



RAISING EXPECTATIONS IS ALL IN A DAY'S WORK FOR SONIC PACKAGING



SONIC PACKAGING INDUSTRIES

CHALLENGE

Sonic Packaging was challenged by disconnected applications that couldn't fully address its diverse business model, causing it to take many tasks offline.

SOLUTION

The technology team at Net at Work helped Sonic Packaging design an agile, Next-Generation ERP solution that will support its growth initiatives for years to come.

RESULTS

- Optimized custom processes within one cloud business management solution
- Eliminated duplicate data entry
- Automated workflows and approvals provide compliance with Sonic Packaging's Quality Management System and Risk Management review process
- Targeted software enhancements create end-to-end solution providing visibility at every step

Product packaging has gone from simply a vessel to protect a product, to an essential marketing tool. The right packaging reinforces the brand, highlights a product's best features, enhances safety, and helps the item stand out on a crowded store shelf. Sonic Packaging Industries understands this better than anyone — indeed their tagline is "Raising Expectations." The innovative company designs custom packaging solutions for customers in the cosmetics, medical and dental, food and beverage, nutrition, pharmaceutical, and veterinary industries. They earn their clients' business by thinking outside the box, creating and delivering inventive, effective, and functional product packaging as a turnkey solution.

Sonic Packaging has a unique business model. It does not manufacture products. Rather, it designs, develops, and fills the packaging for its customers ensuring that all products meet regulatory and customer quality requirements at all times. In short, Sonic Packaging requires all the capabilities that a high-tech process manufacturer needs —plus a whole lot more flexibility and agility mixed in.

SONIC NEEDED A NEW PACKAGE

When Harry Paulison was hired as Sonic Packaging's new COO, he was tasked with implementing a cloud-based, Next-Generation ERP solution that the company could build its future on. "We were operating with a whole conglomeration of disconnected applications," Paulison recalls. "We had QuickBooks for accounting, a separate CRM application supporting sales, and no production support. The company ran on spreadsheets and the vast institutional knowledge of its employees."

The company's management team knew it was time for change. In order to remain competitive, Sonic Packaging needed to be able to scale its operations efficiently. It needed advanced production operations capabilities and robust sales enablement tools. Plus, it needed data analysis capabilities to help it identify trends and pivot more quickly. In short, it needed some help.



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BRING IN THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS

"I immediately thought of Net at Work," Paulison says. "I've worked with them before, and know they are the best in the business. Solving challenges like those Sonic was facing is what they live for. So, we didn't bother with an ERP consulting company to help us analyze ERP applications. Instead, we brought in Net at Work."

Through Net at Work's thorough business software selection process, Paulison and the rest of Sonic Packaging's management team considered 12 ERP applications, narrowing the list down to four before deciding on NetSuite. "The group was unanimous in the decision to go with NetSuite," Paulison says. "It brings together all the capabilities Sonic Packaging needs and allows for extensive configuration and customization, which is rare with cloud-based applications."

LIVE IN SIX MONTHS

Paulison is a veteran of software implementations. He understands how it's done and how to avoid common pitfalls. "We worked with our internal user groups to create workflow diagrams and process flows," he says. "Then, Net at Work's consulting team helped us tweak and revise those processes to optimize them in NetSuite."

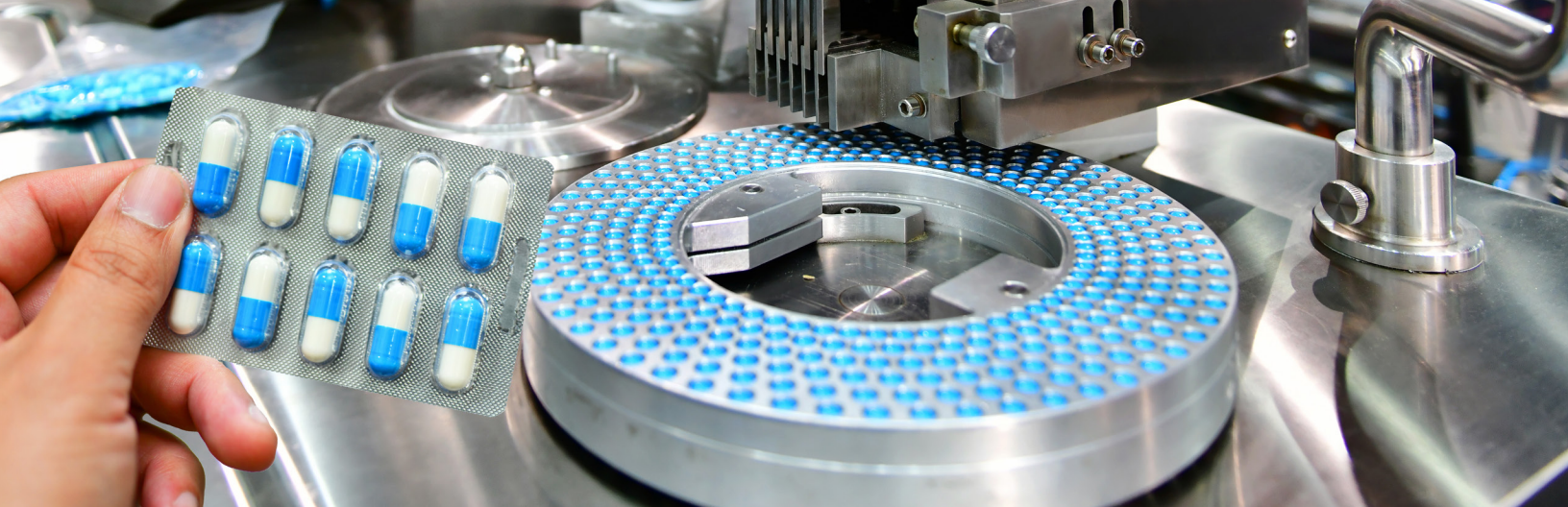
One of the mistakes Paulison sees companies make during software implementations is trying to exactly replicate what they were doing in the old system. Mostly, he says, because it's hard for people to imagine a better way. "This is where Net at Work adds value. They worked with us to revise our processes in order to optimize — not duplicate — them within NetSuite."

As a direct result of the careful pre-planning and project management, Sonic Packaging was live inside of six months. "Net at Work really kept the project focused and on track," Paulison says. "As a result, we were fully operational from day one."

EMPOWERING PEOPLE

Sonic Packaging is a lean enterprise with just 21 employees. Every employee uses NetSuite in their role, from sales, customer support and project management, to finance and production. With everyone on the same solution, the company is able to further elevate its service.

One early win for Sonic Packaging comes from the broad suite of capabilities in the ERP. This breadth allowed the company to give up its spreadsheets and ditch the duplicate data entry of days past. As a result, staff has more time to interact with customers, follow up on opportunities, or check in after a project is completed. "Our secret sauce is our people," says Paulison. "So, to buy them more time to be people, not data entry robots, is priceless."



He continues, "Overall, one of the biggest benefits of our technology platform is that it gives our people the time and capacity to deal with spikes in business. So, when we receive a large number of orders at once, for example, the workflows we've established scale up to keep things moving and allow our people to speak to customers, not chase paper."

ELEVATING OPERATIONS

Sonic Packaging is a company in continual motion. Shortly after its new software implementation, it successfully passed a mandatory annual ISO audit that evaluates whether the company's management systems are in compliance with ISO 9001 standards and requirements. "ISO certification is a baseline accomplishment for us," says Paulison. "Our next goals involve further optimizing our processes and workflows. We're always looking for more opportunities to automate tasks and ensure our people have instant access to the business information they need to do their jobs and help our customers."

To that end, the company works with Net at Work to design custom user dashboards that display real-time metrics, graphs and links to reports. It's this ability to loop in data from all areas of the business, from customer purchase history, work order status, open purchase orders, and average order value, that allows Sonic Packaging's management and staff to keep their fingers on the pulse of business activity from a single location.

OPTIMIZING WORKFLOWS

Sonic Packaging's unique business model meant that new, customized fields, forms, and workflows were needed. Here again, the Net at Work team worked closely with management and staff to design and deploy elegant, functional solutions. "One example of this is the workflow surrounding order approvals," explains Paulison. "Some of our customers' products are subject to FDA approval, and that requires additional layers of quality control on our part. Net at Work helped us design a custom workflow that detects these types of orders and routes the approvals accordingly. It's a seemingly simple step that goes a long way to improving accuracy and control."

Other enhancements to the system include custom forms to collect product specification datasheets, which are automatically included when purchase orders are generated, providing the detailed information required during the manufacturing process.

Next up is an EDI platform to speed and automate order and invoice handling — Net at Work is already at work on this initiative. "We continue to push the system to do more," says Paulison. "The good news is there's near infinite capability. We won't outgrow NetSuite no matter how fast or how large we grow."

CLIENT SUCCESS: SONIC PACKAGING



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VESTED IN SUCCESS

In Net at Work, Sonic Packaging has found a partner fully vested in its success, and one with the resources to continue to support and enhance the company’s business operation.

“Net at Work is an integral part of our technology strategy. They work closely with us to further optimize our operations,” Paulison concludes. “Sometimes they’ll suggest a third-party application that can tackle a task, or they’ll design a new report for us that addresses a particular challenge. We used to have ‘islands of technology’ with data stranded on those islands. With Net at Work’s help, we’ve connected the islands and built bridges for data sharing and collaboration that help us continue to improve and grow.”

ABOUT NET AT WORK

Founded in 1996, Net at Work is a leading technology advisor to thousands of small-to-medium sized businesses throughout North America. The award-winning consultancy offers a rich portfolio of technology, expertise, and services to help organizations derive value from the transformative effects of technology. To start unleashing the power of your business, visit www.NetatWork.com.