

Osment Models Sees Big Picture with SYSPRO Software

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■ AT A GLANCE ■

COMPANY

Osment Models

INDUSTRY

Manufacturing



■ The Company

Osment Models offers a complete line of SubTerrain, Terrain and Landscaping Systems in the form of kits, individual parts, how-to manuals and videos. The company also sells a variety of accessories and tools that aid in the building of model railroads, games, architectural models and miniature landscapes in O, HO and N scales.

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- Jeff Thompson
Accounting Manager, Osment Models

Osment Models markets through several channels, including three multi-level Web sites and stocking distributors in numerous countries around the globe. Founded in 1972, the company's expanding product lines and growing reputation for quality and price are the underlying factors for an accelerating worldwide customer base.

■ The Challenge

Osment Models had been using relatively simple, DOS-based accounting/distribution software that offered no forecasting functionality. In fact, the company developed detailed spreadsheets for forecasting and based inventory levels on monthly average demands from prior years. Explains Accounting Manager Jeff Thompson, "We realized to sustain orderly, profitable growth we needed to build product based on sophisticated forecasting techniques and purchase raw materials to meet those forecasts." While the company had the option of upgrading its current software system, the upgrade was weak in the area of manufacturing controls. And with three local manufacturing facilities, Osment Models needed an ERP solution that also offered in-depth manufacturing expertise across multiple sites.

■ The Solution

After a lengthy software search was narrowed to three solutions, Osment Models opted for SYSPRO enterprise software, which it purchased through local dealer CBIZ Technologies. "Very simply, SYSPRO offered in-depth manufacturing functionality, as well as strong financial and distribution capabilities," notes Osment Models Director of Information Systems, Timothy Harryman, adding, "We also like the ability of SYSPRO e.net solutions to extend the enterprise."

The SYSPRO software, running Microsoft Windows 2000 on a Dell Server, went "live" in August 2001 with twelve users. Almost immediately, the company experienced system recommendations to significantly reduce inventory levels. The software's highly sophisticated Inventory Control, Requirements Planning and Work in Progress modules enables Osment Models to create realistic pur-



chasing and production schedules, optimize stock holdings, identify capacity constraints and manage the performance of the shop floor. According to Harryman, the ultimate goal is the implementation of a Just In Time manufacturing scenario, and he feels the company is now rapidly approaching this target.

■ The Result

Osment Models has also achieved very dramatic savings through the implementation of SYSPRO e.net solutions, one of the first products on the market to leverage the Microsoft .NET Framework as the foundation for a new generation of customizable applications and Web-based services and the XML standard. SYSPRO e.net solutions is a component-based architecture that provides a highly cost-effective way for companies such as Osment Models, to integrate best-of-breed applications, maximize business-to-business trading and leverage wireless connectivity.

Osment Models is using SYSPRO e.net solutions to automate processes once done manually. This will enable the company to reduce labor costs and also enhance order accuracy by eliminating human error. Through the use of COM (Component Object Model) objects, orders placed over the Osment Models Web sites are automatically transacted directly in the SYSPRO database with pricing allocated relative to the customer. The Web application passes information relating to the order to the SYSPRO COM object using the XML standard. The SYSPRO COM object, in turn, processes the transaction in real time. When a new customer places an order, the details relates to the new customer, i.e., a new customer profile, are passed to the reliant SYSPRO COM object. The object creates the SYSPRO accounts receivable account on the fly before the order is even processed. Orders are automatically printed out and items automatically

relieved from inventory in real time. This solution, utilizing SYSPRO e.net solutions, replaced one where all orders are entered manually, a very time-consuming and error-prone process, especially during the company's busiest season. The new application also gives customers the ability to order anytime of the day or night, not just during the company's normal operating hours.

The ability of Osment Models to control inventory is further enhanced through an in-house developed application, also utilizing SYSPRO e.net solutions. This application controls their Raw Materials and Finished Goods warehouses, accurately tracks multiple bins of all SKU's, maintains all details of their random-storage pallets and relieves inventory as sales orders are filled. This in-house application uses the SYSPRO e.net COM objects to collaborate with SYSPRO to reconcile inventory as well as retrieve order and customer details the second they happen. The in-house application also provides a graphical representation of the company's two warehouses in which users have the ability to call up scaled representations of warehouse sections by rows and bins and view the items and quantities in each.

According to Joey Benadretti, Vice President of Marketing, SYSPRO USA, "This is a clear example how SYSPRO e.net solutions can be used to link SYSPRO to a 'best of breed' application. The .NET technology enables the automatic synchronization of data in SYSPRO and a disparate system."

While Osment Models is a company that has to "think small" where its products are concerned, it's obvious that company management is well in tune with the "big picture" and is continually taking steps to maintain its industry leadership position with technology that furthers production efficiencies and enhanced customer service.