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| OverviewCountry or region: IndiaIndustry: Transportation and LogisticsCustomer ProfileSnowman Frozen Foods is amongst the pioneers of cold supply chain in India with a nationwide presence connecting more than 100 cities and distributing to more than 4,400 outlets. It provides integrated logistics services and goods storage. Business SituationSnowman had multiple disparate applications including Everest for inventory management, Tally for financial transactions and Microsoft Office Excel to manage transportation. Thus, assimilating information at month-end involved many person days to reconcile the data.SolutionWith the help of Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner, Blue Star Infotech, Snowman deployed Microsoft® Dynamics™ NAV 2009 at 18 locations including head office in Bangalore. Benefits* Timely billing improves profitability
* Improves efficiency with better resource utilization
* Real time information increases business opportunities
* Improves customer relationship
 |  |  | “We are able to invoice all our customers by 3rd of every month across all 18 locations. It’s faster, more accurate and saves almost 2 person days every month.”Prashant Deshpande, Head Information Technology and Administration, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd. |
|  |  | Through this modern technology driven cold storage warehouse, Snowman Frozen Foods is addressing the ever growing complexity in the cold storage management by helping its customers reduce waste and cost of handling, increase shelf life and storage of perishable products through efficient management of cold chain network. To achieve this efficiently and grow its revenues, the organization also needed a solution to support, enhance and streamline all its operations. Blue Star Infotech with its strong expertise and in-depth understanding of the industry, implemented Microsoft Dynamics NAV. The solution saves over 2 person days in generating relevant reports and consolidating financial information.  |
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Situation

Based in Bangalore, India, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd. is a cold chain logistics service provider, whose investors include Gateway Distriparks Ltd., Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsubishi Logistics Corporation and Nitchirei Logistics Group of Japan and IFC (World Bank group). It offers services such as transportation, storage, handling and retail distribution of entire spectrum of chilled and frozen foods including processed foods, fast foods, meats, ice creams, dairy products apart from fruits and vegetables to restaurants and institutions across India.

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| “With the help of new business solution, we are able to boost employee productivity, make more timely decisions, gain real-time visibility into critical business data and thus increase margins and profitability. We have thus achieved a low total cost of ownership.”Ravi Kannan, Chief Eexecutive Officer, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd. |

The state-of-the-art infrastructure that meets international standards is powered by the strength of over 200 trained employees. Its long arm of distribution covers more than 100 cities throughout the country. It owns 18 cold storage facilities, 12 ISO 22000:2009 and 13 ISO 14001:2005 certified warehouses and operates a fleet of about 100 owned and contracted refrigerated trucks. The annual revenues of the company for financial year 2009-10 were U.S.$7.6 million (INR 34.5 crore).

Snowman was using disparate applications. It was using Everest for inventory and warehouse management. Tally was deployed to manage all the accounting operations and financial transactions. Microsoft Office Excel-based solution was used to manage the fleet of vehicles, their routes, billing and profitability details.

The sales and payment entries from the warehousing software were replicated in accounting software resulting in data duplication. Similarly for statutory reports such as sales tax, sales data was extracted from the Everest and corresponding entry was created in Tally. Due to data inaccuracy and duplicity, most of the month-end billings went for multiple iterations and consumed unwarranted time.

In the inventory package, users from 18 locations logged in through remote desktop to connect to the centralized server where in close to 450 customer-specific databases were maintained. Consolidating this data for monthly and annual reports was a herculean task.

Snowman maintained every customer’s data in a separate database for each branch resulting in multiple codes for the same stock keeping unit (SKU) and multiple customer codes. Standardization of all these codes into a single code was necessary to avoid duplication in billing. It also wanted to map retail business. Each customer who stores with Snowman has his own set of customers and vendors, which are location specific. Standardizing all such vendor and customer codes across India to eliminate redundancy was essential.

Snowman also wanted to optimize use and management of its fleet of vehicles. In addition, it was very difficult to generate meaningful MIS on the fleet and its operations. Real time information on available storage, its location and pallet occupancy report would bring greater efficiency into the entire cold storage process. The existing information was available at regular intervals, however, delays and inaccurate information was brining sluggishness into the business.

Solution

Identifying the need of an integrated system to effectively run the business operations and to achieve the ambitious growth plans, Snowman evaluated various ERP products available in the market other than Microsoft products. But none other than Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009 met the unique business requirements. “In complex business scenario like ours, we needed to deploy base modules along with extensive customization for warehousing and transportation. Dynamics NAV scored over other ERP solutions as it is quick and easy to customize and user friendly,” states AM Sundar, Chief Financial Officer and Company Seretary, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd. “Moreover the solution is cost effective and provided all the functionality within our planned budget.”

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| “The new business solution has mapped the customers’ SKU codes to our codes, giving them a detailed report on their stocks with more clarity. Customers’ positive feedback has assured us of enhanced satisfaction level and hence retention.”Prashant Deshpande, Head Information Technology and Administration, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd. |

The management then looked for an adept partner with prior experience in deploying warehouse, fleet and finance modules. Blue Star Infotech (BSI), a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner was chosen because of its skilled team and its past experiences in the logistics industry. The implementation began in December 2009 and the solution went live in April 2010. It was deployed simultaneously across 18 locations including head office and all warehouses. The solution was deployed for 30 users with all the base modules, General Ledger, Trade and Logistics, Warehouse and Inventory Management.

BSI tailored the solution to include Fleet Management to address all processes and issues related to transportation. The new customized module automates key processes such as vehicle management and maintenance, [capacity management](http://newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/147104), fuel management and route management. It was integrated with other division such as Freezer and Consignment Division. BSI’s Excelsior methodology used extensively ensured quick implementation.

All the key business processes, multiple revenue models, requirement of maintaining inventory without the value reflecting in chart of accounts, complex warehouse rent calculation, contract management were mapped fully. Moreover the solution handles invoicing and collection, maintenance of customers’ inventories, handling primary and secondary customers and tagging them to item or item variants along with complex billing process that includes warehouse storage, customer-wise contracts, promotion offers etc.

“We get up-to-date, accurate location-specific stocks, can view the stock status for every customer in real-time and generate statements and MIS reports by 3rd of every month,” states Sridharan, Senior Manager-Information Technology, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd.

Integration of warehouse and inventory management functionality with financial management, customer relationship management, supply chain management and other business processes ensure efficient communication and collaboration throughout the organization and with trade partners.

Benefits

Microsoft Dynamics NAV helps in reconciliation of stocks vis-à-vis book stocks in a real-time basis.“With the help of new business solution, we are able to boost employee productivity, make more timely decisions, gain real-time visibility into critical business data and thus increase margins and profitability,” explains AM Sundar. “We have thus achieved a low total cost of ownership.”

Timely Billing Improves Profitability

Snowman charges its customers for the space occupied by their stocks in its cold stores. There are nearly 21 variants of chargeable rates coupled with 3 different billing cycles making the revenue generating model quite complex. Doing it manually took 7 days resulting in delayed billing and hence revenue loss. “Post Dynamics NAV, we are able to invoice all our customers by 3rd of every month across all 18 locations,” says Prashant Deshpande, Head Information Technology and Administration, Snowman Frozen Foods Ltd. “It’s faster, more accurate and saves almost 2 person days every month.” Timely billing thus improves cash flow and hence profitability.

Improves Efficiency with Better Resource Utilization

The new solution manages internal and external resources more efficiently, thus improves operational efficiency. Since the data entry needs to be done at one time only, a lot of data repetition at branch level has come down resulting in the better utilization of manpower resource.

Real Time Information Increases Business Opportunities

Earlier, lack of real time information about pallet occupancy and storage space across locations resulted in loss of potential customer. Post Dynamics NAV, availability of information on real time basis to the top management and the functional heads about the key information like the pallet occupancy by warehouse and its location helps in serving more customers. This in-turn has improved the business opportunities.

Improves Customer Relationship

Snowman as a customer-centric company intends to build long term relationship with its customers and thus aimed at total customer satisfaction. “With tighter integration and automated processes, we’re more flexible and can quickly respond to customer queries resulting in enhanced customer satisfaction,” explains AM Sundar.

With Dynamics NAV, it is easier to create reports which show outlet-wise and product-wise sales of fast, slow or non moving stocks. These reports are very important for customers as these help them in planning their inventory and focusing on sales. These reports are automatically scheduled and mailed to business partners on a specific time and date in desired formats with the help of Auto Email System presented by Dynamics NAV.

“The new business solution has mapped the customers’ SKU codes to our codes, giving them a detailed report on their stocks with more clarity,” continues Prashant. “Customers’ positive feedback has assured us of enhanced satisfaction level and hence retention.”

Presents Competitive Advantage with Improved Decision Making

Prior to Microsoft Dynamics NAV, consolidating information was a time-consuming process that resulted in delayed reporting and hindered decision making. But after deploying the new business solution, real-time data is always available online for review by top management, making the decision-making process quicker, thus giving advantage over the competitors. Information on real-time basis related to available storage space across locations and pallet occupancy report helps in taking swift decision on the storage space to be provided to some of the customers as well as on the placement of vehicle for pick-up etc.

AM Sundar concludes, “In the highly competitive market, Microsoft Dynamics NAV has helped us with efficient workflows, improved visibility, increased profits, optimized productivity, greater customer satisfaction and reduced costs.” The solution’s flexibility, modular structure enables the addition of new or custom functionalities over time to match the growth and evolution of the business.

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what’s most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to:

[www.microsoft.com/dynamics](http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics)

About Blue Star Infotech

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| Software and Services* Microsoft Dynamics
* Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009
* Microsoft SQL Server 2008
 | Hardware* Windows 2008 Standard Terminal and NAV Server configuration:
* HP Proliant DL 360G6 CTO Chassis
* HP 4GB 2Rx4 PC3-10600R-9 Kit
* HP Slim 12.7mm SATA DVD Optical Kit
* HP 300GB 3G SAS 10K 2.5in DP ENT HDD
* HP 512MB P-Series BBWC Upgrade
* HP TPM Module Kit
* HP 460W HE 12V Hotplg AC Power Supply Kit
* HP PL Foundation Pk Single Rel FIO SW
* HP iLO Adv 1-Svr incl 1yr TS&U SW
* HP DL360G6 SFF HD Bkpln Kit
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For more information about Snowman Frozen Foods products and services, call (91)(80) (4025 0400) or visit the Web site at: www.snowman.in

For more information about Blue Star Infotech products and services, call (91) (22) (2829 2669) or visit the Web site at: www.bsil.com

Blue Star Infotech (BSI) helps global mid market enterprises derive measurable business outcomes through the use of IT. BSI partners with its clients to understand the business pain points, arrive at the appropriate IT led interventions and manage successful implementation. Using its deep understanding of the mid market segment, and drawing upon its long standing track record in creating IT solutions, BSI is able to deliver affordable and relevant solutions through client-friendly flexible engagement models.

Blue Star Infotech’s dual expertise in building software products for industry-leading Independent Software Vendors and IT solutions for enterprises provides it with an unique advantage to cross-leverage  experiences in creating solutions for enterprises both custom and products across domains and technology platforms.

BSI is backed by the reputed Blue Star Group, ranked among Asia’s best sub billion businesses by Forbes.  BSI is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Oracle Gold Partner, SAS Silver Partner, Kentico Partner, Sitecore Partner, Amdocs Partner.