

K3 responds to Save Our System distress signals

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solutions

Simply Dynamics ERP

 Microsoft
Dynamics



K3 Business Solutions is aware that some companies have spent money on new business software only to find that it has been implemented badly by the supplier; and, in some cases the system simply won't do what it was intended to do. What is a customer supposed to do in such instances? Generally, the first thing they think of after blowing a few gaskets in exasperation and registering their dismay with their vendors is to contact the software publisher's customer services team, tell them what has occurred and ask for alternative suppliers who can help.

In many cases the K3 consultancy and support teams have saved the day by answering Save Our System (SOS) calls. They've gone in and sorted out the software problems and got the system running to the customer's specification to provide the results they were looking for.

K3 has demonstrated its rescue capabilities on several occasions, so it isn't an unusual experience for the firm to provide first aid and ongoing support to companies who have fallen foul of a poorly executed software implementation. Those companies are now satisfied customers who benefit from the experience and knowledge of K3 specialists.



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Monaghan Hardware gains from Dynamics NAV rescue

K3 responded to an SOS from Monaghan Hardware when the company began its search for a new supplier. There were several areas to address arising from a poor implementation of its Dynamics NAV enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. The initial job was to tidy up what had been done to date, get it to function to the customer’s specification, before optimising it to meet and support business performance improvements.

Family owned Monaghan Hardware has a 40-year pedigree of providing the very best service in the business – specifying and supplying architectural ironmongery, doorsets and many other related products. The company is a long-standing member of the Guild of Architectural Ironmongers, and many of its staff hold the highest qualification available in the industry: the Diploma In Architectural Ironmongery and are Registered Architectural Ironmongers.

Innovation in a traditional market

Ironmongery is a traditional industry, and the company takes pride in balancing tradition with being progressive and innovative; in many areas it is a market leader. It uses state-of-the-art IT, designs products in-house, trains its staff to the highest levels and sources the best products from around the globe. Its ERP system is therefore essential to supporting the business.

“It was an important time in our development because we were restructuring the company and the IT was a crucial part of the project. We were undertaking an innovative project by merging the distribution operations of two separate trading companies into one central distribution cost centre, so that the ERP system could handle a new way of selling inter-company and at cost. All of this had to happen seamlessly in the background and so the system was critical to the success of the project,” says John Monaghan, Managing Director.

Project failure is not an option

The company was extremely disappointed to have invested a lot of time and money into the software for it to fail.

“The failure of the project had a knock on effect partly with our customers, but primarily with our staff who lacked any confidence in the system. So, there were a lot of hidden costs; in addition to the expected costs. It was certainly a difficult time for us,” adds John Monaghan.

After much thought, the company decided to look for a new supplier who would be able to take on its ERP system and make it do what it was supposed to do.

“We had learned the hard way that although Dynamics NAV is extremely flexible, you need a supplier that can configure it correctly. We checked the market to find out who had the capabilities we needed, which led us to talk to a number of candidates who we invited in to discuss our project and give them the opportunity to explain how they could help. These meetings were important given our experience with our previous supplier as we needed confidence in our new partner from the start,” says John Monaghan.

“It was clear to us that the K3 team knew what they were talking about and the company’s profile gave us the confidence that we were dealing with the right organisation. K3 had undertaken similar projects in Europe, so we knew its people wouldn’t be coming in cold. When it was time to ask for prices from the various suppliers we were pleasantly surprised that K3 was cheaper than the majority given the size of the company; that was an added bonus although the most important thing for us was to get the job done,” he adds.

Moving forward

Once the contract was agreed, K3 moved swiftly, bringing in its appropriate people who would be able to get Monaghan Hardware back on track. The company had high expectations that its new partner would remove the need for its people to worry about the system and the many problems it had caused for the previous eight years.

“The first thing we needed K3 to do was fix the software that had been specifically written for our central distribution model. K3 sent a consultant who had experience with other companies that had similar functionality within Dynamics NAV. He simplified the whole process from a complicated cycle of raising various orders into a streamlined transactional system that was both logical and easy to use,” says John Monaghan.

“The K3 version of this important tool worked immediately; it was a revelation for us to find something that actually worked at the test phase and we were able to implement it very quickly following some minor fine tuning.”

Back on track

With all the problems associated with the earlier rendition of Dynamics NAV, Monaghan Hardware had to put a lot of development projects on hold. John Monaghan reports that his team has now been able to complete the majority of these over the last eight months.

“With the issues we suffered with the system, we’d been set back a full year. But, now we’ve moved from reacting and managing crises to developing the system and the business. We have even got to the stage where we are looking at implementing new ideas with K3’s help. We are, for example, looking at fully hosted systems with K3

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taking complete control of the software for us, and we're considering installing BizTalk Server, which will allow us to communicate electronically and automatically with customers and suppliers to cut out a lot of order processing. It is exciting times, particularly with all the progress we've made in such a short time."

Novel functionality

Monaghan Hardware is the only company of its kind that has a fully integrated state-of-the-art scheduling system. This gives the company the edge by using live, up-to-date product information for creating "set packs" for doors. This is a form of kitting that is completely configurable in the way it produces reports for customers.

"We create set packs from architects' drawings. These will contain, for example, three hinges, a lock, a handle and a door closer. We can allocate these to multiple doors and we provide bespoke reports for our customers to show what is in each pack. The unique difference with our system is that the information is live; it is based on current stock levels and prices. After quoting in this format, one button press converts it to an order and allows the purchasing routines to take over; it is a very important sales tool that wins us business in a very efficient way," says John Monaghan.

In addition, the ERP system has been integrated with the company's carrier: FedEx. Dynamics NAV passes information into the FedEx system to generate parcel labels with shipping and consignment details, while sending an email to the customer and to the sales team to say the goods have been picked and despatched.

"We are pleased to be supporting Monaghan. This is not an untypical example of where we've taken on a system provided by another supplier and rectified the problems to get it working properly. The original implementations can vary quite dramatically. For example, with Monaghan we are supporting both a standard Dynamics NAV system and a heavily bespoke front end. Many companies have custom work done to their systems and feel they can't move to a better partner because of the non-standard format of their software, but we are proving you can," concludes Gary Vincent, Director, K3 Business Solutions.



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About K3 Business Solutions

K3 Business Solutions is a leading provider of business management solutions to the distribution, wholesale and fashion industries.

With over 25 years experience in delivering integrated business management solutions encompassing, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Business Intelligence (BI), we deliver that all important powerful and future proof business critical solution, which delivers best practice, processes and functionality, designed specifically for your business and your people.

We are renowned for our unique personal service, our skill of listening to our clients and offering expertise that allows us to deliver the right solution, on time and on budget.

K3 Business Solutions is part of the K3 Business Technology Group. K3 is the largest Microsoft Dynamics partner in the UK and thrive on global recognition from Microsoft, including being a valued member of their elite Inner Circle and Presidents club, which in turn reaps benefits additional benefits for our customers.

Contact us to find out how K3 business solutions can help you improve business processes to drive increased efficiencies and overall profits.

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