

Direct Adhesives

How K3 are supporting Direct Adhesives growing business needs



Direct Adhesives is a leading distributor working as the UK's premium partner for German-based Henkel Adhesives.

Direct Adhesives stock over 150 Henkel brands at their Leighton Buzzard site. These include Technomelt Hotmelt adhesives and Aquence water based adhesives. In addition, the company is a manufacturer in its own right, having acquired a maker of water-based adhesives in 2001.

Based in Coventry, the business produces wood and latex adhesives as well as water-based pressure sensitive acrylics. Typical applications for these products include case and carton sealing, woodworking, bookbinding, envelopes, tapes and labels.

Project objectives

- Improve efficiency of key manufacturing activities
- Gain faster insights and information from sales order processing systems
- Support a growing business and ensure access to a user-friendly ERP system.

Results

- Enhanced critical manufacturing processes and boosted productivity
- Information on customers, orders, payments etc is now at user's fingertips
- Paperless module helps save time and transform the firm into a digital business.



Project background

Direct Adhesives approached K3 for help when it was looking to upgrade its previous Sage System to a solution that was more suited to a business of its size. The company has been a user of Sage ERP products for many years and had always found them to support the business operation well. It was becoming increasingly clear that the company was outgrowing its previous Sage Line 500 software. In particular, the company's expanding manufacturing operations demanded tools that were designed specifically for this purpose. At the same time, the company was undergoing an overhaul of its hardware, so considered it the perfect opportunity to upgrade.

Direct Adhesives requirements

The need for manufacturing tools

A central requirement for Direct Adhesives was that any new solution needed to have a strong manufacturing module in order to handle the business's core activities. In particular, the company needed to have a solution that was capable of storing essential formulas and providing key information.

They also needed to be able to obtain accurate costings for bills of material and note if there was any special instructions or requirements in place for certain job capabilities it had lacked in the past. The bill of materials works essentially as the 'recipe' for Direct Adhesives' manufacturing processes, so having everything needed in one place was a core requirement.

An easy-to-use solution

As part of the goal to deliver greater efficiency and productivity, usability was another primary factor when the business was looking for an upgrade. While the company's previous product provided much of the core functionality needed to run the business, the company was aiming for a solution that would be more intuitive and straight forward for its users. Central to this would be the ability to generate more detailed reports more quickly on areas such as sales, to help the everyday business operation run as effectively as possible.

Looking to the future

Another driver for the upgrade was the fact that Direct Adhesives was already looking to upgrade its IT equipment. In 2012, the company underwent a major review of both its hardware and software, which determined that its outdated servers were in need of improvement. This led to the question of whether it was suitable to continue with their existing ERP software on their servers. The decision was made that continuing to use old software on the new equipment would be a backwards step.

A flexible IT solution

It was also important for Direct Adhesives to opt for a solution that offered a high degree of flexibility, so it could be tailored to the company's needs and be integrated with other software solutions throughout the business, such as the company's CRM tools. The ability to import data from Sage into other products, to have easier access to information such as sales figures, was something the business had become used to, and it was important not to lose this functionality.

Solutions delivered

ERP: Sage 1000

Add ons: K3 paperless

"We find it very easy to use. We've got a couple of new people in the business recently and they've picked it up quickly".

Becoming more digital

In today's digitally-focused environment, the company also wanted to be able to move away from paper-based solutions for activities such as invoicing. Direct Adhesives was also seeking a way to make it easier to locate records. So for instance, in the past, if a customer called asking for a copy of an invoice, this was something that was quite time-consuming.

"...We find it very easy to use. We've got a couple of new people in the business recently and they have picked it up quickly. It's an easy to use product and its internal logic is very simple to follow. So for instance, if someone has been working on the sales ledger, going to work on the purchase ledger is very easy. It's because it's basically the same process, so its great for the business."

The solution

A natural progression for a growing firm it quickly became clear to Direct Adhesives that Sage 1000 was the obvious choice. As an existing user with a long history of success with Sage solutions, taking the next step to Sage 1000 was a logical step. This therefore allows the company to benefit from all the additional capabilities needed by a larger business, without having to worry about issues such as retraining users or getting employee buy-in.

As a newer solution than their existing tool, the company was also able to benefit from the latest developments, such as a more user friendly, Windows-based interface that moved away from keyboard commands and encouraged the use of the mouse, something many employees found came more naturally.

A seamless implementation

As Direct Adhesives were also upgrading its hardware at the same time as the introduction of Sage 1000, it was able to benefit from a very smooth implementation process from K3. All the deployment work was done on the new servers, so the company was able to continue using its existing software without disruption, and simply switch over to the new servers when they were ready to go.

A paperless environment

The implementation of K3 Paperless also helps Direct Adhesives meet its efficiency goals. The module replaces paper communications for areas such as invoicing, cutting down greatly the time spent dealing with this activity and reducing the expenses associated with mailing out physical documents. The document storage features also makes it very easy for users to locate and share invoices when requested, again acting as a significant time-saver.

The K3 service benefits

- Simple to use with very little training needed
- Able to integrate processes and information to create an accurate and complete view of the business
- Very smooth implementation process with no disruption

Whether it's a relatively small step forward, or an ambitious change of direction, we will be the partner to deliver systems which meet your exact needs.

Specialising in ERP, CRM, BI and Managed Service solutions we have offices in England, Wales, Ireland and worldwide helping over 400 customers reach their goals.



The results

The result of Direct Adhesives Sage 1000 implementation is a more efficient, simplified manufacturing process. With all the necessary data in one place, their users now gain a full picture of what is going on within their business. This means they spend less time looking for stock, asking questions about formulations, while creditors and debtors are easier to find.

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The company is now well-positioned to continue its growth, serving customers quickly and effectively, without having to worry about the burden these additional activities will place on its ERP software.

"K3 have been a great partner. During the implementation, they were good at talking me through what was needed and how it would work. And if we need help with anything, we can just ring them up and they'll get it sorted quickly. They know their stuff."

K3. Experience Applied

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