Outgrowing QuickBooks: A Manufacturing Company's Journey to Dynamics 365 Business Central

Summary

Customer
Horizon Stone
www.Horizon-Stone.com

Industry
Wholesale Building Materials

Partners
- ACE Micro (VAR)
- Insight Works (ISV)

Solution
- Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central
- Warehouse Insight app from Insight Works
- Honeywell CK65 Mobile Computers

Results
- Increased accuracy of production data
- Improved quality control
- Better tracking
- Improved order fulfillment
- Improved customer service
- Reduced errors
- Better production decisions

The Limitations of QuickBooks for Manufacturers

Horizon Stone manufactures high-quality, long-lasting stone veneers that add value to residential and commercial projects. However, their current accounting system, QuickBooks, did not provide them with the necessary tools to accurately track raw materials consumption and finish good inventory, including serial numbers. As a result, Horizon Stone was limited in their ability to maintain the high quality of their products and meet the needs of their customers. Some limitations of QuickBooks for manufacturers include:

- **Limited inventory management capabilities:** QuickBooks lacks raw material tracking and serialized finished goods management. This is essential for manufacturers to manage production.
- **No support for bills of materials (BOMs):** QuickBooks does not have native support for BOMs, which can make it difficult for manufacturers to accurately track raw materials consumption.
- **No support for production scheduling and forecasting:** QuickBooks lacks tools for production scheduling/forecasting, making it hard for manufacturers to manage production.
- **Limited reporting capabilities:** QuickBooks lacks robust reporting for production metrics like on-time delivery, efficiency, and quality control.
- **No support for mobile devices:** QuickBooks lacks the support for mobile devices on the warehouse floor to manage orders and track serial numbers.

The Quest to Find an Alternative to QuickBooks

It is common for manufacturers who have outgrown QuickBooks to seek the help of a consultant. In the case of Horizon Stone, they reached out to ACE Micro, a Microsoft partner, to identify a new solution and guide them through the process of integrating that solution into their business operations. There are several reasons why manufacturers may choose to work with a Microsoft partner like ACE Micro in this situation:

- **Expertise:** ACE Micro offers expertise & knowledge on software solutions for manufacturers, helping them evaluate their needs & choose the best-fit solution.
- **Customization:** ACE Micro can customize software solutions to fit specific business processes and needs, especially for those with complex production.
- **Implementation:** ACE Micro help manufacturers implement new software smoothly and efficiently, reducing disruptions. They offer data migration, training, and system testing for seamless integration.
- **Ongoing support:** ACE Micro provides ongoing support to manufacturers during setup of new software. Particularly useful for those new to an ERP system or lacking IT resources.

The QuickBooks Replacement Solution

Based on the limitations of QuickBooks and Horizon Stone's need to get more functionality from their internal accounting system, ACE Micro proposed a two-phase solution:

1. Replace QuickBooks with Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central
2. Enhance Business Central's capabilities with apps from Insight Works

Phase One: Integrating Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central is a comprehensive enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution that is designed specifically for small and mid-sized businesses, including manufacturers like Horizon Stone. It offers a wide range of features and tools that can help manufacturers manage and optimize their production processes, including:

- **Advanced inventory management:** Business Central helps Horizon Stone track raw materials, serialize finished goods, and manage inventory in real-time. It also supports BOMs to track materials and components.
- **Production scheduling and forecasting:** Business Central includes built-in tools for production scheduling and forecasting, which helps Horizon Stone plan and manage their production processes more effectively.
- **Robust reporting capabilities:** Business Central includes a range of customizable reports that help Horizon Stone track and analyze key production metrics, such as on-time delivery, production efficiency, and quality control.

Phase Two: Fill the Gaps with Warehouse Insight from Insight Works

Dynamics 365 Business Central streamlined Horizon Stone's manufacturing process, but a gap remained in the warehouse. Workers needed an efficient way to pick and ship products, tracking serial numbers for each order. To fill the gap, the Warehouse Insight app from Insight Works was integrated to help manage Horizon Stone's warehouse process.

One way that Horizon Stone is using the Warehouse Insight app is with Honeywell CK65 mobile computers to pick orders and track serial numbers in Business Central. These mobile computers allow warehouse workers to access Business Central from the warehouse floor and perform warehouse tasks. This can help improve efficiency and accuracy in the warehouse, as workers have access to the necessary information and tools at their fingertips.

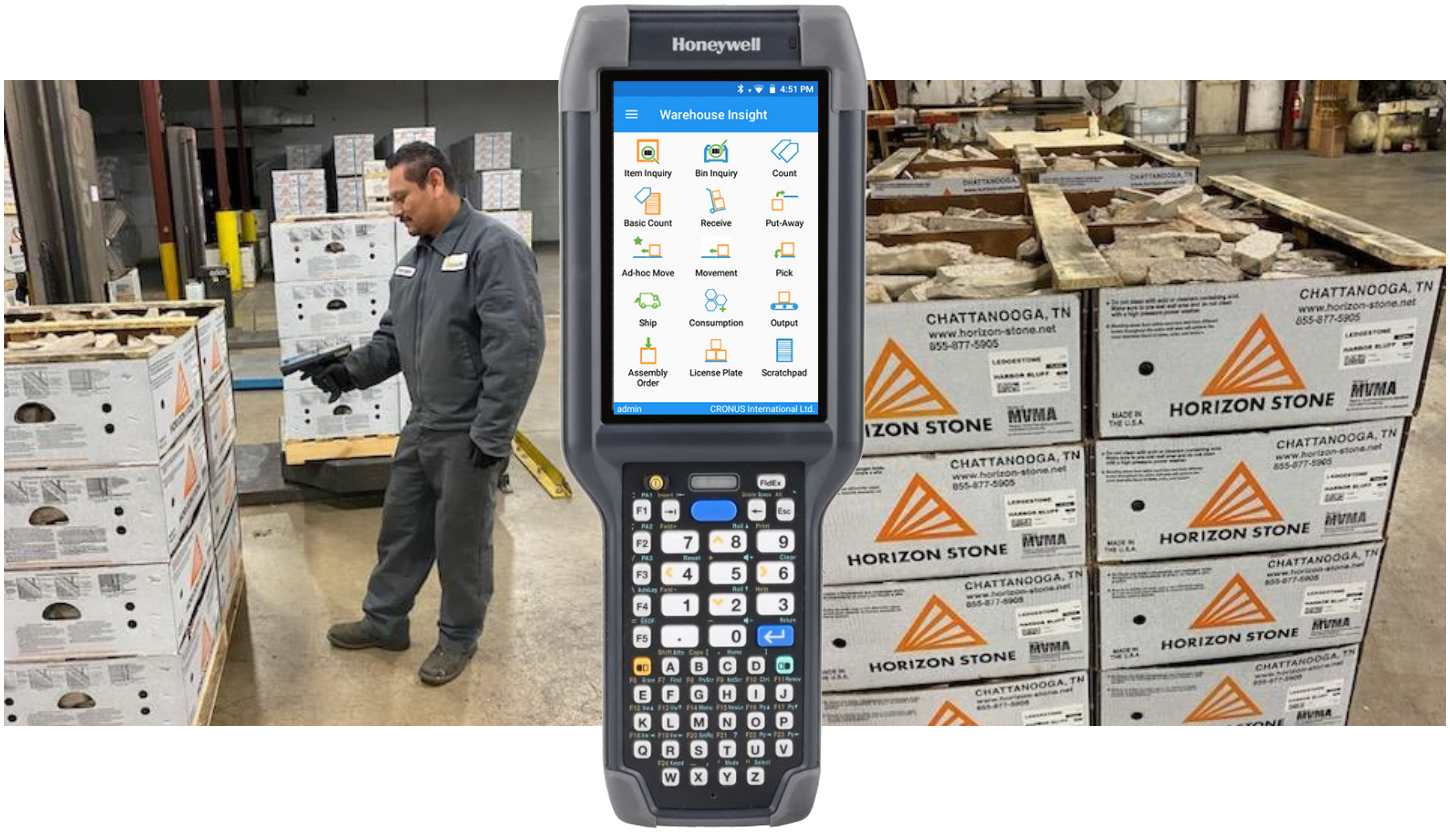
Warehouse workers are able to access Business Central pick tickets from the mobile device and fill orders by scanning products, including serial number information, directly into Business Central.

The Results of Replacing QuickBooks

The integration of Business Central with the Warehouse Insight app from Insight Works has enabled Horizon Stone to increase accuracy in their business operations. This is due to the advanced features and tools that Business Central provides for managing and tracking production processes, including inventory management, production scheduling, and reporting. Having these controls enables Horizon Stone to maintain the high quality of their products and meet the needs of their customers.

Specific benefits include:

- **Increased accuracy of production data:** Horizon Stone now has a greater understanding of its raw materials consumption and yield.
- **Improved quality control:** With the integration of Business Central and the Warehouse Insight app from Insight Works, Horizon Stone now has processes in place to report finished goods more accurately and timely.
- **Better tracking:** The serialization of finished goods inventory has allowed Horizon Stone to have backwards traceability that was previously impossible.
- **Improved order fulfillment:** Horizon Stone has become more strategic in its approach to creating picks and reducing “customer warehousing” in the shipping area.
- **Improved customer service:** By having access to more accurate and up-to-date operational data, Horizon Stone now responds more quickly and effectively to customer inquiries and requests, resulting in improved customer service.
- **Reduced errors:** Business Central and the Warehouse Insight app reduce errors because the mobile devices will notify workers when wrong materials or inventory items are picked.
- **Better production decisions:** Improved visibility into demand, production, and safety stock levels allows Horizon Stone to make more informed and strategic decisions about daily production and warehouse space utilization.



Additional Information

About Horizon Stone

www.horizon-stone.com

Founded in 2003, Horizon Stone is committed to creating high-quality, long-lasting stone veneers that add value to residential and commercial projects, both interior and exterior. Horizon Stone manufactures their products in a state-of-the-art 160,000-square-foot facility in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Their products are available through distributors across the United States.

About ACE Micro

www.acemicrotech.com

ACE Micro, LLC is a professional services firm committed to delivering business solutions to mid-market organizations. They are a Microsoft Partner with expertise in Dynamics 365 Business Central, among other platforms. ACE specializes in serving the lite manufacturing, distribution, and hospitality industries. ACE manages several offices within the southeastern United States.

About Insight Works

www.dmsiworks.com

Insight Works is an Independent Software Vendor (ISV) that caters to the manufacturing and distribution industry. Their product line features a breadth of end-to-end apps that integrate with Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central. There are apps designed for manufacturing, distribution, shipping, sales, productivity, barcoding, and more. Apps are distributed through partners including ACE Micro.

Links to products within the case study

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central
https://dynamics.microsoft.com/en-us/business-central/

Warehouse Insight from Insight Works
http://www.WMSforDynamics.com/

Honeywell CK65 Mobile Computer
https://www.dmsiworks.com/product-category/model/honeywell-dolphin-ck65/

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