



# Sweet solution

When **Rococo Chocolates'** IT system needed an overhaul, it turned to NetSuite

**R**ococo is a London-based manufacturer of luxury chocolates. Chocolatier Chantal Coady founded the company in 1983 and the flagship store still occupies its original building on the fashionable Kings Road. Rococo is a growing business and has secured outlets through several prestigious retail chains.

The company was experiencing difficulties with its IT systems and even the constant upgrades by its previous software vendor failed to deliver the correct functionality, plus the previous supplier only offered a wired network option and not the desired web-based solution. Rococo turned to NetSuite.

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 per cent," 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," Gerry explains.

He calculates that NetSuite has saved him a lot more than just time. "I had a quote for setting up a five-user network to run Sage and that was £30,000. Switching to NetSuite has only meant a fraction of that cost, and I don't have to worry about back-ups and security."

## The challenge

Success brings with it distractions as business processes and IT support systems compete for attention. For Gerry, the main distraction was a Sage Line 50 accounting package. "I was getting tired of the constant support issue, with add-ons and upgrades that didn't deliver what we needed," he says. "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."

Comparative cost was another issue but this was harder to fully evaluate. Gerry says licensing was comparable to Sage but NetSuite offered easier internet networking, a lighter hardware investment and no hidden costs for upgrading. It didn't require employing an IT specialist, buying network kit or managing data backup.

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 says: "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 Gerry's 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 anything up, 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 says.

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 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 - and that's something I never felt I could do with Sage."

"With a growing business you want to keep your head above water and be able to look for which direction to take. That's hard 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." ●FC

*For further information on Rococo Chocolates, please visit:*  
[www.rococochocolates.com](http://www.rococochocolates.com).

*For further information on NetSuite, please visit:* [www.netsuite.com](http://www.netsuite.com).