



Accounting Software

AchieveGlobal Canada solves problems with Blue Link Solutions

Background

AchieveGlobal, a division of The Times Mirror Company, is an exciting combination of three of the world's best-known training and consulting organizations: Kaset International, Learning International and Zenger Miller. The company helps organizations achieve business results through superior sales, customer service, leadership and teamwork.

AchieveGlobal Canada was a subsidiary of its U.S. counterpart until September 1999, when it was sold off as a franchise to a new owner. Its customers are mostly found in the top half of the Canadian Fortune 100. The company's main activities involve coordinating training courses, and providing materials and supplies relating thereto.

The Challenge

The company has a complex inventory model, with highly configurable kits, bills of materials and third party warehousing; and the warehouse staff have no knowledge of the constraints and rules regarding kits and assembled packages. It was therefore critical that the solution be able to supply the warehouse staff with accurate instructions on an automated basis, and provide a limited, real-time interface into Achieve's order entry and inventory system.

In addition, the company has a number of complex, multi-layered customer contracts. These determine pricing based a number of variables relating not only to the customer and product, but also the type of order and a number of other circumstances.

Until the change of ownership, they were using their U.S. parent company's ERP system (Lawson), which had been substantially customized to handle some of their unique requirements. When the sale of the franchise was announced, the company was given a three month deadline to find and implement a replacement system.

The Solution

AchieveGlobal Canada selected Blue Link and its Solutions Accounting. An intensive project was mounted to perform a detailed needs analysis, develop custom features where necessary for the unique inventory and contract requirements, test, train end users, define business procedures, and perform extremely complex data conversion. A project of this magnitude would usually take place over 5 to 6 months, but Achieve had less than three.

By using the strengths of Solutions Accounting and the Microsoft Access environment, and tapping in to the Excel skills already existent at Achieve and the tight integration between Solutions Accounting and Excel, Achieve was able to go live on time with real, up to date converted data, and all the

necessary complex business rules were accommodated.

Inventory, kitting and bill of materials requirements were handled using built-in Solutions Accounting features, customized to take account of the company's complex rules. Limited functionality screens were added for remote access by the third party warehouse. The company's complex contract structure was analyzed in depth, resulting in a simplified business definition that still provided the same end result, and this definition was then imposed on the Solutions Elite contract-pricing module.

Data from the ERP system was converted by Blue Link and Achieve personnel, working cooperatively, not only saving weeks of manual data input, but also reducing the scope for data errors and preserving transaction history where required.

According to Denise Edwards, AchieveGlobal Canada's Manager, Fulfillment and Logistics: "The recent split from our US parent as well as the merger of three training companies, each in themselves doing business in unique styles resulted in a complicated Inventory, assembly and pricing structure for even the most multifaceted operating system. Due to the immense flexibility of Solutions Accounting and the knowledgeable staff at Blue Link, we were able to customize the system to meet our needs."

Carolyn Crawford, Manager, Accounting and Administration, adds: "We found your design; support and implementation team provided us with a quick response, while taking the time to step back and address the business needs."

Maximum flexibility. Minimum cost.

Blue Link Associates Limited
156 Corstate Avenue, Suite 3
Concord, Ontario
L4K 4X2
Tel: (905) 660-0599
Toll Free (outside GTA): 1-877-BLU-LINK
Email: info@bluelink.ca
Web site: <http://www.bluelink.ca>