



# Smart solution creates competitive edge

The key to addressing the many challenges that can have an adverse effect on business performance can often be found in a simple solution – as this office furniture manufacturer discovered.

## THE SITUATION

Smartedge SA has an innovative product and a reputation for good service. However, both of these depend on the company's ability to leverage technology to deliver on its promise of providing made-to-order office furniture at a reasonable price. To help them with this challenge, the team approached Microsoft partner, Compact Computer Solutions.

A number of concerns were immediately highlighted: Smartedge was running a Microsoft® Windows 2000 Server with Microsoft® Axapta 2.5 and, as a result, myriad factors were impeding on almost every area of business, from slowness of the application and a large item master file to manually conducting costing and financial reports.

On an aesthetic level, invoices generated at Smartedge lacked the professional touch of a logo.

Charmaine Kidd, Managing Director at Compact Computer Solutions, explains that although Smartedge had started implementing Axapta 3.0, the installation had not been completed.

## THE SOLUTION

After a thorough assessment of the situation, Compact Computer Solutions decided that the ideal scenario would be for Smartedge to

upgrade from Axapta 2.5 to Dynamics AX 4.0.

"Dynamics AX 4.0 has more features which benefits the client without any extra development," says Kidd. "And because Smartedge is part of the Microsoft Enhancement plan, the company could upgrade without any added cost.

"We also decided to install Small Business Server 2003 to enhance the performance and to provide a solid infrastructure for the business."

Microsoft Dynamics AX (formerly Microsoft Axapta) works like other Microsoft software, such as the Microsoft Office programs and Microsoft SQL Server. This ensures that users are able to quickly acquaint themselves with the product and continue to focus on the work at hand – as opposed to struggling with new technology.

## THE RESULTS

Implementing the solution took a mere three months, during which time there was minimal business interruption.

"The client is using configurable items, thereby downsizing on the item master file and enabling the system to run faster," says Kidd.



"We are very pleased with the results ... We now have better turnaround times and fewer delays in getting information. We are also in a position to know what our stock holding is at any point in time."

- Neville Soll, Manager at Smart Edge

In addition, Smart Edge is now able to automatically create new bills of materials, which provides a more accurate costing on each job.

Master scheduling has also improved significantly, enabling Smartedge to be more efficient and control the inventory levels more accurately. Dynamics AX details exactly what products are needed for manufacturing and assembling – and highlights any potential product shortages.

Furthermore, financial reports are automated and invoicing has seen a marked improvement – customers now receive invoices that are more aesthetically pleasing.

Very little user training was required, as all users were already using Axapta 2.5. It was therefore merely a matter of familiarising themselves with the new, user-friendly Dynamics AX 4.0, with the assistance of the consultants.

"We are very pleased with the results," says Neville Soll, Manager at Smart Edge. "The upgrade allows us to provide an efficient service. We now have better turnaround times and fewer delays in getting information. We are also in a position to know what our stock holding is at any point in time."

"While it delivers a wide range of business functionality and adaptability, Dynamics AX is building a strong reputation within the manufacturing industry for the efficiencies it delivers for production planning, scheduling and forecasting," adds Kidd.

#### TECHNOLOGY USED

Microsoft® SQL 2003

Microsoft® Small Business Server 2003

#### ABOUT COMPACT COMPUTER SOLUTIONS

Compact Computer Solutions (CCS) is a privately owned software and hardware solutions company. It is a Gold Certified accredited Microsoft partner, with proven Microsoft Dynamics competencies and Small Business Specialist status. Its focus is to assist companies and provide efficient and cost-effective business solutions. All customer solutions are based on Microsoft technology. The CCS team consists of people who have been responsible for a number of successful ERP implementations since 1989, and in most cases CCS continues to service those clients.

#### ABOUT SMARTEDGE

Smartedge SA (Pty) Ltd was formed in 2001 by Celebrity Engineering (Pty) Ltd, a leading manufacturer of office furniture in South Africa. The company was specifically created to take advantage of a unique patent to edge flat particle board with a super durable moulded polyurethane compound that is both wear and impact resistant. The product has revolutionised the way that board is edged in the office furniture industry, and the technique used by Smartedge SA has made its smartform edge cost effective and competitive with conventional PVC edges. Smartedge SA has successfully exported its product range to Australia, Zambia, Angola and the Congo, and has built up a reputation for good service coupled with a quality product.

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