C&O Nursery
www.c-onursery.com

COMPANY
- Location: Headquarters in Wenatchee, WA, US; several field operations nearby
- Industry: Fruit tree farming and sales

OVERVIEW
Founded in 1906, C&O Nursery raises fruit trees to sell across the U.S., primarily focusing on apple, pear and cherry varieties for orchards. C&O has 36 full-time employees and 350 seasonal employees. Annual revenues total $12-15 million. C&O switched to Acumatica from Microsoft Dynamics GP because its old software could not smoothly integrate its accounting and inventory systems.

KEY RESULTS
- Integrated accounting and inventory streamlines financial management processes
- Web-based system allows 24/7 remote access
- Mobile access will improve staff's connectivity and productivity

Fruit tree nursery switches to Acumatica from Dynamics GP for better integration of accounting and inventory

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- Curt Norton , Office Manager, C&O Nursery

SITUATION

C&O Nursery began operating in 1906 and has remained a family-run business, now in its fourth generation. It has grown to employ nearly 400 staff during the growing season, with 20 sales representatives around the U.S. Raising and selling dozens of varieties of fruit trees, C&O currently has annual revenues exceeding $12 million.

Since 2008, C&O had used Microsoft Dynamics GP for accounting and payroll, along with special inventory software. In 2012, Office Manager Curt Norton grew frustrated with their outdated set-up: "We had a customized independent inventory system based on Microsoft Access 97, which is archaic. It had some issues, plus it was not supported."

Mr. Norton envisioned integrating accounting and inventory through Microsoft Dynamics GP. He learned, however, that it wouldn't work. "As I dug into it, there were some inflexible parts of Microsoft Dynamics GP that I didn't like related to the customizations our company would require," he says. "We have a lot of customizations in this business. There's software out there that handles agriculture and businesses like this, but most of it is not specific for the way that we handle our company."

SOLUTION

C&O's Acumatica Gold Certified Partner, Patricia Bennett of PC Bennett Solutions, recommended Acumatica as the solution to C&O's problem. She notes, "Because Acumatica was browser-based, and because Acumatica was written in .NET, I thought it would be a better application for them to customize than Microsoft Dynamics GP."

After doing his own research, and extensively consulting with PC Bennett Solutions, Mr. Norton recalls, "I decided that it sounded like a very good solution for us."

C&O decided to purchase Acumatica with a perpetual license and deploy on-premises. They bought the Financial Management and Distribution Management Suites and plan to incorporate Acumatica Payroll soon.

Mr. Norton reports their transition's first steps involved shifting their accounting data. Their Acumatica Financial Management Suite went live at the start of their fiscal year, October 1, 2013, and by February 2014 they had gone live with the Distribution Management Suite.

"Now that we're on the Distribution and Financial Management Suites together, all-in-one, they talk to each other easily," Mr. Norton says. "Our old inventory system did not talk to Microsoft Dynamics GP, so we had to take the effort to build a bridge there and even then it didn't bring all the data over that I really needed."

BENEFITS

Mr. Norton appreciates how Acumatica has streamlined his work: "We finally have a package that is all-in-one and the data is a lot more detailed. This way we don't have to switch from one program to the next to get our data. All the data is right there in one integrated program."

The C&O leadership enjoys being able to use Acumatica wherever they go. Mr. Norton reports, "I can access Acumatica anywhere I want. Anywhere we have a computer and internet, I can get into Acumatica. In my position it's important to keep tabs on things." He adds that the company president also enjoys the accessibility of their data:

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>
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"He does a lot of traveling and can access Acumatica wherever he is. He can look up different varieties to see if we have any on inventory." Before implementing Acumatica, this remote access wasn't possible.

In the future, Mr. Norton says, they will give their field crews access to data through mobile devices. "That was a big selling point for Acumatica for us," he says. "That is what we're really looking forward to, being able to get all of our field staff connected to Acumatica, too. They're going to be able to access directly, rather than calling in or waiting days to get data."

The C&O sales reps will also benefit, Mr. Norton reports. "Eventually, we're going to be able to tie in all our salesmen throughout the U.S., so that they can look at the orders they have sold. Right now we have to print out a report and send it to them."

Another Acumatica advantage that Mr. Norton anticipates for their future is giving C&O customers the ability to order their products online.

Mr. Norton is pleased that C&O switched to Acumatica. "It works well," he says. "It is reliable, built solid."