



SIDELCO

SAP AG AND N'WARE TECHNOLOGIES SOLVE ORDER MANAGEMENT ISSUES WITH SAP® BUSINESS ONE

“Our revenues have more than tripled since we implemented SAP Business One.”

Renault Jacques, Systems Administrator,
Sidelco Inc.

QUICK FACTS

Company

- Name: Sidelco Inc.
- Location: Quebec City, Canada
- Industry: Consumer products
- Products and services: Fire alarm and access control systems
- Revenue: CAD 6.8 million (€4.76 million)
- Employees: 60
- Web site: www.sidelco.com
- Implementation partner: N'ware Technologies Inc.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Simplification of accounting procedures
- Elimination of reentry for data from Microsoft Office applications
- Automation of record searches

Objectives

- Replace obsolete order management software based on Microsoft DOS
- Build in scalability to support additional users and functions
- Institute standard record keeping across departments to manage customer relationships
- Implement report suite for decision support

SAP® Solution and Services

SAP® Business One application

Implementation Highlights

- Requirements assessment with SAP partner N'ware Technologies in May 2004
- Go-live of accounting functions in July 2004
- Integration of SAP Business One with existing SAP applications at Siemens due to merger between Sidelco and Siemens in July 2006

Why SAP

- Recommendations from similar midsize clients in North America
- Demonstrated expertise across enterprise resource planning functions
- Flexibility to implement rightsized solution affordably

Benefits

- Single, easy-to-use application for sales, order, inventory, and billing management operations
- Visible growth path as trusted partner of N'ware Technologies
- Scalability to integrate additional functions and accommodate business growth

Existing Environment

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, aging customized software running on Microsoft DOS

Third-Party Integration

- Database: Microsoft Access
- Hardware: IBM servers and Dell PCs
- Operating systems: Microsoft DOS and Microsoft Windows



Established in 1977 in Quebec City, Sidelco Inc. first earned North American recognition for manufacturing, distributing, and servicing Pyr-A-Larm fire detection products, now included in a product line from Siemens. Today six full-time researchers and 20 field technicians keep Sidelco on the leading edge of comprehensive building security, fire alarm, and access control technology. Areas of high growth currently include exit control devices and surveillance cameras. The company's mission is to enable its customers – that administer buildings ranging from public to commercial to industrial spaces – to manage people and assets at the highest level of performance and reliability. Following the merger with Siemens in 2006, Sidelco's flagship SPHINX software integrated access control and fire detection in a single control station for enhanced efficiency.

Outgrowing the Homegrown Back Office

As it came of age during the 1980s, Sidelco followed the norm for new companies and built back-office systems function by function with individual best-of-breed solutions. The IT staff gradually created or assembled separate Microsoft DOS-based software components that filled specific needs for some users but were not designed to integrate with each other or keep pace with company growth.

Twenty years later, Sidelco had 40 employees, 600 customers, and annual sales of CAD 1.7 million (€1.19 million). The order management process was hindered by the need to transfer data manually between key systems. In addition, personnel in the accounting and

sales departments badly needed ready access to a full history of customer orders. Plus, as Sidelco systems administrator Renault Jacques says, "Long-term strategy was beginning to suffer from the absence of a single big picture."

To maintain a profitable bottom line, which is essential in a tightening technology marketplace, Sidelco clearly needed to upgrade its IT environment. The company needed a full-service, scalable solution to manage customer and vendor relationships, production and inventory planning, and its accounting and financial operations. But it could not afford to compromise its proven ability to respond nimbly to changing customer needs and market requirements by getting bogged down in a long, slow installation process.

Choosing an SAP® Solution

In spring 2004 a team led by Jacques saw a demonstration of the SAP® Business One application by N'ware Technologies Inc. (N'ware) and invited its consultants to an on-site visit. N'ware's talent for teamwork with its clients was clear from the beginning. Although Sidelco had considered other solutions earlier, its managers were impressed by the ease of integration and flexibility offered by SAP applications – features that would help to simplify data mining and make importing files easier. Sidelco's managers realized that they had at last found a simple way to move information seamlessly along the process from sales to invoicing. In SAP Business One, the team found a solution designed to bring affordable and scalable enterprise integration to midsize retail, manufacturing, and services companies like Sidelco. Particularly attractive was the way the SAP ERP Financials solution enabled the preparation of customer statements and sales reports.

Meeting Implementation Challenges

"Our experience with N'ware and SAP has been rewarding since the very beginning," explains Jacques. "We had both a trusted local partner and an expert global leader to help us over the rough patches during our coming of age."



“One benefit is that it now takes 75% less effort to carry out the same processes. In terms of efficiency, the drag-and-relate option in particular is a lifesaver for tracking down crucial information with just a mouse click.”

Renault Jacques, Systems Administrator, Sidelco Inc.

The implementation of SAP Business One was designed to ensure that Sidelco staff, already stressed by the growing complexity of homegrown systems, could quickly learn the new functions they needed to do their jobs. Using the SAP software interfaces came easily to the technical support staff, who had the software up and running by the second day. They were then able to train and provide support

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Renault Jacques, Systems Administrator, Sidelco Inc.

to users in the sales, manufacturing, accounting, and human resources departments as well as to executive users.

Jacques says, “Everybody came up to speed even faster than we’d hoped. We could retire the legacy systems within two weeks.” Now, when they hand off data between departments, users avoid the previously manual and cumbersome tasks. They benefit from fully automated processes. Sidelco has also enhanced its IT hardware to support future growth. SAP Business One currently runs on two full-time servers and about 30 desktop computers, with five more desktops expected by 2008 to accommodate the opening of a new office in Montreal.

Tallying the Wins

The benefits of using SAP Business One abound at Sidelco. Training new employees – and having skilled staff be able to quickly fill in for others when needed – now takes much less time. In addition, the entire Sidelco staff can analyze a suite of new reports and not only monitor work in progress better, but also recognize new sales opportu-

nities. Furthermore, SAP Business One enables Sidelco to automatically set its customer prices to reflect changes in costs along the supply chain.

There are major benefits in efficiency as well. It’s already clear to Sidelco’s managers that SAP Business One has been able to replace a large number of previously disjointed processes with end-to-end processing and consolidated data records. Because SAP Business One eliminates the need to rekey data, the process from quote to statement at Sidelco now takes place in one unbroken chain. In addition, users in every department can view the process at whatever level of detail they need. As Jacques explains, “One benefit is that it now takes 75% less effort to carry out the same processes. In terms of efficiency, the drag-and-relate option in particular is a lifesaver for tracking down crucial information with just a mouse click.”

With SAP Business One to support its development, Sidelco is experiencing impressive growth and now has 800 customers and a staff of 60. Revenues in 2006 were CAD 6.8 million (€4.76 million), more than triple the 2004 figure.

Looking to the Future

As a separate entity under the Siemens umbrella, Sidelco maintains its own workplace culture and brand identity. Meanwhile, some requirements for additional automation and integration with the parent company have emerged. These include the need for Sidelco to enhance how it qualifies sales prospects and manages its sales operations. As part of this development, a project to integrate the SAP Customer Relationship Management application between Siemens and Sidelco is expected to launch in late 2008.

Jacques sums up the ongoing trusted relationship between Sidelco and SAP: “We can’t imagine having to look outside the SAP world for solutions to our business challenges.”



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