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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

■ CASE STUDY

Luxury Chocolate Maker Benefits from NetSuite

Rococo Chocolates is a manufacturer and retailer of luxury chocolates based originally on King's Road, London, although it has now expanded to add another store and a flourishing wholesale business. It is using hosted software from NetSuite, which can provide ERP functionality covering all Rococo's accounting, sales management and logistics processes. The software also supports e-commerce functionality, which enables wholesale customers to order online.

Implementing this hosted software has enabled Rococo to move forward, expanding in size from its original store, and has also helped sales rise. The NetSuite software includes a real-time dashboard function, which lets staff see immediately what is happening in a particular area of the business. For instance, the staff in the warehouse can see the day's orders, the chairperson can look at sales and profitability, and the marketers can see a customer's order history. This means everyone knows the exact status of their department, saving time and improving the efficiency of the business.



Expansion

The confectionery market is highly competitive and NetSuite releases Rococo's financial controller Gerry Kerins from spending his time developing a complex IT investment and allows him to concentrate on core business issues. "Sales in the period since we implemented NetSuite have gone up by 25 percent," he says. "NetSuite can't



take all the credit because the Rococo team was growing the business successfully before - but it has made it easier for us to grow faster by allowing everyone to access the business information they need, when they need it, and wherever they need it."

By allowing wider access, NetSuite has removed Rococo's main bottleneck. "Outside my office, the queues of people wanting access to business critical data were often longer than the huge queues for our chocolates during the Easter rush. It was my machine that accessed the data so everything from buying a bottle of milk with petty cash to customer queries and order management caused constant interruptions to my day - it seemed like everything came through me," he explains.

Gerry Kerins continues: "As the business grew, the network path looked inevitable. The only products offering the sophistication we required were server-based. There didn't appear to be any suitable ASP solution in the UK until NetSuite arrived. I wanted a solution that was scalable and NetSuite offered us this and the reseller supported the migration."

Benefits

The freedom NetSuite has brought has allowed existing business practices to be extended and given Rococo's customers access to the system to place orders. It is now easier to manage and fulfil orders because everyone concerned can view a new order within minutes of it being received.

NetSuite is also continuing to be a major contributor to Rococo's ability to

expand. Gerry Kerins elaborates: "We are about to open a second London shop and have the luxury of not having to worry about equipping the premises with expensive networking kit. The cost savings on capital investment with NetSuite is a real boon and will make the move less complex in a practical context - and less expensive, too."

Deployment has meant that Kerins' master copy of the data is no longer on his hard drive but resides on NetSuite's servers in the US. But he has no real concerns about this relocation. "I am probably happier with the situation now because I don't have to worry about backing-up anything, NetSuite does it all for me. If I go on holiday, the data is still there, being well looked after and available to our staff whether I'm there or not," he adds.



Dashboard Function

The 'killer' feature for Rococo is NetSuite's Dashboard interface, which can be configured to show essential information to any of Rococo's departments. This takes quite a load off the finance department and allows Gerry Kerins to fulfil his dream: "I'd rather grow with a leaner personnel structure and delegate to the customers and the Rococo staff. We can do this by using NetSuite intelligently."

He concludes: "With a growing business you want to keep your head above water and be able to look for which direction to take. That's the hard thing because you get involved with the nitty-gritty of keeping the IT system going. I now have time to concentrate on real business matters. At the end of the day I just close my PC down and go home without worrying about anything else." For further information contact NetSuite on Tel +44 (0) 1628 774400 or visit www.netsuite.co.uk. □