

CUSTOMER SUCCESS



Central Distributors of Beer: Proud to Be Buds With Sage MAS 500

When you “make it a Bud” in Michigan, it’s likely your brew came from Central Distributors of Beer. Central is the largest Anheuser-Busch wholesaler in the state and one of the largest in the country, delivering to more than 1,700 retail outlets in 38 communities.

Family-owned since 1933, Central Distributors prides itself on being one of the most modern and progressive beverage wholesalers in America. It takes advantage of Anheuser-Busch Wholesalers’ computer-based inventory systems and refrigerated warehouses to offer “the freshest, highest-quality beer available anywhere.”

Inadequate and Unreliable

“What are you doing?” Budweiser’s advertising slogan took on special meaning for members of Central’s finance group, who kept asking themselves what they were doing with an inadequate accounting package. The system failed frequently and was cumbersome to use. Technical support was hard to get, too.

“We basically prayed each month that the system wouldn’t crash before we finished month-end reports,” says Kurt Gail, Central’s CFO. “Then we’d start praying all over again the next month. It was no way to run a business.”

Refreshing Efficiency

Gail went shopping for a new system to handle Central’s financial needs. He visited other beer wholesalers to see what they were using, then selected Sage MAS 500 ERP for its robust, full-featured functionality and ease of use. Sage MAS 500 now automates all accounting tasks at Central, including accounts payable processing, budgeting, and a wide range of reports.

“Sage MAS 500 has been a lifesaver for us,” Gail comments. “It’s trimmed 20 percent off administration time, and will have paid for itself in a little over a year. Furthermore, it’s very easy to use, so training is simple. We’ve only had to call tech support once so far, which says a lot about the product.”

Customer:

Central Distributors of Beer

Industry:

Anheuser-Busch exclusive distributor

Location:

Western Wayne County, Michigan

Number of Locations

One

Number of Employees

175

System:

Sage MAS 500

- eExecutive
- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- FAS Asset Accounting



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CHALLENGE

Replace inadequate, unreliable system with a robust, fully automated, solid business solution that will help streamline operations and maximize profitability.

SOLUTION

Sage MAS 500 financial and FAS Asset Accounting modules.

RESULTS

Streamlined automation of all accounting tasks; 20% cut in administration time; positive ROI in about a year; accurate expense tracking and depreciation; greater check writing flexibility; easy budget analyses.

"After our consultant installed the hardware and software and ran a demo, we were ready to go," Gail says. "Two of us watched the reseller create a statement, then we set up the rest in just one day. We were able to print checks, perform journal entries and put in budget numbers right off the bat—a truly remarkable feat!"

Sage MAS 500 lets Central's finance staff put descriptions and comments in vouchers for more accurate expense tracking, something that was not possible before. Checks can be written on different bank accounts, depending on vendor, giving greater flexibility. Another important feature has been the ability to set up recurring journal entries, and then reverse accruals even months later with the click of the mouse.

Gail uses the system to create trial balances, balance sheets, and individual financial statements for the delivery, sales, warehouse, garage, and administration departments. He can easily compare current year performance versus prior year and budget figures—providing greater insight into business performance.

The FAS Asset Accounting module tracks valuation of delivery equipment, vehicles, trucks, trailers, buildings and related additions, warehouse equipment, furniture, fixtures and computers. It calculates both book, and tax depreciation, integrating seamlessly with the entire Sage MAS 500 solution.

"I used FAS Asset recently to run budget projections before we calculated assets," Gail notes. "This proved to be very convenient, as it let me budget depreciation more accurately for the next year."

Central also implemented WCS, a route planning module from Daugherty Systems, which integrates seamlessly with Sage MAS 500. Entries to WCS flow directly into Sage MAS 500, avoiding time previously spent re-keying data into a stand-alone system.

Gail says he's glad Central now has Sage MAS 500. "I love our new system," says Gail. "It's very reliable and does everything we need, all in one easy-to-use package. We're so pleased, in fact, that we've opened our doors to other Anheuser-Busch wholesalers, so they can see what a smooth operation we've got running here."

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