Customer Profile

Renshawnapier keeps production sweet with Infor System21 Aurora

Facts at a glance

Solution: ERP
Product: Infor System21 Aurora
Industry: Food & Beverage
Country: UK

"System21 Aurora is more cost effective and less complex than SAP."

—John Taubman, Head of Information Systems, The Real Good Food Company

About the company

Renshawnapier is part of The Real Good Food Company plc, an AIM-listed, UK-based company offering a wide range of products to grocery retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers. With 500 employees and a turnover of £230 million, its brands include Whitworths Sugar, R&W Scott, Napier Brown Foods, Renshaw, and Regalice.

Renshaw is a leading manufacturer of marzipans, ready-to-roll icings, baking chocolate, and jam. Napier Brown is Europe's largest independent non-refining distributor of sugar. Garretts Ingredients is the UK's foremost dairy and bakery ingredients supplier.

For more information, visit www.renshawnapier.co.uk.

Setting the strategy

Following the merger of Napier Brown Foods and Renshaw in 2009, the senior management team had to make a decision on which of the two existing ERP systems it would run across the new company. Napier Brown Foods was running SAP and Renshaw was supported by Infor™ System21.

Minimizing costs to boost profitability is crucial for Renshawnapier. While the resurgence of home baking means that demand for Renshawnapier's products is strong, the manufacturer faces escalating raw materials costs. This means that, like many manufacturers, Renshawnapier finds itself fighting the tide in battling against declining margins.

In order to realize potential cost savings as a result of the merger, and fulfil its objective to preserve margins, Renshawnapier's chosen solution had to be able to fit its business processes; be implemented quickly and cost effectively; and offer a great deal of flexibility.

Getting business specific

After both the SAP and Infor solutions were reviewed in detail, Infor System21 Aurora was chosen to support the business and manufacturing processes involved in running the new company's three manufacturing sites and sales office in the UK. The selection was based on a number of factors, but the dominant force behind the decision was that System21 Aurora could be adapted to fit the complex manufacturing processes and demands of the new company more quickly and cost effectively than SAP.

"The ability to implement quickly to a tight budget, combined with an in-depth understanding of the challenges we face, were instrumental factors in making the right ERP choice," comments John Taubman, head of information systems, The Real Good Food Company plc.

"We already had a long-standing, trusted relationship with Infor, and it was this, in conjunction with an in-depth understanding of the complexities inherent in the food manufacturing industry, which clinched the deal."

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> **—John Taubman, The Real Good Food Company**

Seeing results

Over a 12-month period, Infor System 21 was upgraded to Aurora 2.3 at two manufacturing sites, and Aurora 2.3 was implemented across Renshawnapier's remaining manufacturing and sales sites. In order to optimize the benefits of the solution, the manufacturer's IBM iSeries 820-2395 hardware was upgraded to a Power System Model 520 #8203-E4A 2 Way Express 9637. Infor's professional services consultants worked closely with Renshawnapier to transfer data and ensure the latest version was live within thespecified timescales.

"The merger and subsequent process review coincided with the height of the recession, so the pressure was on to see tangible benefits from our ERP implementation," Taubman says. "An economic downturn tends to have a relatively minimal impact on the food market's demand for our products as people tend to eat more comfort food–cake and chocolate–which our raw materials are crucial to. However our raw materials costs, particularly sugar cane, continue to rise, squeezing our margins and causing us to continuously look at ways of manufacturing at a lower cost base.

"Our expectations of this project were therefore set high, as the software was integral to maximizing the benefits of the consolidation of Renshaw and Napier. But through de-duplicating processes and reducing costs, while at the same time delivering the high service levels and fulfilment our customers and partners expect, System21 Aurora hasn't let us down," he continues.

Since implementing Infor System21 Aurora, Renshawnapier has standardized and consolidated processes across its four sites and has tightened MRP, forecasting, inventory, warehousing, and financials to deliver improved productivity.

System21 Aurora has strengthened and improved both the accuracy and availability of the manufacturer's management information, which has increased visibility and improved decision making.

One area where this has resulted in significant cost savings is procurement strategy. The system highlights where surplus costs are being incurred and provides a cohesive view of commodity prices and data, ensuring the procurement team buys the right quantities at the right time, and, crucially, at the right price.

"System21 Aurora is more cost effective and less complex than SAP. Users have given us some great feedback on the interface, which undoubtedly encourages greater use of the system, expediting the benefits," Taubman comments.

"Infor offers far greater flexibility than its competitors and has a thorough grounding in the issues and challenges we face in a complex food processing environment," he continues. "System21 Aurora fits our business very well, helping us to protect margins and improve profitability in the face of operational complexity and rising raw materials costs."

Doing business better

Having tightened and consolidated its manufacturing process using Infor System21 Aurora, Renshawnapier is now looking at where it can strip out costs and make improvements to the supply chain. By applying quality management information derived from System21 Aurora out into the supply chain, the manufacturer expects to drive even greater tangible savings in the future.

641 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10011
800-260-2640
infor.com

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