FRAMECAD manufactures success with SAP Business One and REALTECH

At A Glance

The Challenge

- ⊙ Systems in-place not scalable for projected growth

- ⊙ Limited reporting, no CRM capabilities, limited functionality

- ⊙ Business processes need to evolve to support growth

The Solution

- ⊙ SAP Business One

- ⊙ IBM infrastructure

- ⊙ Professional services from REALTECH

Key Benefits

- ⊙ Ability to support multiple languages and currencies, remote sites and individual projects

- ⊙ Scalable to support further growth

- ⊙ Flexible to support further developments and capabilities

FRAMECAD is a Kiwi company on the go. With revenue growing rapidly every year, installations around the globe and offices in the US, UAE, Australia and Spain, the Auckland-based manufacturer of steel framing design and manufacturing solutions needs integrated business applications and support that works as hard as they do. They have been a SAP Business One customer since 2005 and look to technology partners REALTECH and Maclean Computing for on-going development and professional services.

"To support our planned growth we knew that we needed a great IT platform and this has been achieved with SAP Business One and assistance from REALTECH and more recently Maclean Computing," says Kent Hutchings, CFO for FRAMECAD. "With SAP Business One we can replicate our business processes worldwide, track projects in multiple currencies and build and nurture our relationships with stakeholders. And with the teams from REALTECH and Maclean Computing in the background, we have the capabilities to expand and extend the solution as our requirements evolve."

Rapid Expansion

"We were just beginning our rapid expansion when I came on board in late 2004," explains Hutchings. "FRAMECAD was expanding its machine technology business and saw the huge potential for light gauge steel framing in construction. To support future growth it was important to have a good ERP foundation that we could use as the business grow and evolved.

So Hutchings and his team developed a detailed functional requirements analysis document that contained a number of different scenarios. "We weren't exactly sure what our growth paths would be," says Hutchings, "but we knew what we would need to support them. We coordinated our efforts with the entire team, from our Managing Director Mark Taylor – Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year – Services category 2009 – through the accounts team to the warehouse people. We asked them what they needed to do their jobs better and what they would require in the future. The final result was a 20-page document that spelled everything out."

"We sent out the requirements package to a number of vendors and started the process of selecting the right system for our needs," continues Hutchings. "Again, my IT support manager was a step ahead and recommended that we include REALTECH in our search as he had dealings with them in a previous position and had been impressed with their professionalism. REALTECH had considerable expertise in SAP implementations and was gearing up to support SAP Business One."

Hutchings had been instrumental in the implementation of the SAP Enterprise Version in a previous role and was familiar with its reputation for stability, robustness and complete end-to-end ERP functionality. "I liked what SAP could do," says Hutchings, "but the Enterprise Version was overkill for our particular needs. But as we reviewed the submissions and started to investigate the solutions, we found that SAP Business One's capabilities matched our immediate requirements and had the ability to scale up as we expanded."

Selecting SAP Business One and REALTECH

After presentations and demonstrations by the various bidders, FRAMECAD selected SAP Business One as their ERP / CRM platform of choice and the team from REALTECH as their implementation partner. "One of things that we especially liked about REALTECH is that they were very clear on technology transfer," notes Hutchings. "They had detailed the tasks that needed completing and had assigned the appropriate resources – a mixture of their people and ours – so that we would be learning the system from the ground up."

At the same time as the upgrade, FRAMECAD was revising their business processes. "We were planning for growth," says Hutchings, "and took the opportunity to match the enhanced capabilities of SAP Business One with an upgrade of our business processes based on the work we did for the functional requirement analysis so it worked out very well for us. We wanted more visibility into our everyday transactions and manufacturing operations. And that is exactly what SAP Business One provided."

"In almost every respect FRAMECAD is the perfect client," says John Showell, Sales Manager, at REALTECH. "They knew exactly what they wanted, they were methodical in their documentation and they had a good team in place that was able to pick up the management of SAP Business One very quickly. We provided some initial training and have consequently been helping them out when they needed additional developments or assistance on enhancements to the system. REALTECH have more than 55 SAP Business One clients in New Zealand and the people at FRAMECAD are one of the more advanced practitioners." Over the last four years FRAMECAD has extended their utilisation of SAP Business One to include, manufacturing, project control, service management and customer relationship management.

Futures

FRAMECAD is poised for continued growth. "The uptake of our technology worldwide has been nothing short of phenomenal," says Hutchings. "But we couldn't continue to grow without the support of an excellent IT platform. And that is what REALTECH have provided. There is a lot of continuity in their staff – the same people who helped us get started are still the ones who advise us when we need any additional help. They understand our business and deliver on their promises."

"The future is filled with opportunities," concludes Hutchings, "But whichever directions we take, we'll be able to support our growth with SAP Business One and be supported all the way with our technology partners REALTECH."

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