



Epicor ERP and MFI Boost Efficiency and Profitability for Socabelec East Africa Ltd

Company Facts

- Location: Kenya
- Industry: Distribution
- Website: www.socabelec.co.ke

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Olivier Lauvaux, managing director for Socabelec East Africa Ltd

In October 2003, Socabelec SA (Belgium) the mother company of Socabelec East Africa Ltd, established a branch in Nairobi, Kenya to serve the East African market. The office was established with one Belgium engineer to manage and train the Kenyan team in the field of energy, power solutions, automation and industrial electricity.

Socabelec East Africa now has a team of trained professionals working around the clock to provide its customers with a comprehensive range of technological products including: engineering, installation, supply, after sale services and maintenance. Through competent management coupled with the latest technology, Socabelec East Africa has grown to become a market leader in its field.

Socabelec East Africa’s operations are steadily expanding. This, along with the advancement in technology and the increase in demand for its superior product offering, meant that Socabelec East Africa needed to refine its business view and identify pain areas that were affecting profitability.

The Challenge

To facilitate reporting capabilities, and summarise expenses for accurate quoting and allocation of resources, Socabelec East Africa realized that its decentralised system was not consolidating data to ensure accurate planning and project management.

Reporting was one of the biggest challenges. “The headquarters required accurate data that reflected the work we were doing but we were unable to supply it in real time. Often we were only able to identify problem areas when we discovered them at the end of the financial year. This had a direct negative effect on our bottom line,” says Olivier Lauvaux, managing director for Socabelec East Africa.

Success Highlights

Challenges

- Required a solution to facilitate project management
- Difficult to summarise expenses and calculate profitability by project due to complex jobs
- Accurate reporting in real-time to keep headquarters abreast of activities

Solution

- Epicor ERP

Benefits

- Up-to-the-minute data availability supports management in strategic decision making
- Facilitates growth and expansion
- Simple to import and export data
- Boasts key functionality required by Socabelec East Africa
- Identified profitability issues that previously were unknown

Why Epicor and MFI

“On the surface it may appear that all the big ERP players are similar but there are definitely key differentiators when it comes to Epicor and their local partner MFI,” explains Lauvaux. “Scalability, flexibility and a detailed understanding of our business is paramount. Then, how the implementation is carried out, makes or breaks the project.”

Socabelec East Africa looked at leading ERP providers and evaluated them according to the following stringent criteria:

- **Functionality**—functionality offered by each ERP provider according to Socabelec East Africa business process requirements.
- **Flexibility and product customisation**—is the system flexible and scalable so that it can be customised to suit business processes.
- **Live site visit**—a site inspection at a customer with a live system to get feedback on user experience and see the product in action.
- **Local support and implementation team**—the service and capabilities of the service provider implementing the system is critical to the system’s success.

Epicor ERP offers extensive functionality and Epicor local partner MFI was able to tailor the solution to Socabelec East Africa’s exact requirements. “Epicor ERP offers an inspiring solution with critical functionality to enable us to carry out detailed budgeting and support project management,” says Lauvaux.

“Gaining an intricate understanding of Socabelec’s business enabled our team to tailor a solution that provides detailed insight into every aspect of their business to optimise performance and profitability,” says Aadil Tharani, managing director, MFI Consulting & Technology Limited.

The Implementation

MFI’s professional service and comprehensive understanding of the business was the precursor to the success of the project. There were no surprises because thorough planning was carried out and

a systematic implementation ended with a full month of intricate testing to ensure that all contingencies were covered.

“MFI’s adopted best practice methodology to ensure that the implementation went ahead smoothly. The process began with the installation of the system and then progressed to the customisation process. By the time we started with training, our team understood the flow of data and were comfortable with the navigation,” says Lauvaux.

Epicor ERP is used by all departments of Socabelec East Africa.

Success and Profitability

Epicor ERP provides real-time data on: projects costs; AR aging; billing, booking and backlog; and stock management. This directly enables management to take corrective action on pricing and project management.

“We are now able to carry out detailed reporting whenever needed using real-time data, safe in the knowledge that it’s accurate and up to the minute. This has a direct positive effect on our bottom line because accurate quoting and allocation of resources means that nothing slips through the cracks,” says Lauvaux. “In the past we were only able to identify losses at the end of the financial year which meant that a significant amount of time would pass before we could remedy it. We have also learned new things about our profitability which previously were unknown. Now we have a handle on all aspects to maximise our resources, become more competitive, and help the business grow well into the future.”

About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation is a global leader delivering business software solutions to the manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industries. With more than 40 years of experience, Epicor has more than 20,000 customers in over 150 countries. Epicor solutions enable companies to drive increased efficiency and improve profitability. With a history of innovation, industry expertise, and passion for excellence, Epicor inspires customers to build lasting competitive advantage. Epicor provides the single point of accountability that local, regional, and global businesses demand. For more information, visit www.epicor.com.



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