

CUSTOMER SUCCESS



Sage MAS 500 ERP Supports Growth for Metrolina Greenhouses

With 100 acres and more than 4 million square feet of heated greenhouse space, Metrolina Greenhouses is the largest single-site greenhouse operation in the United States. Its plants and flowers are shipped to major retailers up and down the Eastern Seaboard. The company enjoys sustained revenue growth in large part because it reliably delivers the quality products its customers have come to expect. To consistently meet demand in a dynamic industry its warehouse operations use Sage MAS 500 ERP with Warehouse Automation.

A Solution for A Growing Enterprise

For years Sage MAS 90 ERP served the company well as its accounting and distribution solution, but continued growth and expansion led it to look for a comprehensive and sophisticated warehouse management solution. “We were building a new 100,000 square foot warehouse to consolidate materials from several smaller warehouses on our site,” explains Charles Childers, IT Director for Metrolina Greenhouses. “The timing was right to incorporate true MRP (Materials Requirement Planning) procedures and implement RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) for better planning and control.”

The company evaluated Microsoft Dynamics NAV and SAP before deciding on Sage MAS 500. “Sage MAS 500 had the strongest MRP module,” Childers says. “Combine that with our positive experiences with Sage MAS 90 and our Sage Software business partner and the deal was sealed.”

Accurately Plan for Demand

One of the most important objectives for Metrolina Greenhouses was to streamline its production planning and inventory replenishment. Sage MAS 500 uses historical data and advanced replenishment formulas to help the company easily understand current and future material and distribution requirements. Single-screen planning provides up-to-date item statistics, including on-hand quantities, current purchase orders, work orders, transfer orders, and other elements that affect planning decisions.

MRP calculations generate suggested work orders for manufactured items, purchase orders for raw materials, and requests to move material between locations. “It would be impossible for us to keep on top of our enormous production volume without this tool,” Childers says.

Customer:

Metrolina Greenhouses

Industry:

Wholesale Grower/Distributor

Location:

Huntersville, North Carolina

Number of Locations: 1

Number of Employees: 600+

System:

Sage MAS 500 ERP

- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Alerts
- Cash Management
- Customizer
- Purchase Order
- Sales Order
- Inventory Management
- Inventory Replenishment
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Planning & Scheduling
- MRP
- Engineering Change Management
- Shop Floor Control
- Warehouse Management
- Warehouse Automation

Sage FAS Asset Accounting

Add-On Solutions

- RFID solution from Scanco

CHALLENGE

Metrolina Greenhouses successfully used Sage MAS 90 ERP for years, but rapid expansion called for a move to a comprehensive warehouse management and production planning solution.

SOLUTION

The company upgraded to the Sage MAS 500 ERP, adding integrated advanced manufacturing capabilities and warehouse automation functionality.

RESULTS

Revenues have increased by millions of dollars annually since the implementation. The company is operating successfully with half of the staff it would have required without the efficiencies delivered by Sage MAS 500.

Accurately Track Inventory Movement with RFID

As incoming items, such as plant pots, enter the warehouse, they are scanned with a handheld reader that links to the integrated Sage MAS 500 system, completing the purchase order receipt. Next, an RFID tag is produced for each incoming item using a portable RFID printer. “The automated receipt process speeds the cycle and eliminates routine mistakes,” says Childers. “As the incoming items are scanned, they are validated against the purchase order, ensuring we’re getting what we ordered, in the right quantities.”

Work order picking tickets are printed and sent to the warehouse floor, where workers pull the required items and scan the RFID tag of each. “Nothing leaves the warehouse unscanned,” says Childers. “In an operation this large, it’s imperative that we keep accurate track of our products and their movement, and this system makes it possible.”

Respond to Changing Conditions

Much of the company’s product is distributed to major retailers and home improvement stores. These customers depend on Metrolina Greenhouses for accurate replenishment. “There are no second chances in this industry,” explains Childers. “We need to have our plants in our customers’ hands for prime growing and selling seasons.”

Meeting those expectations involves collecting and analyzing each customer’s sales data on a daily or weekly basis. Metrolina Greenhouses receives sales orders and revised order quantities electronically in their integrated EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) solution. The data is imported into the Sage MAS 500 MRP module where it is compared to existing forecasts and current orders. “We use the live sales data to refine our forecasts and adjust our production accordingly,” says Childers. “The flexibility to dynamically adjust dates and quantities without deleting and reentering data saves us an enormous amount of time.”

Before implementing its Sage MAS 500 solution, customer sales data and order changes were entered into the software manually, requiring a team of employees 10 to 12 hours a day during the company’s busy seasons. “Without Sage MAS 500 we would

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have had to double our staff to keep up with our increased sales volume,” Childers says. “We invested in tools that help our staff work smarter and faster—and then go home to their families.”

Weather conditions also play a critical role in production forecasts, so the planning department fine-tunes its forecasts and delivery schedules daily depending upon the growth rate of its plants. “Our customers trust us to deliver what they need, when they need it. It’s a large responsibility, but we earn that trust,” Childers adds.

Invest in the Ultimate Solution

The company’s sales have increased by millions of dollars a year since the implementation—an increase Childers attributes to the efficiencies promoted by Sage MAS 500. “For our industry, there is no software out there that comes close to the functionality of Sage MAS 500. We have the ultimate solution.”

If you would like to learn more about Sage MAS 500 ERP, please visit www.sagemas.com or call 1-800-854-3415 to speak with a representative today.

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