



SVK OPTIMIZES ITS BUSINESS OPERATIONS WITH A FULLY INTEGRATED ERP SYSTEM FROM ORGANI AND PROGRESS SOFTWARE

When your business is manufacturing and distributing cement products and bricks, the complexities of inventory management are multiplied. With pallets weighing hundreds or even thousands of kilograms, moving inventory is no small task. And with most orders requiring a large quantity of materials, it is critical those items are in stock. One missing item can make all the difference when it comes to completing a project.

These are the very challenges construction product manufacturers and distributors like SVK face. Headquartered in Belgium, SVK has over 100 years of manufacturing, supply and technical expertise. As one of the largest manufacturers of building materials in Belgium, SVK offers a comprehensive portfolio of fiber cement products and bricks. The company also manages a bookbinding operation.

As is the case with many organizations, over the years SVK acquired a number of different applications to manage its business operations, from administration and finance to inventory and warehouse management. While some of the applications were modern, others, dating back 10-15 years were sorely out-dated with character-based user interfaces. In most of those cases, SVK did not have the option to migrate to a more modern application based on new technologies such as a graphical user interface, electronic archiving, customer relationship management (CRM) or business intelligence (BI) tools that could provide deeper insight into operational and financial data.

“Our IT infrastructure could not scale with our growing business,” explains Walter Verhaert, Director for SVK. “While we could keep up with customer demand and manage our business operations effectively, it took a toll from both a resource and cost perspective. There were numerous operations that we knew could be easily managed through automation with an updated system that we were tackling by hand.”

For example, SVK’s process for inventory management required a significant amount of physical counting and controls. That process made audits painful and failed to give sales the up-to-date information they needed to accurately fill customer orders. “It took far more people than it should have to manage that process. And in the end, we still only had a ‘theoretical,’ idea of what our inventory was. Because after just one order, those numbers changed.”

Verhaert says SVK wanted to streamline its operations by giving all employees access to the same system with the same information. With a fully automated system and access to up-to-date reliable information sales could better serve the customer; employees



CHALLENGE

Disparate systems limited access to information and impacted employee productivity

SOLUTION

An integrated ERP system from Organi, based on the Progress’ OpenEdge’ platform

BENEFIT

Increased efficiency and productivity; improved data flow and control over inventory process; increased executive access to real-time data

could be more productive; the company could reduce its costs; and management could make more informed business decisions with real-time visibility across business operations.



ORGANI OFFERS A LOCAL PARTNERSHIP AND STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY

When it came to choosing a new software vendor, SVK didn't have to look far. Based on a reference from another local organization within the same industry, SVK contacted Organi, a Progress Software application provider also based in Belgium.

"After a demonstration of their solution we were extremely impressed with Organi's expertise and technology," says Verhaert. "We saw tremendous potential in partnering with Organi. Not only did they offer impressive solutions, a long list of customers, and proven industry success, but they were located in Belgium. Having a close relationship with a vendor was important to us. With a larger, multi-national company employees are constantly coming and going. With Organi, we were confident that we would be working closely with the same people from the beginning of the implementation to the very end. They were truly committed to our success."

SVK had an immediate need for a bookkeeping application, so that was the first solution they implemented. "It was critical that from the very start we have access to analytical overviews and financial information at our fingertips," explains Verhaert. The second phase of the project involved replacing all of SVK's existing applications with a single integrated ERP system for managing every aspect of the business, including sales orders, purchase orders, inventory management, warehouse management, compliance management, electronic archiving [EDM], CRM and BI.

Built on the Progress® OpenEdge® platform, SVK's system is fault-tolerant with built-in failover capabilities in the event of technical interruption or a disaster.

Verhaert says the implementation was extremely smooth. SVK was able to recover all of its historical data from the previous systems—data on more than 5,000 products. And the cutover from the old systems to the new integrated system was seamless, causing no interruption to its business.

AUTOMATION AND ACCESS TO REAL-TIME DATA IMPROVES CONTROL ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE

SVK's new system from Organi has been in place for approximately one year. And while the company is still learning about the system and how it can improve the business, SVK has already realized numerous advantages, and it anticipates the system will deliver tremendous benefits to the business moving forward.

With a fully integrated application, SVK's management now has access to real-time reporting and analysis. With facts in hand, SVK's executives can make more informed business decisions.

The inventory process has greatly improved. With access to real-time stock information sales can be confident that products are in stock, and customers benefit from timely delivery of goods. And SVK's production manager is better able to plan production based on accurate inventory levels.

Employees can now better serve the customer. With the ability to quickly and easily access account information using fewer screens and with a direct access to the electronic archive, sales and customer representatives can now resolve issues and answer questions far more quickly and accurately.

"We needed to make this change to ensure we are ready for the future. And I believe this system will support our needs for decades to come."

Walter Verhaert
Director
SVK

SVK has significantly improved its ability to control and manage its business processes. Unlike its previous solutions, the Organi system imposes business rules and processes that must be followed by all users. As a result, there are far fewer errors; efficiency and productivity have increased; and output from the system [documents, email, fax, etc.] is now uniform.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the near future, SVK plans to collaborate with Organi to further customize the ERP solution to meet their specific business needs. SVK plans to deploy the complete CRM system in 2012 to increase sales and opportunities with the ability to better target specific customers with relevant offers and information. The company also expects to implement a barcode rating system to further improve inventory management.

Verhaert says they are very satisfied with their choice to work with Organi and invest in new technology. "We needed to make this change to ensure we are ready for the future. And I believe this system will support our needs for decades to come. As for our relationship with Organi, they have been very good to work with. They collaborate with us to meet our needs and resolve any issues or questions we may have. We have peer-to-peer relationships at numerous levels within both organizations—management, operations, IT, etc. That has certainly contributed to the success of our project by making sure we are addressing all of the needs and challenges across the organization. Overall, we have a very positive relationship, and we look forward to continuing to realize the benefits of our new system."



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ORGANI



Organi offers a unique combination of vertical applications and services to different markets, including manufacturing, transport & logistics, bailiffs and bookkeeping & finance. For more than 35 years, Organi has helped executives in these markets to increase their productivity and profits. The continuous effort in developing high-end applications based on the newest technologies makes Organi one of the most important Progress partners in the Belgian area. In 2010, Organi received the Fastest Growing Partner award from Progress. www.organi.be

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation (NASDAQ: PRGS) is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or in the cloud, on any platform or device, to any data source, with enhanced performance, minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

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Rev. 8/14 | 120326-0004