

SAP Customer Success Story
Professional Services – Technology-Enabled Business Solutions



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Yvonne Hyland, Senior Vice President, Technology Solutions Company

AT A GLANCE

Company

- Name: Technology Solutions Company
- Location: Chicago
- Industry: Professional services
- Products and services: Technology-enabled business solutions
- Revenue: US\$42.7 million
- Employees: 200
- Web site: www.techsol.com

Challenges and Opportunities

- Large market potential within the midsize sector, characterized by many complexities found in the enterprise market
- Need to develop preconfigured industry solutions to allow for predictable results in terms of cost and time to benefit
- Lack of in-house expertise specific to the industrial machinery and components (IM&C) and high-tech industries
- Lag within midsize sector in adopting enterprise resource planning software and best practices

Objectives

- Provide specialist support for customers within target market sectors
- Enable rapid implementation
- Deliver an affordable, low-risk solution
- Drive revenue growth in the midsize market

SAP® Partner Solutions and Services

- EDGE for IM&C and EDGE for High Tech, both qualified SAP® All-in-One partner solutions

Implementation Highlights

- Well-defined and well-structured qualification process
- Collaborative marketing events
- Access to support materials and training

Why SAP

- Robust functionality
- High level of preconfiguration and a streamlined platform that easily includes industry-specific business processes, thus supporting company expansion
- Extensive development and marketing support to ensure rapid time to market

Benefits

- Implementation time reduced from 6-9 months to just 4 months
- Repeatable approach that improves operational efficiency
- Competitive, affordable solution that supports revenue growth in the midsize market
- Partner solutions expected to account for 50% of sales of SAP-based software by 2008

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS COMPANY

SAP Partner Drives Midmarket Revenue Growth with a Qualified SAP® All-in-One Partner Solution

With a wealth of experience in the industrial machinery and components (IM&C) industry and the high-tech industry, Chicago-based Technology Solutions Company (TSC) is proud of the specialized expertise it offers. “We have a lot of industry-specific knowledge and we believe that differentiates us from our competition,” says Yvonne Hyland, senior vice president at TSC. To capitalize on this strength, the company developed EDGE, a qualified SAP® All-in-One partner solution that provides functionality tailored to the needs of businesses within the IM&C and high-tech industries. As a result, TSC can now offer customers an effective, rapid-implementation solution – providing a competitive advantage that is driving the company’s revenue growth within the midsize market.

Founded in 1988, TSC delivers specialized technology-enabled solutions to customers within the healthcare, financial services, manufacturing, and retail industries. The US\$42.7 million consultancy has been an SAP partner since the mid-’90s and delivers targeted solutions in enterprise applications, customer relationship management, and business technology. Initially focused on implementations for larger companies, TSC has reached out to the midmarket in recent years.

Leveraging Industry Expertise

To provide midsize customers with a more efficient, cost-effective – and ultimately more competitive – service, TSC wanted to leverage its industry knowledge to reduce implementation time on SAP projects. “We wanted to deliver a set of best practice–based functionality without configuring the solution from scratch and reinventing the wheel on every implementation,” explains Hyland. “By preconfiguring much of the solution we would be able to expedite the process.”

To achieve this, the company decided to develop a prepackaged, industry-specific solution that focused on the IM&C and high-tech industries. “We have a lot of staff with extensive experience in

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these industries, as well as a large reference base of customers,” says Hyland. “Market analysis also suggests that the IM&C and high-tech markets hold significant potential.”

Partnering with SAP

SAP was the natural software partner in the development of the solution. “SAP is one of the strongest players in the market today,” comments Hyland. “The software is extremely robust and best practice–based functionality provides a streamlined platform for the development of specialized industry solutions. We don’t see that from other software vendors.”

Hyland was also impressed by the comprehensive support that would be available during the development process. “The amount of effort made by SAP to enable partners to expedite the development of industry solutions and get them to market quickly is very attractive,” she says.

Specialist Solution Built on Best Practices

The first qualified SAP All-in-One partner solution developed by TSC was EDGE. Tailored specifically for the needs of manufacturing companies in the IM&C industry, EDGE provides specialized enterprise resource planning support across finance, procurement, logistics, and sales functions – helping companies to work more efficiently. “We’ve included everything that we know is needed for an IM&C manufacturer to implement the system and be able to run their business successfully from day one,” explains Hyland.

Because much of the functionality is preconfigured to fit with business processes, the timescales for implementation are dramatically reduced. A producer of modified bitumen roofing and waterproofing membranes is just one example of a customer who

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has seen a rollout within 16 weeks. “Compared to implementation of a nonspecialized solution, it’s definitely a lot faster,” says Hyland. “We’d probably be looking at a project timescale of at least six to nine months if we had to configure and document everything from scratch.”

Rapid Time to Market

The high level of preconfiguration within the SAP software meant that TSC was able to develop its own specialized industry solution quickly. “The additional layer of functionality provided by SAP really cuts back the amount of effort required, making it quicker, easier, and less costly to produce a qualified SAP All-in-One partner solution,” comments Hyland.

Access to expertise within SAP and to a wide range of development resources was there whenever it was needed. Training and support materials, as well as resources provided through the SAP PartnerEdge™ program, all helped to ensure that the process was as efficient as possible. A structured approach ensured that the qualification of the EDGE application and supporting documentation went smoothly. “It’s a very well-defined process,” confirms Hyland. “All the tasks and deliverables we needed to achieve were clear and straightforward, and we simply worked through them.”

SAP also provided support for marketing TSC’s solution. “We have access to a lot of SAP collateral that can be used and adapted,” says Hyland. “There are also some great opportunities for collaborative marketing. For example, we’ve held several joint events with SAP, including Webcasts and breakfast meetings.”

Repeatable Approach for Improved Efficiency

For TSC, having a defined solution with an implementation approach that is repeatable means the company can deliver the solution more efficiently. “The key saving is not just in the time it takes to configure the solution,” says Hyland. “The training documentation, process flows, role descriptions, and other support materials can all be reused and that saves a significant amount of time.”

The sales process has also been streamlined. “Before, sales discussions were much more abstract. We talked about requirements, but it took a long time before we could actually show customers what the solution would look like,” explains Hyland. “Now, because we have a preconfigured solution, we can demonstrate it using the customer’s own data to illustrate how it will work in practice. This really helps to expedite the sales process.”

Driving Growth in the Midsize Sector

TSC anticipates that more and more of its business will focus on midsize customers, driven by its qualified SAP All-in-One partner solution. Of the company’s total revenue from SAP-based software and services, the company expects the EDGE application to account for 50% by 2008. And Hyland believes that the midsize sector holds significant potential for TSC. “With approximately 1.3 million midsize companies in the United States, it is a vast market and one that will be increasingly important for us,” she confirms.

TSC recently launched a second qualified SAP All-in-One partner solution, EDGE software for the high-tech industry, and plans to develop additional industry solutions in the future. In addition,

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the company continues to refine its existing IM&C solution to offer additional functionality in areas such as service management, which is key for some manufacturers. “We’re looking at moving into new industries, but we’re also enriching what we have,” says Hyland.

TSC’s partnership with SAP is on course to continue delivering business success for the company. “SAP seems to be more focused on partnering now than it ever has been,” concludes Hyland. “Our relationship is very strong and becoming more collaborative every day.”

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