go live, three companies had been integrated into Drallim and were running on the Avante system. This data was running parallel in Epicor, following several pilot days that had been run throughout the project – this made the transition very smooth. In fact, a fourth acquisition was made by Drallim on the day of go live, and this company was subsequently integrated into the new Epicor system in only two months.

"Epicor is intuitive and we put a lot of effort into preparing for go live," adds Mooney. "But it's not just about the software, you have to have a strong business wide project team, and not forget the importance of high quality training for staff. We used a buddy system to help staff share experiences, which was very beneficial."

Costs Down and Efficiency Up

Drallim now has complete real-time visibility across all of the businesses that it acquired during the project in a single system. This enables teams to plan workloads and be extremely agile when unexpected external factors come into play, such as supplier delays or urgent order opportunities. Drallim manufactures thousands of different products and Epicor has given the management team a much more detailed understanding of manufacturing times and costs.

"Agility is key to our success. Epicor allows us to move quickly and quote for projects in a way that will make us profitable, and remain competitive in terms of cost, quality, and delivery timescales," says Mooney. "We can be confident in all of these with Epicor."

The new Epicor solution has had a direct impact on costs. The project itself came in 23% under budget, annual support costs are down 21%, and administrative efficiencies alone save the company over 4,400 hours per year across 30 users.

Process improvements have reduced lead-times across the entire company, with administrative efficiencies coming from all areas of the business including: report preparation; serial number control; goods receiving; supplier payments; general ledger management and systems administration. Cash flow has also been significantly improved through an electronic account receivable payment interface that has seen payment terms drop from 60 days to five.

“For the management team at Drallim, greater control over the business has been the big win,” concludes Mooney. “We have total financial visibility of the costs of every product we manufacture and our performance. This is already providing us with information that will help us further refine manufacturing and administrative processes in the future.”

The journey does not stop with the initial implementation – Drallim has further project stages planned that will see the incorporation of additional Epicor modules as the business continues to expand and new demands arise.



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