

Microsoft 2006 Pinnacle Awards Excellence in Teamwork

The Excellence in Teamwork Award recognizes customers whose collaborative efforts in their organization, with Microsoft or with their partners, have produced a result that would not have been achieved without the collaboration.

Completed nomination forms should be submitted to mbs-evnt@microsoft.com by 5 p.m. CST on Friday, January 27th, 2006.

Nominator Information

Name: Ken Grabowski

Company Name: Interactive Business Information Systems, Inc. (IBIS)

Phone Number: 770-368-4000 ext. 3182

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Company Being Nominated

Company: Revman International

Contact Name: Paula Lareau, Vice President of Administration

Authorized Phone: 864-573-2440

E-Mail Address: plareau@revman.com

Business Address: 2901 N. Blackstock Rd

City: Spartanburg

State/Province: SC

Country: US

Postal Code: 29301

General Customer Information

Number of Employees: 120

Estimated Annual Revenue: 120M

Industry: Retail Distribution

Number of North American Sites: 2

Number of International Sites: 0

Microsoft Partner (VAR): IBIS Inc

Company Web Site: www.revman.com

Microsoft Solution(s):

Is someone representing the company attending Convergence?

Yes No I don't know

Microsoft occasionally produces case studies used within marketing and sales opportunities that evangelize customer success stories. Is this customer willing to be profiled?

Yes No

Company Description

Please describe the company: what it does, what products and/or services it provides, the company's mission or vision statement, company history, etc.:

Founded in August 1988, Revman International is a marketing-driven company focused on providing high fashion home furnishings products with an approach to upscale retailers. The company owns the license rights to produce quality bed and bath products for such internationally recognized brands as Izzy, Nicole Miller, Tommy Hilfiger, Anne Klein, Echo, and Marimekko in addition to their own brand of Revman products Dorm2Go and Bed2Go.

Revman's customers, which include Bed Bath & Beyond, Federated, and Crate & Barrel, require that they supply ASN's, acknowledgments, and invoices in a very specific manner or they will be penalized with chargebacks. There are also very specific rules about shipping as well involving both dates and addresses. For example, Revman ships 8,000 cartons a day on average, but due to their monthly retail-driven cycle, they may ship 40,000 cartons a day from their 400,000 square-foot warehouse at month end. The company typically runs 100,000 transactions each day.

By outsourcing the development of these products, the company has been able to tap into a network of global resources to ensure that only the best quality products are created at the best prices for consumers. That means high quality and high value.

Revman's commitment to excellence affects every division and every level of the company and forms the backbone of their mission: to satisfy the needs of their customers and consumers who purchase their products, to understand their needs, to work to develop creative solutions to their problems, and to provide quality products and reliable service to achieve their goals.

System Description

Please describe the business management solution: current modules implemented, number of users, hardware configuration, customizations, integrated solutions, future plans, etc.:

Current Modules Implemented:

Microsoft Dynamics GP

- Financial Series
 - General Ledger
 - Accounts Receivable
 - Accounts Payable
 - Bank Reconciliation
 - Analytical Accounting
- Supply Chain Management
 - Inventory Control
 - Sales Order Processing
 - Purchase Order Processing
 - Advanced Distribution
- Manufacturing Series
 - Manufacturing Bill of Materials
 - Manufacturing Order Processing
 - Materials Requirements Planning
 - Demand Planner Collaborative
 - Demand Planner Power Base
- Customization Tools
 - Integration Manager
 - Modifier with VBA
 - Extender
- Reporting and Analysis
 - SmartList Builder
 - FRx Financial Reporting
 - SQL Server 2000 Reporting Services
 - GQL Reporting
- Integrated Solutions
 - Manhattan Associates WM for Windows
 - TIE Commerce EDI
 - Scribe Adapter for Microsoft Dynamics GP with eConnect

Number of Users:

52

Hardware Configuration:

Revman had been running their prior MRP application Point Man on DEC AlphaServers with Oracle. The AlphaServers had been in place for ten years costing Revman with a lease of \$20,000 per month the first seven years and \$10,000 per month the last three. The total hardware solutions for the Microsoft platform cost Revman \$100,000 and are financed over a 3-year capital lease.

The Microsoft Dynamics GP solution is deployed to the organization via three Windows 2003 Terminal Servers. The terminal servers each have dual Xeon processors and 2 GB of RAM. The backbone of the MRP solution is a Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition with Microsoft SQL Server 2000 Enterprise Edition. The database server has Quad Xeon Processors with 7.5 GB of RAM and Raid level 5 and level 10 hard drive arrays. Manhattan Associates WM for Windows is deployed via an application server and a database server, both of which are Windows Server 2003.

Customizations:

Revman had overly customized their prior system, PointMan MRP. Revman made a concerted effort to limit customization on this project as a direct result of that experience with the goal being ease of future upgrades.

“Revman wanted to be hands-on in the implementation. We wanted information so we could do the work ourselves as much as possible. IBIS was our expert: telling us where to find data, how the tables worked. We then applied the knowledge in our apps,” says Paula Laureau, VP of Administration for Revman. “We wrote macros for Product Development to input skus due to the number of attributes required. We create about 10,000 skus a year.

“Revman needed to be able to soft allocate goods (which GP does) and send a pick list to [Warehouse Management (WM)]. The pick list needed to be a hard allocation (cannot be changed – only shipped or not shipped which would then retrieve the allocation.) Since GP only soft allocates and WM only hard allocates, we had to write internally an app that sets in between the two systems,” Lareau explains. “Our senior application developer, David Sims, wrote the app. In the app, once the allocation is made, it updates GP allocations and uses GP on-hand balance. The next step is to create the pick list. This action holds the allocation until the pick is relieved by WM. While in the allocation status, quantities can be moved from customer to customer. After pick, only a Zero ship from WM can relieve the allocation.

“Revman has 57 item “attributes” like color way, pattern, carton code, NMFC code, HTS code, designer, market channel, subtype, weight, etc. These are required either by our customers on their labels or our internal reporting. We bought the Extender module to do this for us. Many of the Extender fields are transmitted to WM for our shipping labels.

“Other applications that Revman wrote were to allow roll down of date changes from the header of both POS and SOS to eliminate having to change each line after origination,” Lareau concludes. Further customizations were minor such as field name changes via Modifier.

Integrated Solutions:

Revman has an extremely complex business model with the constant introduction of new products with long lead times which have to be closely monitored. TIE Commerce is the EDI application utilized by Revman. Ninety-five percent of orders are EDI orders. IBIS and Business Microvar assisted the internal development team of Revman in integrating Microsoft Dynamics GP utilizing Scribe Software's Adapter to Microsoft Dynamics GP with eConnect.

With Microsoft Dynamics GP Demand Planner module, Revman is able to spot trends in their customers' point of sale data to determine whether to procure additional manufacturing to capitalize on an upward sales trend. The integration of purchasing, inventory, and customer data gives Revman a competitive advantage in managing inventory at the SKU level. Demand Planner has eliminated the need for entering large amounts of data into spreadsheets to determine what products should be made and supplies ordered. This has enabled Revman to lower inventory levels and reduce chargebacks.

Revman's customers send point of sale data to Revman. Revman uses this data in forecasting orders and future manufacturing. IBIS and Merit Solutions worked in conjunction with Revman's Planning Department to integrate this data with the Demand Planner module. With this data integration, Revman is able to properly forecast customer demands, allowing for proper placement of orders with their manufacturing partners in the Pacific Rim and Mexico.

The use of Microsoft Dynamics GP Materials Requirements Planning has allowed the Revman Purchasing Department to take the plan developed in Demand Planner and determine the best way to source products based on their suppliers lead times. This has allowed Revman to reduce rush orders and shipping expenses not only from their suppliers but also to their customers.

The integration between Microsoft Dynamics GP and Manhattan Associates Warehouse Manager has impacted the entire organization through tighter inventory management. Through the integration of these two systems, the customer service representatives have been able to allocate inventory to meet customer delivery times and fill rates. The visibility into other modules has eliminated the need for many phone calls to determine if a product is due to arrive into Revman's warehouse.

Revman sells to large retail chains that have very complex distribution with many locations. The Microsoft Dynamics GP and Manhattan Associates WM for Windows solution has been able to meet delivery requirements which are crucial to success in their industry.

Revman uses Microsoft Dynamics GP SmartList extensively for end-user ad-hoc reporting. This frees up the development team for more valuable projects. Revman has developed several complex reports in Microsoft SQL reporting and plans to use this tool throughout the company.

Future Plans:

The next phases of the project with the Revman and IBIS will be to deploy Microsoft Business Portal 3.0 and upgrade to Microsoft Dynamics GP 9.0. They would also like to provide customers and vendors with the ability to purchase products via the website and have all transactions integrate into the back office and warehouse management systems. In addition, Revman will leverage IBIS in a replacement of Lotus Notes with Microsoft Exchange Server.

Case Study

1. *Describe how teamwork and collaboration impacted the business success of the organization in relation to their business management solution?*

Revman's solution included some very detailed business requirements. Most specifically, its solution required that the Microsoft Dynamics GP application integrate with their warehouse management by Manhattan Associates and strong demand planning and forecasting abilities.

"We were referred to IBIS by our leasing company guy, Todd James. He had another client who raved about IBIS. We were working with another consulting firm. It became apparent that they were not going to be able to handle the size and complexity of our implementation. Todd called his client who called Andy Vabulas. Within 10 minutes I was speaking to Andy. After a 20 minute conversation, I knew IBIS was what we needed if we were going to be successful. Whereas the consulting firm we were working with was reluctant to touch any of our interfaces and refused to work with Manhattan Associates, IBIS was eager to take on the challenge. They looked on it as an opportunity," Lareau describes. "Our old consultants did not know anything about eConnect and never heard of Scribe. Only through IBIS did we get the support we required."

Once hired, IBIS immediately began coordinating their efforts to assure Revman was successful. Since the project was several months behind, IBIS decided it would be in the best interest of the client to partner with additional organizations to assure a January 1, 2006, "Go-Live." IBIS brought in Merit Solutions for their manufacturing expertise and Business Microvar for their experience with Scribe's Adapter to Microsoft Dynamics GP with eConnect. Throughout the engagement, IBIS also leveraged Microsoft's Deluxe Support Services when troubleshooting was required.

The Revman, IBIS, Manhattan Associates, Merit Solutions, and Business Microvar teams collaborated to develop the necessary business processes and workflows that would integrate the Microsoft Dynamics GP components with the solution developer products. The exercise of developing this complete solution to deliver Revman's business objectives was similar to designing then assembling a puzzle.

"We needed partners to assist with various third party integration pieces, who were subject matter experts, yet who also knew where to go if additional assistance was required," says Paula Lareau. "We needed partners who would work closely with us. IBIS had no problem bringing in outside expertise to achieve the objective while keeping our team in the loop every step of the way. We were impressed by that.

"There was constantly an enormous amount of knowledge transfer going on from all sides. Communication between the teams was fantastic." continues Lareau. "We consider this team our own employees. They have worked so closely with us and each other, and continue to do so to optimize our system and significantly improve productivity. They took the time to really get to know our business, and our team took the time to educate them on our operations, our objectives and our future direction. The teams really came together and delivered. We are thrilled with the results and are now well prepared to move forward with our future plans."

Case Study

2. *What were the specific strengths of each organization involved in the project and how were those strengths combined to deliver a successful end result?*

IBIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Lead • Microsoft Dynamics GP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Series ○ Supply Chain Management ○ Manufacturing ○ Customization ○ Reporting and Analysis ○ Integrating Solutions • Customer Satisfaction
Manhattan Associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse Management
Merit Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Dynamics GP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Manufacturing ○ Demand Planner
Business Microvar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scribe Adapter for Microsoft Dynamics GP with eConnect

The strengths that Revman possess truly helped IBIS, Manhattan Associates, Merit Solutions, and Business Microvar complete the project successfully. It stemmed from their ability to treat their partners like an extension of their own organization. They were clear on objectives, open to suggestions and had a desire to assemble the right team, no matter where the individuals came from, that could deliver the best results. Their commitment to their partners was unparalleled. They were open and flexible to changes in project schedule and open to additional recommendations made by the team.

When IBIS’ strengths were added to the mix — ability to team up with third party consultants, ability to know when to bring in subject matter experts to ensure a project’s objectives are achieved, and understanding the need to keep the client abreast of all facets of the project — the project was destined for success.

On all sides of the table, the willingness and openness to bring in the necessary resources to achieve the objectives directly impacted how well the project was completed. With so many intricate pieces to the project that required subject matter experts, Revman’s trust in their partners to help fill the gaps, and their eagerness to work with several different teams ensured the project was completed on time and was a triumph.

Case Study

3. *What contributions did each organization make that delivered a positive result that may not have been achieved if each were acting alone? How did that impact the timeliness, cost, outcome, etc. of the implementation?*

IBIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Lead • Microsoft Dynamics GP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Series ○ Supply Chain Management ○ Manufacturing ○ Customization ○ Reporting and Analysis ○ Integrating Solutions • Customer Satisfaction
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With the enormous number of integrations and touch points in assembling this solution, there was no way any one organization could have met Revman’s requirements. Revman knew this, and assumed the role of matchmaker so to speak.

Revman worked closely with each organization and in turn were supplied with the right resource, which possessed the right mix of experience so that they would all be able to work together in a synergistic way toward the common goal.

Revman’s dedication to the success of the project was demonstrated each time another obstacle was encountered. They were open to suggestions and adjusting the schedule, and acted as a conduit to foster clear communications to all members of the assembled team.

Paula Lareau describes the partnership, “One thing I really liked about IBIS is that they (Clinton Weldon, Jon Byrd, Mike Beatrice) call and check in to see if everything is going okay. I’ve never had to try and get their attention. I feel they are focused on me and my success. I feel we are partners and they care about my success as much as I do. IBIS encouraged meetings with our President, Richard J. Roman, and was always willing to attend meetings. When things got stressful, IBIS was there, in the trenches, facing the issues head-on.”

The end result was a completely integrated system that meets and/or exceeds the requirements set forth by Revman, all delivered within the promised time frame. Previously, when Revman tried to achieve this result with a single system, they were ultimately unsuccessful for a variety of reasons, primarily: 1) the system was ultimately customized to the point where neither the software company nor any authorized vendor would support it; 2) the costs were exorbitant; and 3) users were tethered to the office by a lack of mobile feasibility and non-32 bit applications.

Case Study

4. *What contributions did each organization bring that delivered a higher level of customer/end user satisfaction that would have otherwise been impossible if each group were acting alone?*

IBIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Lead • Microsoft Dynamics GP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial Series ○ Supply Chain Management ○ Manufacturing ○ Customization ○ Reporting and Analysis ○ Integrating Solutions • Customer Satisfaction
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The extensive knowledge of the applications by IBIS, Manhattan Associates, Merit Solutions, and Business Microvar ensured that the different systems would fully integrate and offer a process that appeared seamless to the system users. The teams worked together to ensure the data maps and touch points were accurate. The increased speed of the applications, the mobile connectivity, and the workflows that were collaboratively developed improved the business' efficiencies and ultimately resulted in the customer's satisfaction in Revman's service. Revman's unwavering support of the project plan provided the foundation that ensured the project was completed as expected.

With the new business solution in place, Revman has achieved their goal of mobile connectivity, greatly improving business processes and in turn is experiencing surging customer satisfaction ratings. Customer satisfaction in this industry is paramount: happy customers are repeat customers.

Case Study

5. *How did the project impact the overall success of the organization? Please provide examples of specific return on investment including time and cost savings, improved customer service, and other business process improvements.*

In order to stay in business and remain competitive, Revman realized a mission critical need to upgrade their existing hardware solution to allow them laptop and mobile connectivity. Their existing solution simply would not run on laptops. After conducting extensive research and comparison analysis, Revman determined that they needed a Microsoft solution to achieve their current and future objectives.

After the implementation of the new solution was completed, Revman has seen the biggest improvements in their G/L as well as their fully-integrated sales and inventory forecasting abilities. “Our old accounting was “off-system.” We also use a factor to collect our accounts receivable. With GP, we are taking over our own AR at a great savings. We pay 10% to our factor. Our planning was rudimentary. While we had access to our customers’ point-of-sale data and even forecasts, we handled all that manually,” states Lareau. “With GP, we have integrated our customers’ forecasts and POS data to get much better foresight. We have very long lead times (3-4 months) and forecasting accuracy is imperative. We expect a decrease in inventory and obsolescence by 20% due to GP. We expect to see an increase in order fulfillment from 89% to 95% due to GP increasing customer satisfaction. Plus we cut our closing month end books by one week to four days.

“We expect to reduce IT headcount by two and save \$100K per year with no DBA required and less project management. Plus SQL Server is less expensive than Oracle – maintenance on Oracle was \$70K per year.” Lareau continues, “We also plan on dropping Hummingbird BiQuery and using SQL Reports for free, saving an additional \$9K annually.

“With our Microsoft solution, we have been able to develop a “go-forward” strategy with the help of our partners that is already paying off. We’re able to forecast our orders better and customer satisfaction will improve. In that aspect alone, and the value of our partnership with IBIS, this solution has already paid for itself and more,” says Lareau. “If we didn’t make the decision to go with Microsoft and IBIS, we would not have been able to grow our business. Wireless and laptop capabilities were imperative, and the solution they delivered allowed us to achieve all that and more.”

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