



Milne AgriGroup

Company Facts

- Location: Perth, Western Australia
- Industry: Agriculture
- Website: www.milne.com.au

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Tony Moore, Finance Systems Manager | Milne AgriGroup

Success Highlights

Solutions

- Epicor ERP
- Epicor Manufacturing
- Epicor SCM

Benefits

- Optimized Order Processing
- Improved Inventory Control
- Improved Invoice Accuracy
- Improved Visibility across the Organization
- Real-time Financial Reporting

Epicor ERP breathes new life into AgriGroup processes

Today's fast-moving commercial environment requires businesses to be flexible, agile and efficient in order to succeed.

Nowhere is this truer than in a company's enterprise IT, where the introduction of advanced software systems can bring both opportunities and challenges.

Milne AgriGroup is one of Western Australia's largest agribusiness organisations with operations extending from the Kimberley region in the north to Albany in the far south. The company has been a premium feed supplier to thousands of farming families for over a century, and in that time has always sought state-of-the-art technology solutions to maximise service efficiency.

It was this commitment to innovation that led the company to re-examine its current processes to see where the latest IT developments could add value and bring its operations to the next level.

Upgrading to a new ERP system was a crucial step in this journey, with AgriGroup keen to update its legacy platforms to achieve a more integrated whole-of-business approach and stay ahead of the competition.

The importance of integration

Tony Moore is AgriGroup's finance systems manager and he described how the company had built up numerous different applications over the years to handle essential business processes.

While the company had a quality assurance system for order processing and tracking across its mill and meat businesses, there were still a number of processes relying on multiple spreadsheets, programs and printouts.

Many procedures, particularly on the meat-processing side, were still manual-based. This created a significant paperwork burden, slowing the organisation down and adding unnecessary productivity bottlenecks.

Furthermore, these disparate systems were expensive to maintain and were holding back business growth. Ultimately, it became clear that the company needed to update to a single system to boost speed and optimise performance across its operations.

"We wanted it to be technically advanced, so we were looking for a solution at the forefront of being able to integrate with other systems," Moore explains.

Searching for the ideal solution

After conducting extensive online research and whittling down a list of suitable candidates, AgriGroup chose an Epicor 9 ERP solution provided by Precise Business Solutions.

Moore says Precise stood out from the crowd because of its methodical five-step implementation process, which included sign-offs at each stage.

"They were able to understand what we were trying to do and therefore add value in not just giving us what we asked for, but to have ideas and options for customisation."

AgriGroup was also keen to work with an established provider - one that had a sizeable presence in Perth and offered sophisticated capabilities and support, but without too much handholding.

"Epicor's flexibility was its best feature. We've become very self-sufficient, but we can still call on Precise for their expertise when we need help or assistance," Moore adds.

Revitalising business processes

Since the implementation, AgriGroup has seen drastic business process improvements across the board. Moore claims the changes are phenomenal and the company has been able to retire a number of major applications and come together in a single platform.

"Epicor has improved our inventory and invoicing accuracy, simplified our credit control functions, quickened financial reporting and made management information easier to retrieve, among other benefits," he says.

"Essentially, we've achieved everything you are looking for when putting in a new ERP system."

Business critical customisations have allowed the firm to revitalise industry-specific processes, such as setting up order entry screens for its meat telesales department. This ensures members of the sales team have customer call lists at their fingertips to streamline order taking and minimise re-keying of data.

The software has enabled AgriGroup to move towards a completely paperless approach, automating workflows and bringing a new level of efficiency to many areas of the business.

"It has put us in a position where we can now grow without concern," Moore states. "We knew what we were planning to do, but the speed of change in some operational areas was still a big surprise."

Looking ahead

Despite all the advantages of using the new system, AgriGroup is not resting on its laurels. The business is already working on a number of new value-added ventures to optimise the core ERP implementation.

AgriGroup recently commissioned a new meat line that specialises in processing raw chicken into packs of cooked-chicken pieces. As such, they foresee a future need to upgrade maintenance management functions to oversee plant and equipment requirements.

The company is also keen to take advantage of new technology trends, such as mobility. While the factory is now completely paperless, drivers still receive a printed manifest and AgriGroup is examining how tablets could be implemented to ensure signing for deliveries is as efficient as possible.

In addition, mobility options are being considered for sales and marketing purposes, such as allowing external sales teams to document visits and access crucial information through a CRM module while on the move.

Collaborating with Precise

Moore says AgriGroup is working closely with Precise on these developments, confirming that it is an ongoing relationship built on the success of the original implementation process.

Precise has the size, scale and location AgriGroup was looking for in a provider, he adds. They also offer key industry knowledge, a wide range of recommendations and innovative ideas.

"We avoided what we didn't want, which was a lot of people to fly in, help us put the software in and disappear again. We had local people, we learned from them and they're still available when we need them."



 solutions@precisebusiness.com

Global Headquarters
Level 1, 116 Hobart Street
Mt. Hawthorn, Western Australia 6016
P +61 (08) 9242 5933

 www.precisebusiness.com

Precise EMEA
6-8 Market Place
Reading, Berkshire RG1 2EG, UK
P +44 (0) 1189 254 964

