

Cymot (Pty) Ltd

Distribution / Retail

Introduction

The Challenge

Automate tills across 11 shops; speed up warehouse management tasks such as put away, pick and pack; reduce headcount through system efficiencies; improve quality and speed of preparation of management accounts; allow staff to see a single view of data across all locations, real-time; replace ageing, limited systems.

The Solution

Implemented IBM eserver iSeries Model 270 running A/IX under PASE, HansaWorld Enterprise ERP and CRM solution.

The Benefit

Single real-time system supporting all operations, lower operational costs including reduced headcount, faster and higher quality reporting.

Company Profile

Cymot (Pty) Ltd is a privately owned company operating through 11 sales outlets throughout Namibia. Cymot is a specialist distributor and retailer of:

- motor spares, accessories and abrasives
- outdoor equipment, fishing tackle, bicycles and 4x4 accessories
- workshop equipment and tools, and
- personal protective equipment.

Cymot operates from a centralized warehouse and Head office based in the capital city Windhoek, and employs around 310 people.

Situation

Cymot had been operating on a character-based IT system for around 20 years. However, the old system could not support the company's plans for growth and significant limitations were identified. In particular:

- the warehouse management system was holding back the growth of their business,
- integration of modern electronic motor spares catalogue was no longer possible on the old system,



- Cymot were missing out on other, modern applications (such as email and advanced word processing) as a result of running on older hardware.

Cymot embarked on a project to identify all its processes and probed the market to find the best system to suit its demands. The key requirement was to have a fully integrated ERP supporting all business processes within the organization - this would provide Cymot the platform for future growth.

This system had to be run via a centralized server which branches could connect to using Digicon lines, the bandwidth of the lines varying between 64K to 128K over distances of close to 3000 kilometers.

The New Software

One of the key requirements for the new software was the ability to run over a wide area network (WAN) using connections with only a small bandwidth. The infrastructure costs in the vast areas of Namibia are relatively expensive and excluded typical graphical emulation software. The ability of HansaWorld to have a graphical user (GUI) interface over these slow-speed lines was one of the most important factors in the selection process.

"The multi-platform abilities of HansaWorld, as well as the fact that HansaWorld operates from its own 3 tier database allowed HansaWorld Enterprise to operate using Cymot's existing hardware", Frank de Oliveira, the IT manager of Cymot explains. "Furthermore, the costs to implement HansaWorld vis-à-vis the other software programs, made the decision easy".

The Requirements

An extensive list of requirements was noted down during the scoping phase of the HansaWorld implementation. These varied from key necessities to 'nice-to-have' tools, which HansaWorld has now programmed in their latest releases. The most important features, all delivered by HansaWorld Enterprise, included:

- advanced, flexible and easy to use reporting, all capable of being run by users
- hub and wheel warehouse management functionality, where branch requirements are readily replenished from a central warehouse operating consolidated purchasing
- clear access levels with strong separation of tasks between different staff members
- scalability to support growing operations, currently running at around 3,000 invoices per day.

The Implementation Process

Once the decision was taken to implement HansaWorld, key Cymot staff and HansaWorld developers spent over half a year identifying and documenting Cymot's needs and programming any modifications. Detailed training sessions were conducted with all members of staff to make sure that they understood the new system and felt confident in using it.

Cymot's implementation went live 3rd May 2004. HansaWorld worked alongside Cymot staff to ensure that any teething problems were kept to a minimum, and fixed quickly. Due to the large volumes of data being entered into the system on a daily basis, the original Linux server began to feel the strain. HansaWorld quickly arranged for a replacement IBM machine to be lent to Cymot so that the data load could be handled. For three months thereafter the HansaWorld system was fine-tuned to the Cymot demand.

Cymot is now running on an IBM eserver iSeries model 270, using A/IX under PASE. They are considering switching to Linux in a logical partition (LPAR), and will continue to review the most appropriate eserver model on which to run HansaWorld Enterprise – they have the flexibility to choose from any model in the eserver range.

Benefits and Results

"The computer literacy of Cymot staff increased by 75% within a very short time" Frank de Oliveira states. "The benefits of HansaWorld system began to bear fruit, especially in the warehouse management module, handling all the inter-branch stock orders through an automated nightly routine. The Service Order module for Cymot's workshop has increased the productivity and service delivery significantly. Furthermore having the built in communication tools like Chat and Conferencing provided a new and cost effective way of communicating throughout the company."

The ability to have real-time information for every facet of the organisation, as well as the drill down functionality in every report is highly appreciated by everybody.

Future Plans

Cymot plans to use the e-commerce functionality within HansaWorld to launch their electronic parts catalogue, to provide their key customers access to this information via the web and to run their website.

Other plans include the introduction of a bin location system in the Central Warehouse premises.

Cymot believes that HansaWorld is a system that can cater for their needs today and tomorrow. With the vast functionality in the standard product and the short turn-around time for customizations, Cymot has a solution which matches their individual business requirements. Frank de Oliveira explains, "With the experiences gained, we can say that almost anything is possible within HansaWorld".

