

Filling A Tall Order

FOSTER'S MEETS DEMAND WITH \$170 MILLION SUPPLY CHAIN PROJECT

As the most recognized Australian brand around the globe, **Foster's Brewing International** brews and distributes more than 100 million cases of its most famous beer, Foster's Lager, to more than 150 countries worldwide. The company's success in expanding its portfolio and global reach can only be sustained by a scal-

able production and distribution network. In 2003, the company decided its current systems and processes did not have the needed flexibility or capacity to meet increasing demand for diverse product lines.

After a thorough assessment, Foster's embarked on \$170 million project to significantly improve sup-

ply chain capabilities, reduce operational costs and gain economies of scale. It closed its Sydney brewing operation and two existing warehouses to centralize warehousing operations in one facility located in Yatala, Australia, near Brisbane.

In order to drive production and supply to the majority of the New South Wales Queensland and Northern Territory market, the Yatala facility needed a warehouse solution with critical functional depth, flexibility to evolve with consumer tastes and real-time business intelligence to optimize service across its supply chain network.

Foster's turned to **RedPrairie Corporation** to deploy a single installation of Dlx Warehouse to centralize warehousing operations, which was

task interleaving with 27 forklifts, including nine twins. This functionality configured with user involvement enabled operators to pick multiple pallets simultaneously for a single load, dramatically reducing travel time.

To further enhance productivity levels, Foster's invested in radio frequency equipment. Dlx Warehouse and a solution from **Intermec** run on a Windows XP touch screen for the forklift drivers, providing Foster's with the ability to interchangeably communicate with supply chain solutions it may implement in the future.

With the right resources and great buy-in from the start, Foster's now has the flexibility it needs to maintain its leadership role in the indus-

Execution in the Field

Foster's better arms field sales staff with mobile solution

As the National Business Manager for Sales Tools and Processes for Foster's Group, Barry Dunham and his team strive for continual improvement in the way field sales representatives conduct business with customers.

"Process improvement, new technologies and personal development are key focus areas for this team in assisting the field sales to deliver a superior service," says Dunham.

In accordance with that mantra, Foster's identified the need to progress to a third generation customer relationship management solution. Foster's selected a mobile PDA solution from **O₄ Corporation** to improve the way customer information is collected in a timely and efficient manner, while not weighing the field sales teams down with heavy laptops. Foster's also needed to ensure field sales, marketing and management had the latest information at their fingertips as soon as it was available, whether they were in the office, at home or with the customer.

"As part of the selection process, Foster's interviewed a short list of players in the same market space, completed a rigorous set of selection criteria and evaluated product demonstrations," says Dunham. "Against a predefined set of measurement criteria, O₄ came out in front."

In April 2006, Dunham and his team began the roll out of the O₄ Solution, which included both a mobile application used by field sales staff and an office-based management suite providing administration and reporting support. The initial rollout to more than 300 field sales members was completed at the end of June 2006 by an internal Foster's team supported technically by O₄ Corporation.

In the office, the O₄ Management Suite is used by staff on laptops and desktop PCs for territory management, messaging staff, journey planning, to set sales representative priorities and create surveys. O₄ integrates with Foster's **JD Edwards E1** transaction system on information such as customer details and product details, all exchanged through a data warehouse.

In the field throughout Australia, the O₄ Solution is now being used by more than 450 staff members. Sales representatives use the O₄ Mobile Client on handheld devices for a range of activities, including recording premise information, call planning, ordering, range and distribution checks, surveys, sales analysis and more.

According to Dunham, a key benefit is the ability to receive and transmit key information to the field without docking to a work station. Almost half of the field sales team does not visit an office weekly, so it is essential that information is transportable through GPRS, and all information collected is transmitted at the time of collection. The second key benefit is having one view of the information stored. This ensures that any person within the organization with access to customer information is viewing the same information. Call history, upcoming activity, promotions, etc., are stored once and viewed by all.



Foster's Group is a premium global multi-beverage company delivering a total portfolio of beer, wine, spirits, cider and non-alcoholic beverages.

delivered on time and on budget. Dlx Warehouse provides a seamless transition from production to the warehouse to end-point distribution. The new 20,000-square-meter facility can handle a weekly production capacity of more than a million cases of packaged beer (13,800 pallets) and 92,500 draught beer kegs (10,300 pallets) as well as external receipts of more than 2,000 pallets of packaged beverages, including wine, spirits and non-alcoholic beverages, and 500 pallets of kegs. When the system receives the goods from production, they are optimally directed to inventory locations, to other tasks such as labeling or to be loaded from the mass accumulation table onto to outbound vehicles.

To streamline intra-warehouse execution, Dlx Warehouse enabled

try. Overall, Foster's is seeing results in four key areas: Automation, visibility, utilization and flexibility, which makes Yatala the success model to follow for future site developments at Foster's.

"By streamlining inbound and outbound warehouse processes with RedPrairie, we are able to achieve consistently higher performance levels across the supply chain that drive additional savings," says Robbie Attard, business systems and service manager, Foster's.

Foster's has since replaced other warehouse management systems, gone live with RedPrairie at its specialized 43,000-square-meter export wine distribution center and is now undertaking a global rollout of RedPrairie.

—ALLISTON ACKERMAN