

Sanderson solution helps Cimandis to manage a highly diverse business

Cimandis has grown from a simple wholesale business to become one of the largest trading operations in the Channel Islands. Cimandis is part of the CI Traders group, comprising 8 complementary food and beverage manufacturing and distribution businesses including Victor Hugo and Bucktrouts. The company supplies the retail and hospitality industries with a wide range of products including fresh and chilled meat, bakery goods, alcohol and soft drinks

Background

Cimandis incorporates two commercial bakeries, butcheries, food service and alcohol distribution businesses, with publishing and electrical rental firms soon to be added; diversifying the mix further. Sanderson has supported Cimandis through its acquisitions and company growth since 1998, providing a centralised system to run all of the company's operations. To cope with this rapid growth and the challenges of entering new industries, Cimandis has been able to extend its use of the Sanderson system, utilising existing functionality and adding new modules to meet changing needs. The company is now one of the largest customers using the Swords solution from Sanderson, with over 115 licences.

Supporting future development plans

According to Steve England, IT Director at Cimandis:

"We chose the Sanderson solution to streamline our initial business following a competitive tender. The standard package did what we wanted it to - automating everything, from sales through to warehouse operations, handling our fresh, frozen and ambient food products. Because it is an open system, it interfaced with our existing third party nominal ledger and left the door open for development to run a delivered trade for wines and spirits. Buying a system which could support extensive future development plans was very important in our decision."

Swords integrates all areas of the supply chain so wholesale distribution businesses can balance the demands of sales, purchasing, stock control and cash flow. Any or all operations can be automated to accommodate change and growth whilst maintaining continuity of existing business processes. Along with the comprehensive modular suite of Swords software, Sanderson offers a full range of consultancy, training and project management services.

Solution Summary



Customer Profile

- One of the largest Channel Island traders incorporating 8 complementary manufacturing and distribution businesses

Challenge

- Create a centralised system to manage all business processes and provide a single view of the business across all sectors

Solution

- Utilise existing functionality of the Sanderson solution and incorporate modules to meet new requirements as they arise

Benefits

- Streamlined standard business processes
- Diversification into new industry sectors
- Initial IT investment protected through system upgrades and new development
- Single view of the company across all industry sectors now available

Standardising diverse businesses onto a central system

Two years after the initial installation, Cimandis added a newly acquired bakery business onto the system. This bakery supplies own-label products such as Marks and Spencer sliced bread, national brands including Hovis and Granary as well as local brands, Island Bake and Island Gold. To manage 24-hour fulfilment effectively, bakery specific modules were incorporated, including a recipes facility that holds all recipe data on the system. Through instant reporting, Cimandis bakers can easily see what they need in order to fulfil orders within the current 24-hour period. The facility also supports stock control to ensure ingredients never fall short and costings can be accurately determined to support operational profitability.

A further acquisition added an established butchery operation to the business, supplying pre-packed own label products to the Islands' leading supermarkets and delivering meat, poultry, game and deli products to local chefs. A catch weights system was added so that stock could be calculated in line with industry standards, while acting as a control measure for the business. Storing weight data for each order alongside standard truck run sheet instructions ensures drivers deliver the correct amount of stock to each customer. Furthermore Cimandis can keep a tight grip on route profitability. Radio frequency drives efficiency in managing goods inwards, using bar-coding to record all incoming products. The data is matched with purchase orders in real-time and any discrepancies are immediately flagged.

Cimandis' supermarket customers have also benefited by improvements to the initial system. They can now place orders via the web, for internationally recognised brands such as Coca Cola, Walkers, Pepsi and Laurent Perrier. These orders are automatically downloaded into the system for processing in the same way as telesales orders.

In 2006 Sanderson upgraded Cimandis' servers to support the additional workload. The upgrade will enable the system to support future expansion. Cimandis' publishing business will soon be incorporated, allowing centralised billing for customers buying advertising space.

A single view across all businesses

One of the most significant benefits of centralised operations is a single view of the business across all sectors. This is achieved by transporting 10 sets of Swords data into the system's business intelligence module overnight. With Business Intelligence, Cimandis now has a powerful analysis tool to manage information and aid business decisions - improving efficiency, reducing costs and raising customer service levels.

Steve England concludes:

"We supply a very broad range of products to an equally broad customer base. It is essential we have reliable systems to manage the complexities of our business. Sanderson has proved it can help us to successfully extend current operations and sustain future growth, both from a system and customer support perspective."



Orders placed via the web are automatically downloaded into the system



Bakery specific modules hold all recipe data



A powerful analysis tool manages information – raising customer service levels

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