

Performance Made Collaborative: Food & Beverage Manufacturer Gains Clarity, Agility and Unity with QAD

The Company: United Kingdom's Leading Plough-to-Plate Producer of Animal Protein Products

Grampian Country Food Group Ltd. (Grampian) is one of the UK's leading privately owned food companies, producing a wide range of chicken, pork, beef and lamb products for the retail and food service markets. The company sells fresh and frozen meats, as well as eggs and farm feeds, and value-added convenience foods. The group's chicken division is its largest, processing 3.8 million chickens per week. The company's Halls division is the top haggis producer in the world.

Grampian is vertically integrated, espousing a plough-to-plate philosophy encompassing all aspects of the food production chain from breeding, hatching and growing chickens, milling feed and raising pigs, to processing, transport and distribution. Established in 1980, Grampian employs almost 20,000 people, has an annual turnover of over US \$3.4 billion (£1.8 billion) and operations throughout the UK and Thailand.

The Challenge: Sustainable Competitive Advantage

For Grampian, sustainable competitive advantage is driven by product quality, customer service and price. Because meat is largely a commodity, profitability depends on efficient operations and an effective distribution network. The company's enterprise technology is a key enabler of its strategic objectives.

In 1998, in anticipation of impending Y2K requirements, company management realized that the time had come to do some self-examination and commit to a new IT architecture. At the time, some sites operated stand-alone systems, while some shared a central AS/400. The technology did not support the level of internal collaboration needed to maximize operational efficiency.

Grampian needed updated enterprise technology that would enable a collaborative environment where inter-company trading could take place, and management could get an accurate picture of business activity. The company required a modern, integrated IT infrastructure that would allow its different sites to collaborate effectively and share information, while giving management easy, real-time visibility to enterprise data. Decision makers knew that

Grampian needed to fully replace all existing systems with a single, integrated system that would support its information and collaboration needs.

"We were looking for a supplier who could provide a world class manufacturing system, continuing world class service, on-going product development and industry experience – we found these qualities with QAD," says Howard Dearling, divisional IT manager at Grampian.

The Solution: QAD Delivers Accuracy, Efficiency, Reliability

Grampian leveraged its implementation QAD Enterprise Applications to streamline and automate processes, ensuring efficiency and reliability. QAD Global Services provided the training, knowledge transfer, systems advice and programming, enabling Grampian to drive faster return on investment (ROI).

"We were looking for improved processing accuracy, improved operational efficiency and better access to information," says Dearling. Grampian's QAD system supports critical administrative and business processes including Sales Order processing, Planning, Purchasing, Financials and third-party payroll applications. Processes are integrated to give a single view to the user and current, accurate information is readily available to anyone with access permission.

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In addition to enhanced features and functionality in the new applications, the QAD infrastructure enables integration with existing applications. "The new applications integrate automatically with each other," says Dearling. "This was one of the fundamental attractions for us of an ERP system."

The Benefits: Collaborative Capabilities Drive Operational Efficiencies

Adopting the QAD system across the organization has enabled Grampian to collaborate where previously it was unable to do so. The improved visibility of information across all locations, combined with capabilities for collaborative planning and forecasting have helped Grampian's employees to be much more customer-driven.

Grampian also consolidated data for its seven divisions into one central database, which all key functions of the business can easily access. Better links between shop-floor and back-office systems have eliminated manual processes, making administrative processes more efficient and accurate.

"With the QAD system, we are able to deliver a better service to our customers through big improvements in the accuracy of documentation and delivery of the product as ordered," says Dearling. Sales orders can be placed on a single system and viewed across the organization, making inter-company trading easier. And thanks to the QAD implementation, reviewing weekly sales figures is no longer major administrative task, and the information received is more reliable and accurate.

The Future: Building a Supply Chain for the 21st Century

Grampian's vision for the future is to continue improving communications with its extended supply chain through e-business. The organization aims to link its suppliers and customers into its planning and forecasting.

"We'd like to continue to break down the traditional barriers that exist between Grampian and its suppliers and customers alike. With a defined IT strategy, Grampian can become closer partners with suppliers by undertaking collaborative planning and forecasting and can better service customers by allowing them to place their own orders and view their status on line," says Dearling.

Highlights

Company

Company Name	Grampian Country Food Group
Industry	Consumer Goods; Food and Beverage
Products	Fresh and frozen meats; eggs and farm feeds; value-added convenience foods

Solutions

QAD Enterprise Applications	QAD Enterprise Applications (MFG/PRO eB2)
Hardware	Hewlett Packard
Operating System	Tru64
Database	Progress 9.1E
Languages	English
Number of Sites	7
Time-to-Benefit	Immediate

Results

- Improved visibility of information across all locations
- Capabilities for collaborative planning and forecasting
- Enterprise data consolidated in one central database
- Better links between shop-floor and back-office systems
- Manual processes reduced or eliminated
- Administrative processes more efficient and accurate.
- Better customer service
- Better accuracy of product documentation and delivery
- Sales orders placed on a single system; visible across the organization