

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Green Valley Growers Offer “Passport to Paradise” With Sage Pro

As recently as five years ago, Green Valley Growers' (GVG) 866 acres in southeast Texas were woods and pastures. Today, the company runs more than a million square feet of heated greenhouses, and has 400 acres in production, growing high-quality landscape and patio plants. Selling to independent gardens centers, home centers, and other retailers, GVG has become one of the largest wholesale nurseries in the nation.

GVG distinguishes itself with innovative marketing programs, such as “Tropical Splendor,” providing customers a “passport to paradise” for their patio. Its Web site describes four popular tropical destinations, explains local plants and how to grow them, and even contains recipes for exotic entertaining.

Outgrowing Standalone Systems

Green Valley Growers started business with Peachtree by Sage as its accounting system, with separate inventory management, order processing, and spreadsheet systems. “Rekeying data multiple times added costs and allowed errors,” says Jim Hessler, president. “A fully integrated system became absolutely necessary.”

Sage Pro ERP is now used to manage virtually all business operations at GVG. The software has automated standard accounting functions such as payables and receivables, payroll, and the general ledger. It also tracks customer orders, inventory, purchase orders, production, and work orders.

Monitoring Millions of Plants

“We use Sage Pro to track each of the 10 million plants,” says Hessler. “We record the date when a plant is put into production, where it is located, whether it has been moved or transplanted, when a cutting is struck, and every time it is watered or fertilized. Sage Pro gives us a totally accurate accounting of individual costs, and how they vary throughout our many growing cycles.”

GVG's reseller customized Sage Pro to capture costs on leftover plants from batch sales. “Each day a plant is here, it accrues costs,” explains Hessler. “It might be only a fraction of a cent. But when you're dealing with the volumes we are, every part of a penny adds up.”

Customer:

Green Valley Growers, Inc.

Industry:

Wholesale plant nursery

Location:

Willis, Texas

Number of Locations: One

Number of Users: 160

System:

Sage Pro ERP

Modules in Operation

- System Manager
- General Ledger
- Accounts Receivable
- Accounts Payable
- Inventory Control
- Order Entry
- Purchase Orders
- U.S. Payroll
- Bills of Lading
- Customer Connect
- Production Entry
- Shop Control
- ProAlert
- Work Orders
- Customization Manager

CHALLENGE

Standalone inventory management, order processing and accounting systems required rekeying data multiple times, adding costs and increasing potential for errors.

SOLUTION

Sage Pro ERP with complete suite of financial and inventory management modules, for a totally integrated system that runs entire company.

RESULTS

Sales grew by 35 percent in the last year while back office staff was reduced by 10 percent; real-time inventory data provides important competitive edge.

Automated Ordering

Customer service representatives use Sage Pro to enter orders from customers or the sales team. The system checks inventory levels, and places an order if stock is available. After an order is keyed, item availability is relieved from inventory.

The Order Entry module transmits data to nursery docks, and generates pick tickets for workers in the fields. Pick tickets can be run by single order, full dock, or a range of docks, minimizing trips to the field.

Sage Pro also determines the best shipping route for customers, thanks to another customization by the reseller. The program shows which routes already have orders, and how much of each truck is still free, for faster and more efficient deliveries.

Picking and Invoicing

Pick tickets at GVG are sorted by Sage Pro, then printed by cost center. The software monitors labeling and bar code printing through the Order Entry module. The system prepares shipping labels, creates copies of orders so that dock supervisors can verify products on the order, and prints out paperwork for drivers.

The next morning, the Sage Pro Accounts Receivable module confirms shipments and creates invoices, prints, and sends them to customers. The same module flows data into the General Ledger module, and relieves inventory, resulting in real-time counts.

Coming Soon...

On the production side, GVG uses the Purchase Order module to record all raw materials used, such as soils, fertilizers, chemicals, small plants, cuttings, and seeds. Soon, the Production Entry module will update automatically, and notify growers of material requirements through the material planning features of the Manufacturing suite of modules.

A Sage Pro remote ordering system is currently in final testing stages at GVG. The sales team will soon be able to record orders into a palm device and transmit data wirelessly to Sage Pro, for even faster order fulfillment.

"Sage Pro reduced redundant data entry, allowing us to achieve 35 percent growth in sales in one year while reducing office labor by 10 percent."

—Jim Hessler
President

Green Valley Growers, Inc.

Helping Gardeners Grow

Hessler is certain that Sage Pro ERP was the right decision for GVG. "Sage Pro reduced redundant data entry, allowing us to achieve 35 percent growth in sales in one year while reducing office labor by 10 percent. Also, we now have much better financial information. The system makes it easy to get real-time cost information, which makes us more efficient and improves production planning decisions.

"The software also gives us better information for customers on upcoming production and future availability," he continues. "This is a must when dealing with huge national chains, particularly during busy spring months. The system prevents us from promising plants we don't have. With remote ordering, we'll trim several hours off of every order, which is a key factor in maintaining our competitive edge.

"Perhaps the best thing about Sage Pro is that it works for us, not vice versa," Hessler notes. "It doesn't force us to conform to someone else's business system. It does exactly what we need now, and will support growth at our current rapid pace."

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