

A Radius Solutions Case Study



Multi Packaging Solutions

Multi Packaging Solutions supports growth, enhances customer service, and gains immediate access to critical business information with Radius Solutions.

Solution Snapshot

Challenge: Having grown through acquisition, Multi Packaging Solutions was challenged with running its business on multiple, disparate IT systems. To streamline information flow, the company was looking for an IT solution that enhanced customer service, improved productivity, and increased operational efficiencies.

Solution: PECAS Vision, a fully integrated ERP/MIS solution, is specifically designed for printing and packaging companies, especially those producing items in the areas of: folding cartons, labels, inserts, commercial print, and flexible films.

Why: PECAS Vision met Multi Packaging Solution's requirements more than any other system, and Radius Solutions services professionals had the industry best practice expertise to help configure the system to meet very specific requirements for the organization.

Benefits: MPS now offers customers ultimate traceability of sales orders from inception to delivery and billing. With the EDI capabilities available in PECAS Vision, they can now extract all customer data from the system on a real-time basis and send it in a status report to track order status and delivery information. In addition, MPS has reduced its overhead costs by using half the number of people to service its customer orders than it did prior to using PECAS Vision.



Growth through Acquisition Requires a New IT Strategy

"We wanted to present a unified face to the customer without them having to worry about what location was servicing them," explains Nancy Smith, Vice President, Customer Assistance for Multi Packaging Solutions. "The customer should not be bothered with any type of thought process other than dropping the order off to us and having MPS manage everything from there."

Multi Packaging Solutions is a leader in supplying high-end print and packaging supported by outstanding customer service and product and process innovation. Managed by a group of experienced industry professionals and led by Marc Shore, Multi Packaging Solutions is a leader in the cosmetics, healthcare, horticultural, media, and value added consumer markets. The company's emphasis on creativity, technology leadership, and customer focus, has helped it quickly become an industry leader.

Over the last three years, MPS has acquired a number of leading organizations including John Henry Packaging, Hamilton Printing, Hilltop Press, SVH, The Printery, Innovative Packaging, and Great Western Industries. Today, MPS plans to leverage PECAS Vision, based on Progress Open Edge Platform, to standardize operations across all of its plants in order to maximize efficiencies and gain visibility across the entire production process.

Prior to implementing PECAS Vision and in the wake of substantial growth, MPS experienced numerous business challenges associated with a need for technology integration and visibility across its enterprise. With each location running on different, disparate IT systems, there were opportunities throughout the organization to improve productivity levels, operational efficiency, and respond effectively to the needs of its customers.

"With the breadth of capabilities available to customers through our network of 12 manufacturing locations, it was critical that we have the ability to track sales by customer, market, and sales representative across the organization. We needed a solution that was robust and automated to give us immediate visibility into our business to help us manage it more effectively."

"In today's competitive market, customers absolutely have the ability to pick and choose among the vendors that can meet their needs. Whichever supplier can most effectively meet their requirements is going to get that business," says Smith.

The need for consolidated sales reporting on a timely basis was a priority for Multi Packaging Solutions, according to Erin Willigan, Vice President of Marketing for Multi Packaging Solutions.

As a company with a clear commitment to its customers, it was also important to MPS that, despite its numerous locations, the customer always viewed and experienced the company as one cohesive organization.

The company also faced challenges in managing work across numerous locations with disparate IT systems. Employees were required to enter an order in one location, cancel it out of that location, and cut a purchase order to another location. "We were basically servicing ourselves and, as a result, duplicating our efforts across various departments – from shipping, to receiving, to customer service," says Smith. This lack of efficiency and streamlined operations had a negative impact on MPS's overhead costs.

And while customers were not impacted by these challenges, it was becoming clear to MPS that it would be difficult to continue to manage the same processes in the face of continued growth.

Standardizing Operations on a Single Integrated Business Platform with PECAS Vision Suite

"The Radius Solutions group was very responsive, and we didn't have to explain our business to them, they already understood it," said Hogan. "Multi Packaging Solutions is a company that invests in state of the art technology. We want to offer the best technology today, while making sure we are ready for tomorrow."

The decision to implement a new Business Information Management system was based on the need to standardize operations to a single integrated business platform so the company could increase efficiencies and have immediate access to its critical business information across all of its operations. "In today's world, you're only as good as the information you can get your hands on," said William Hogan, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Multi Packaging Solutions.

MPS needed a standard MIS/ERP system to fit its current operational needs and provide the infrastructure to allow it to quickly integrate acquired operations, while enabling seamless service for its customers. It also required a system that will scale to support aggressive goals for topline growth, and the incorporation of processes to help improve profitability.

The organization undertook a thorough due diligence process to make sure it secured a relationship with the right solutions provider to achieve its objectives. A number of vendors were considered before finalists were short-listed. Those vendors were very closely evaluated and their references checked before Radius Solutions was selected. In the end, PECAS Vision met MPS's customer requirements more than any other system, and Radius Solutions' services professional had the industry expertise to configure the solution to fit the organization's specific needs.

Business Doesn't Miss a Beat with a Smooth Implementation

"This is a good example of how the flexibility of PECAS Vision enables us to meet the varying requirements of our customers."

It took only five months to complete the initial implementation from the time MPS made the decision to use PECAS to the time the solution was operational. With plans to implement the entire PECAS Vision Suite across all of its operations, MPS began with its Indianapolis and Louisville locations which went live in July, 2007. 400 users across the two locations were trained to use the new system four weeks in advance of the final cutover. The implementation phase consisted of gathering data and doing the knowledge transfer between the MPS ERP implementation team and Radius Solutions so the team could learn how to do the setup and how the system was integrated, then

develop a proper cutover plan, and do proper testing and training before the system went live.

According to Smith, the implementation was a very smooth process. "In my opinion, the cutover went phenomenally well. I have been through a few Oracle and SAP rollouts and I know how bad things can get. But with this implementation, we did not miss any orders; our business did not miss a beat."

Today, approximately 450 MPS employees are using PECAS Vision. In addition to its Indianapolis and Louisville locations, the company is running two facilities on the PECAS Vision Suite, and a third location is currently using the Purchasing module. The company has another project scheduled to go live by the New Year in a location in Michigan where MPS will be doing a vendor managed inventory project using the Scheduling module.

MPS's goal is to have all of its locations on one integrated ERP system, explains Smith. "We will have two rollouts finished by this time next year. We will be putting every location on the PECAS financial system almost immediately. And we will be rolling PECAS out to at least two locations per year until we have all locations up and live."

According to Smith, the implementation was a very smooth process. "In my opinion, the cutover went phenomenally well. I have been through a few Oracle and SAP rollouts and I know how bad things can get. But with this implementation, we did not miss any orders; our business did not miss a beat."

"This project is completely customer driven. They have some very strict quality requirements that will be run through PECAS Vision to help us to service not only that type of customer, but that type of industry as well," says Smith.

MPS is no longer duplicating its efforts when it comes to servicing orders. "That has absolutely had a positive impact on our overhead costs."

The system has also introduced a level of accountability that previously did not exist. Before the system there were no real requirements that employees had to follow in terms of what data to enter, where and why. Now employees have very specific operations they have to follow and, as a result, the company now has visibility into the quality of its overall operations. "We now have insight into our machine rates, run speeds, what we have invoiced vs. what we have been paid, our profitability, etc., and we can make adjustments accordingly that have a major impact on our business and our customers' business," says Smith.

According to Willigan, PECAS Vision has also proven to be extremely beneficial in terms of auditing large projects. "It is very easy to go into the system, generate all of the invoices related to a specific project, print them out and compare them to what the purchase order was and what we quoted – just to verify that everything we bill ties back to what we expected to bill on the job." Before implementing PECAS Vision there were only a few people who could access that type of information. Today, any user we want can go into the system and obtain the information they need, when they need it.

Improved Productivity and Streamlined Operations Reduce Costs

"Today, we are using half the number of people to service our customer orders than we did prior to using PECAS," says Smith.

"This streamlining and visibility into the information helps the entire organization because the data is not all funneling through one or two people who happen to know how to use certain reporting modules. The ability for the every-day user to get in and get what they need is a significant benefit."

Implementing PECAS Vision has also directly benefited MPS's customers. Prior to using PECAS Vision, providing customers with details on order status was difficult and time consuming since the order may be processed between multiple facilities. "That type of information is extremely important, especially in our media business because we have to turn the orders around very quickly," says Willigan. "Customers often need quick access to real-time information. Today we are now able to manage one account from any location, live on the system."

Customers Benefit from Improved Visibility, Combined Reporting, and Access to Real-Time Information

With the ability to generate combined reporting information, MPS now spends less

"They need to know when the packaging is going to arrive so they can maintain their own productivity schedule and meet their own end customer requirements. Taking the step to implement a solution to help streamline our business is actually helping to do the same for our customers."

Ability to Meet Ongoing Customer Requirements a Competitive Advantage

"We rarely have to say, 'no we can't do that'. When we meet with a prospect we like to sell our capabilities and our creativity, but we don't want to have a stumbling block come down to something technical. Certainly, having PECAS Vision has taken away any objection that a customer could have to our capabilities."

time compiling order status information and can quickly extract those details into one report for the customer. "This is a major benefit to our customers because they are able to use all of that real-time information for their own scheduling requirements," explains Willigan. "They need to know when the packaging is going to arrive so they can maintain their own productivity schedule and meet their own end customer requirements. Taking the step to implement a solution to help streamline our business is actually helping to do the same for our customers."

One of the biggest benefits of the PECAS Vision system, believes Smith, is MPS's ability to meet ongoing customer requests. MPS has worked with several customers to offer electronic resolutions to order entry, invoicing, and License Plate tags that ease check in of product in order to reduce errors, increase productivity and minimize the amount of touches it takes to bring product into their locations. "The Radius Solutions system gives us the flexibility to respond to and meet customer needs and changing requirements. Some of our customers are highly electronic in the way they run their business, using a warehouse management system (WMS) that requires items to be bar coded and scanned in a certain way. We could not have met those standards without PECAS Vision. This system has absolutely given us the ability to pursue opportunities that we could not have supported in the past."

MPS may acquire additional businesses in the future, and Smith is confident that the Radius Solutions system can scale with their business growth and the changing needs of its customers and the market. "What we sell to the customer is the capability of servicing them and meeting their requirements and keeping their costs down. PECAS Vision has absolutely helped us to do that and we believe it will continue to do so in the future."

About Radius Solutions Radius Solutions is a leading provider of global, integrated business information management systems and services, specifically designed to fit the needs of the packaging and printing industries. With more than 35 years of experience, Radius Solutions' PECAS Vision software has become an industry standard for leading converters wanting to streamline their operations, respond more quickly to customer demands and gain immediate access to critical business information. Radius Solutions is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, with offices in several countries around the world. For more information please visit: www.radiusolutions.com.

About Multi Packaging Solutions Multi Packaging Solutions is a leading print and packaging company offering an array of print and packaging for the healthcare, horticultural, media, and value added consumer markets. MPS has 12 production facilities throughout the United States. Founded by Marc Shore, MPS has a seasoned management, sales, and design team with vast experience in print and packaging. Unlike traditional packaging companies, MPS is unique in its depth of industry experience, breadth of technologies and range of resources. More information is available at www.multipkg.com.



North America Headquarters
312-648-0800
info@radiusolutions.com

European Headquarters
+44 1246 290331
infoUK@radiusolutions.co.uk

United States
United Kingdom
Netherlands