



Case Study

Boehmer Box triples estimating capacity with Solarsoft aVP

Customer Spotlight

- Folding carton manufacturer
- Kitchener, ON, Canada
- www.boehmerbox.com

Key Challenges

- Functional limitations of the old system
- Inaccurate estimating dependent on individual knowledge
- Obsolete system platform & hardware
- Inefficient data transfer & extraction

Solution

- Solarsoft aVP – Solarsoft's integrated business software for consumer packaging manufacturers

Key Benefits

- Improved production efficiency
- Increased costing accuracy
- Tripled estimating capacity
- Complete inventory traceability from initial receipt of raw materials through to final shipment
- Faster and more accurate plant scheduling
- Easy access to data within the system, with complete data extraction and reporting capabilities

“We definitely made the right choice with Solarsoft. They have been very responsive with us, and have allowed us to have input into the development and new features of the Solarsoft aVP system.”

Bill Warren - Director of IT
Boehmer Box Corporation

“One of the key benefits for us has been the **traceability** from **raw materials** right through to **finished cartons.**”

Boehmer Box challenge

With internal IT systems that no longer satisfied the increasing demands of their customers, Boehmer Box, an Ontario-based folding carton manufacturer, realized it was time to implement an integrated approach to their business systems. The packaging company, established in 1874, is one of the oldest businesses in Kitchener, ON, and manufactures paperboard packaging for food, beverage and consumer goods using offset lithographic printing together with sophisticated finishing methods. Accepting the need to replace their existing system, Boehmer Box wanted to make sure they did their homework before selecting a business system and a system supplier that they could partner with.

Need for a change

Boehmer Box had been running an in-house developed core business system for years. It became clear that Boehmer was in a situation where the platform of this system was becoming obsolete. They had difficulties finding people to support the system due to key support people retiring; they also couldn't find replacement parts for scanners and other hardware connected to the system. The

core business system was built on obsolete technology that couldn't be integrated with newer technologies, and didn't allow for efficient data transfer and extraction. More importantly, the functional limitations of the system no longer met the business needs of Boehmer Box.

One of the major issues in the legacy system was estimating. “Before the aVP software implementation, our process was more dependent on the knowledge and information of key individuals, not accurate data in the system,” says Pete Kropf, Senior Estimator at Boehmer Box. “With the new system our estimating process is more efficient and our estimates are more accurate.”

Starting with a plan

After making a decision to move forward with the project, Boehmer Box spent a lot of time putting together a project plan. “We needed a solution that covered all of our business processes, from the estimate to the receipt of cash,” says Bill Warren, Director of IT at Boehmer Box. “We wanted to develop a detailed list of what we were looking for to make sure the new system met all of our needs. We put together teams of people from different departments, both managers

and users, to collect the necessary information.”

A part of the internal process at Boehmer was to map out all key functionalities needed in the new system. “We had other requirements for the new system as well; we needed an up-to-date technical platform, multi-plant capabilities for future growth, and integration capabilities with other software solutions,” says Warren. Boehmer's main goal was to find a long-term partner, a software supplier with strong presence in the industry who would work together with them as a team to implement the solution. One key requirement was to limit any customization in the software, with any changes made becoming a part of the standard release of the selected software.

Evaluating different solutions

The first step in the evaluation process was to contact other packaging companies to see what types of software solutions they were using. From this list and initial information collected from different software vendors, Boehmer Box short-listed two systems that were to be evaluated further. The list of required features that Boehmer had created was discussed with the software vendors.



These must-have features included access to the data in the system, imperial and metric measurement capabilities, full traceability from issued roll to final case, and multiple currency functionality. "We wanted to find a supplier with in-depth knowledge of our industry who would be committed to working with us on a long-term basis," says Warren. "We were also looking for a system that would give us the most 'bang for the buck', and would allow updates with minimum costs."

The Solarsoft solution

"We decided on aVP based on the functionality of the system, and the willingness of Solarsoft to work with us to develop the system," says Warren. "This was a long-term decision for Boehmer and we felt that Solarsoft would be the vendor who would best work with us." Solarsoft aVP has all the key functionality that Boehmer Box was looking for, and provides the management at Boehmer the needed visibility into their business.

Rapid implementation

The go-live date was set in the beginning of the project, and "nothing was going to prevent us from hitting that date," says Warren. The initial implementation was very quick. The whole project was done in

six months, and completed on time and on budget. "Because of this aggressive implementation schedule, we needed to count on our users' dedication and tenacity in order to be successful. After the initial implementation, Solarsoft continued to work with us to resolve on-going issues related to systems and process efficiencies. Everybody who sees the system now can't believe that the implementation only took six months."

The Solarsoft aVP solution at Boehmer includes all modules of the software; estimating, pricing, quotation requests, sales and production order processing, purchase orders, raw materials and finished goods inventory, job costing and work-in-progress, production and plant scheduling and finished goods inventory. The system also incorporates work-in-progress tracking using radio frequency bar-code scanning, and integrated shipping and invoicing. In addition to the key, the software is fully integrated with Open Accounts financials, ArtiosCAD and CAPE palletizing program.

Benefits

After the system implementation, Boehmer now has traceability of their inventory from initial receipt of raw materials, through to the final shipment.

"One of the key benefits for us has been the traceability from raw materials right through to finished cartons," says Jeff Snoddon, Director of Logistics at Boehmer Box. "Now, if we have a quality issue, we can track the order right back to every skid and machine it was on, to every employee who touched the order, and to the original roll and supplier."

Each transaction is tracked through the production process, providing immediate information to customer service and production staff alike. The system also checks the availability of all components within the job and notifies the user if raw materials are needed. The user can then automatically create new purchase orders for any materials that are required, taking into account any physical inventory and existing allocations.

Moreover, the system has improved production efficiency at Boehmer Box. When an order is ready to be scheduled, the system automatically recognizes the machine limitations of all converting machinery and ensures that a suitable routing is selected. Solarsoft aVP has eliminated past issues where jobs would be scheduled for machines that were not capable of running such orders.

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