

Overcoming the technology grind

enVista and Stone Technologies helped a grain and milling company successfully migrate to Microsoft Dynamics 365 in the cloud in seven months

When a grain, milling, and commodities company acquired a new milling facility from one of its key customers, it was required to discontinue its use of its SAP enterprise resource planning system and its enterprise asset management system from Maximo. Not only did the company need to migrate from SAP and Maximo to Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Finance and Operations on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform within seven months, but it also had to integrate all their production machines and various existing proprietary and third-party systems with the new solution, including a warehouse management system (WMS) and an electronic data interchange (EDI) solution. The consequences of not meeting this compressed timeline would result in a significant, negative financial and operational impact.

The company turned to leading supply chain consulting and IT services firm enVista, which provides full implementation and support services for several Microsoft business applications. These include Microsoft Dynamics 365, Microsoft Azure, SharePoint and Office 365.

To ensure that all safety and quality requirements were met in optimal fashion in the appropriate systems and further support the client, enVista brought in Stone Technologies, a systems integration firm that specialises in manufacturing operations management.

A vital part of the implementation involved migrating the client's existing Wonderware SCADA platform and replacing proprietary quality, recipe, and lab systems. Working with Stone Technologies, enVista focused on meeting the deadlines for the company's set go-live date, while at the same time establishing a platform to allow it to optimise both production and operation activities in future.



“enVista and the client are now focused on exploring additional process improvement opportunities”

Thanks to the help of both enVista and Stone Technologies, the grain and milling company has successfully met its goal for an aggressive phase one implementation, completing the migration on time (in just seven months) and within budget. Together, enVista and the client are now focused on exploring additional process improvement opportunities and leveraging all systems to give the latter a competitive advantage. Future areas of focus will include production scheduling, commodity management and trade, and transportation optimisation. ■

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Implementation Experts

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Upgrading to Microsoft Dynamics 365



NIGEL COX: ENVISTA

A lean operational and technical value assessment can help companies to determine where and how to make improvements that drive results

For companies that want to make the jump to Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Finance and Operations, the first thing to consider is the impact such a move could have on business operations. By conducting an operational assessment beforehand, companies can identify any inefficiencies that may exist across their business. As an implementer and consultant for multiple Microsoft systems, including Dynamics 365 for Operations, enVista offers a deep knowledge base that provides companies with unique insights into optimising supply chain execution through a lean operational and technical value assessment.

“enVista’s knowledge base provides companies with insights into optimising supply chain execution”

For all types of manufacturing – including project, discrete, process, and lean – the goal of an enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementation is to satisfy customer demand while keeping costs low with minimum inventory levels. However, each manufacturer faces distinct challenges. For example, project manufacturers must collaborate across multiple departments, such as sales, project management, engineering and finance for each sales opportunity, whereas discrete manufacturers focus on operations like the shop floor, warehouse and procurement.

With so many moving pieces in a complex manufacturing organisation, it’s easy to envision what can happen when department processes are out of sync. Enterprises should ask themselves whether their delivery performance is below 95%. An assessment can help them pinpoint where they are falling short and how to increase service levels before upgrading their ERP. Companies might also benefit from a value assessment if they have capacity challenges in their current operations and need to handle more products within their existing footprint. If a company is curious as to what their competition is doing to enhance their supply chain, they can learn that through an assessment too.

A lean operational and technical value assessment should include an onsite interview of key stakeholders to identify significant pain points. It is also beneficial to conduct a lean process analysis that includes all functional areas of a company’s distribution process – from order entry to receiving, to loading and shipping. Ultimately, the goal is for organisations to identify areas throughout their operations to generate more profit, make customers happy, and tie up less cash.

Lean is about eliminating waste in processes and ERP is about integrating and automating back-office processes. Do companies really want to integrate and automate waste? ■

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