

RENEWAL BY ANDERSON

Solution Overview

Industry

Construction

Company Profile

Renewal by Anderson specializes in custom-made, quality windows for home-owners.

Scenario

Renewal by Anderson needed a business management system that would enable custom-ordered windows without requiring billions of part numbers to be set up in Inventory.

Benefit

eEnterprise provided a central solution on standardized Microsoft technologies that has enabled Renewal by Anderson to increase profitability.

Software Used

Microsoft Great Plains eEnterprise
 Financial Series
 Distribution Series
 Purchasing Series
 FRx Financial Reporting
 Customization/Integration Tools
 Modifier w/VBA
 Integration Manager
 Microsoft SQL Server 7.0
 Microsoft Windows 2000

The multitude of possibilities of item combinations for made-to-order windows could easily require billions of inventory items. Renewal by Anderson builds windows of opportunity using eEnterprise and Visual Basic for Applications to create an efficient business system that requires low maintenance in part number entry, thus enabling a faster speed to market... resulting in higher sales.

Company

Based out of the Minneapolis/St. Paul region, Renewal By Andersen is a firm that specializes in window replacement solutions for home-owners who need new, comfortable, quality windows. The retail operation implements a unique method of manufacturing and selling custom windows, each of which are made to the customers' exact specifications.

Situation

With each and every window custom ordered, this means that practically every order includes different windows with unique shapes, sizes, colors and associated materials. Dean Dodson, Information Systems Engineer for Renewal By Andersen, knew that this method of tracking and processing orders was a challenge for any business application. "The typical problem we face with any purchased application software is that they are either part-number based or project based. Our business seems to fall in between these types of businesses, we feel we fit in the 'mass customization' category." The reality of maintaining this model in any business management system was daunting, to say the least. If Renewal by Anderson were to create salable part numbers for every item possible to sell, they would have to maintain over 10 billion items in a system item master table.

A Simple Solution with Modifier w/VBA

To address this need, Dean decided that, through adding slight customizations to eEnterprise using eEnterprise's customization tool, Modifier with Visual Basic for Applications (VBA), Renewal By Andersen could easily use and maintain its current business model without individually tracking all the different item combinations. "We wanted the receiving to work, we needed job costing, and we needed to place purchase orders with the factory for our windows. Using the Modifier with VBA, the solution was fairly simple to implement."

"Businesses like ours compete primarily by offering our customers highly-tailored, customized products. Knowing that we can customize our eEnterprise business management solution to adapt to our current and future business needs really gives us peace of mind."

Dean Dodson
Information Systems Engineer
Renewal by Anderson

First, Dean created "base" inventory items using the eEnterprise Inventory module. Then, using the Modifier with VBA, Dean added additional data entry fields to the eEnterprise sales transaction entry window. The goal was to allow Renewal by Anderson's data entry person to select a "base" part number during sales transaction entry, then select any of several options that the customer would request, such as height, width, glass type, exterior color, interior color, and so on. Dean then used the Dynamics User Object Store (DUOS), a user-definable database that's built directly into eEnterprise especially for VBA customizations, to store all the custom item detail information with the base part number. Through Microsoft VBA code, Dean can then redisplay these custom options when the user displays the customer order in the transaction entry window.

Renewal By Andersen is able to print purchase orders, using Microsoft VBA to retrieve and display all the corresponding options for each item in the purchase order. Purchase orders with the custom window information are then sent to the factory floor, where the order can be processed and each custom item on the order can be built exactly as the customer requested.

For more information about Microsoft Great Plains Business Solutions, visit www.greatplains.com

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