



Company Overview

GFI is the largest honey packer in the United States. GFI purchases honey from more than 40+ states and countries as well as packs 85+ million pounds annually. GFI is based in Onsted, Michigan and employs about 200 people across its locations in Michigan, California and Florida. GFI also utilizes a broker network, several distribution centers and its own truck fleet to sell, store and deliver its products. GFI has achieved the very prestigious British Retail Consortium (BRC) Global Food Certification for its Michigan and Florida locations.

Challenges

GFI faced several challenges during both the selection process and the implementation process of their ERP system.

First, they had not been using an integrated ERP system, but their growth in sales was creating an increasing challenge to their current “systems.” GFI needed a system that would be fully functional in all core modules and allow them to run their three existing plants. GFI’s IT infrastructure also required significant upgrades to support a new ERP system. Their existing “systems” did not support standardized business and/or operations processes across their multiple facilities. As a result they lacked cross-company: reporting, communication, the ability to share information and standardized work processes.

Second, the organization did not have an internal IT applications department to provide system implementation support. The IT strategy was to invest in functional department personnel and not hire technical people like database administrators and programmers.

Lastly, a new ERP system that would support new business capabilities and allow for quick and easy integration of new acquisitions which, did occur early in the implementation.

Approach

GFI chose Plante Moran to assist in their ERP software system selection. After assessing a variety of solutions, they selected Plex On-line’s ERP software as a service (SaaS) model, as it most closely met their business needs. The Plex On-line solution offered optimum functionality in all core areas and could be deployed in minimal time,

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with no front-loaded costs and could easily expand to accommodate anticipated acquisitions.

GFI utilized Plex consulting for the initial implementation of accounting, then again partnered with Plante Moran, a Plex On-line implementation partner, to implement the balance of the Plex On-line ERP software across their production facilities. In addition, GFI supplied personnel from each facility and business function to participate in the design, testing, data conversion and end-user training stages of the implementation.

Results

Together, GFI and Plante Moran were able to configure Plex' software to meet GFI's core business needs for all three manufacturing facilities. Plex' solution, combined with Plante Moran's project management, software applications knowledge and business process expertise, allowed GFI to make business improvements with real-time reporting, online supplier releasing through supplier portal, supplier kanban, and standardization of their chart of accounts.

Overall, GFI was able to meet Food Industry requirements including BRC and FDA regulations regarding Country of Origin, lot and shelf-life traceability as well as product recall guidelines. They implemented Supplier, Internal and BRC Audits within Plex and linked them to the integrated Problem Control functionality. GFI was able to streamline the order entry and acknowledgement process while simplifying the customer shipping and truck scheduling activities. The tracking and payment of commissions and buying group rebates as well as the automatic creation of Accounts Receivable invoices are now incorporated into the process.

GFI also added new capabilities such as Production Requirements Planning, Material Requirements Planning and Capacity Planning during the course of the implementation. Other newly integrated functionality includes Control Plans tied to Process Routings, Inspection Checksheets, Container audits and the tracking of supplier certifications. GFI also implemented fully automated Time & Attendance functionality, Injury Tracking and Training Tracking.

Plante Moran Overview

Founded in 1924, Plante Moran is the 11th largest public accounting, tax, and management consulting firm in the United States serving middle-market, owner-managed organizations. With more than 200 partners and 2,000 staff located in 22 offices throughout Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, China, India, and Mexico, the firm is dedicated to meeting the ever-changing needs of its clients. The firm offers a portfolio of services within audit and accounting, human capital, tax, technology, financial advisory services, operational effectiveness, international, and business advisory services. Plante Moran helped pioneer Plex' implementation alliance partner program in 2006 and have assisted dozens of clients representing dozens of manufacturing facilities and thousands of users across multiple countries with implementations and optimizations of

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Plex. Plante Moran also participates in Plex forums, Plex regional user groups and frequently presents at the annual PowerPlex user conference.

Plex Overview

Plex Online, built on a “Software as a Service” (SaaS) model, offers more than 350 functional modules, providing manufacturers instant access to vital information and management functions using a simple Web browser. The on-demand solution features product lifecycle management (PLM) functions such as program and change management, enterprise resource planning (ERP) functions such as accounting and finance modules, customer relationship management (CRM) features such as order entry and tracking, manufacturing execution systems (MES) functions such as production scheduling and machine integration and supply chain management (SCM) functions such as supplier quality and traceability.