



SOLUTION BRIEF

Customer Profile

Florida-based Vogue International sells personal care products to chain retail stores around the world. 2003 Revenues are up 18% over 2002 and expected to top \$100M by 2006.

Business Situation

Vogue's existing systems and processes were failing under the pressures of fast growth, hard-to-manage inventory, outsourced manufacturing and difficult demands from large retail clients. The company was ready to invest in an enterprise-wide financial management and supply chain solution that would meet current and future needs.

Solution

- > Solution Assessment
- > Microsoft Great Plains Financials
- > Microsoft Great Plains Distribution
- > Microsoft Great Plains Manufacturing & Material Requirements Planning
- > Microsoft SQL Server

Business Benefits

Vogue has substantially improved accounting and financial operations, including streamlined business processes and ready access to critical information. Enhanced supply chain, manufacturing and integrated shipping automation have lowered costs and increased operational performance.

Industry

Personal Care Product Distributor

ePartners Success Story

ePartners and Great Plains help Vogue with its makeover



Vogue International, based in Oldsmar, Florida sells hair care products and fragrances to mass merchandisers and food and drug chains in 23 countries. Business is

excellent - retail sales hit \$59 million in 2003, up an impressive \$9 million from 2002 and nearly triple the sales of 1999. A new strategic action plan looks to double 2003's numbers over the next three years.

Vogue was dealing with demanding pressures from their fast growth, widely distributed markets, a large amount of product and outsourced manufacturing. They needed a highly efficient solution to serve its retailing customers like Wal-Mart, Walgreen's and Rite-Aid, and to support planned expansions to Target and a broader market reach in Mexico and Great Britain.

Vogue had hit a wall with their existing technology, and needed to upgrade their software and network infrastructure. Joseph LaHurd, Vogue's Chief Financial Officer, talked about outgrowing the previous system. "We had a kind of an archaic system. It was a non-relational database with poor data integrity. The system was unreliable for running even the most basic reports. The health of our own company drove us to find a different system."

Vogue turned to ePartners, the leading Microsoft Business Solutions Consultancy for middle market companies.

ePartners Success Story

ePartners and Great Plains help Vogue with its makeover

Solution:

ePartners performed initial research and discovery using their Envisioned Business Solutions (EBS) framework, a methodology that helps companies align IT strategies with their overall business strategies. Armed with a solid understanding of Vogue's core business drivers and processes, ePartners was able to help them mitigate risks and gain clarity in the product selection process.

ePartners research included a detailed study of 3 leading mid-market accounting and financial solutions complete with cost and implementation estimates. Vogue selected Microsoft Great Plains due to its scalability and flexible modular architecture. Joseph LaHurd, CFO, reported, "We implemented a lot of modules. A financial suite, accounts receivable, accounts payable, general ledger, purchasing, sales order processing, demand forecasting, and lots more. It all integrates together. Microsoft has done a good job of tying it together and making it as seamless as possible."

LaHurd liked the idea that Great Plains was a core Microsoft product. "If there's one thing that sold us on Great Plains, it was Microsoft," LaHurd said. "I've got a technology background and have seen a lot of ERP applications. Great Plains is a mid-market application, but because Microsoft is there, it has ease of integration with Excel, Word, and so on. Features like SmartList allow users to go in and select information that they want to see and automatically dump it into an Excel spreadsheet. This was really the thing that

made a difference between Great Plains and the second-place product we were reviewing."

Business Benefits

Great Plains' distributed functionality delivered huge improvements over our previous system, which typically left employees in the dark about product numbers or destinations. With Great Plains, our employees can access the information they need from wherever they are.

The supply chain modules proved to be extremely important, as did the Great Plains manufacturing modules, which Microsoft has greatly enhanced over the past two years. The open architecture and versatility of Microsoft's SQL Server Database allowed for integration with Vogue's existing custom shipping solution and easily accepted feeds from multiple legacy systems.

Great Plains warehouse management features have dramatically improved Vogue's operations. For example, before implementing Great Plains the busy warehouse didn't always ship exact amounts of product. Vogue intends to implement automated inventory control, but in the meantime they've improved their shipping accuracy with simple Pick Tickets. If a retailer orders 50 of item #101, Great Plains automatically prints out exactly 50 Pick Tickets. Warehouse employees attach the Pick Tickets to shipping cards, which guarantees that they will ship exactly 50 items. Other warehouse management features like bin locators, which detail bin contents and locations, have greatly improved workflow and asset management.



After more than a decade of arming its customers with a competitive advantage, ePartners has established itself as the largest global Microsoft Business Solutions consultancy in the world. From aligning their clients' business and IT strategies; to improving business processes; and deploying and supporting solutions that accelerate business results, no other Microsoft Business Solutions partner offers more comprehensive information technology solutions and services than ePartners. Last year alone more than 300 leading companies spanning 45 industries, turned to ePartners for strategic business solutions and consulting services. Visit epartnersolutions.com to view additional case studies

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North America: 888.883.9797

International: +44 (0) 20 7190 2846

