

Business Drivers

- > Management of stock allocations and sales and purchase order processing
- > Functionality for import management, inventory control and warehouse management
- > Reporting and analytics



Profile in Brief

- > Distributor of houseware items
- > Based in the UK
- > Sells to retailers, including supermarkets, department stores and independent traders
- > Works with market-leading brands, such as Thermos, Luminarc and Le Parfait

World Class Products Require World Class Service

Brands Home & Leisure (BHL) is a distributor of houseware items, such as kitchenware, drinkware, insulated containers, tableware, glassware and storage jars. Based in the United Kingdom, BHL vends a variety of popular brands, such as Thermos, Luminarc, Cristal D'Arques and Le Parfait, selling products to retailers including supermarkets, department stores, online stores and independent traders. With a simple philosophy based on the pillar of quality products that are supplied on time and supported by excellent service, BHL is a premier distributor of homewares throughout the United Kingdom.

Need for Integration Prompts Search for New ERP Solution

Before partnering with Apprise, BHL utilized a DOS-based ERP system that relied on 3rd-party bolt-ons to perform many basic management functions. Far from being user-friendly, this system was not fully integrated and required extensive time resources to fully monitor. The weaknesses of this system were numerous, including a lack of functionality for stock allocations, sales and purchase order processing, import management, inventory control, warehouse management and reporting and analytics. Poor process management and increasing inefficiencies made it clear to the firm's leadership that a new ERP system would be needed to keep pace with the demands of the market.

BHL commenced a search among global and UK-based software providers and ERP solutions, including SAP Business One, Microsoft Dynamics NAV, Epicor and Access. Impressed by Apprise's solution integration, their industry expertise, and high level of customer service, BHL added Apprise to the list of suitable vendors and eventually selected them as the highest-quality and most cost-effective solution for the firm.

"It was clear that with Apprise's all-in-one ERP solution, there would be little to no customization needed, and that the firm's knowledgeable team was prepared to make the implementation process as smooth and straightforward as possible," said Mark Snape, Finance Director, BHL.

Principal among BHL's reasons for coming to this decision was the fact that Apprise® ERP is fully integrated, providing for a lower cost of ownership, reduced start-up costs, faster speed of implementation and more accurate and real-time information. Apprise's specialization in the homewares industry allowed the team to optimize BHL's conversion and offer industry-specific features and functionality with little to no customization needed. Several of the more salient features of Apprise ERP that directly responded to BHL's needs are multi-currency capabilities, alerts, distribution resource planning tools, inventory reservations, sales restrictions and the system's integrated EDI mapper.

Beyond the high-quality of the Apprise ERP solution, BHL was encouraged by the firm's certainty of cost and overall pricing transparency.

"When adding in hidden costs such as licensing and implementation fees, it was difficult to get a true cost from other providers," said Snape. "Apprise was very upfront about pricing matters, which increased our confidence in the brand's honesty and reliability."

Business Impact

- > Improved internal reporting and analysis
- > Increased accuracy in inventory allocations
- > Streamlined process with credit checking capabilities
- > Better overall control and visibility for the business

"Apprise's integrated ERP system offered us the ideal way to track and record our business transactions, turning what was once a complex, multi-faceted process into a flawless, streamlined procedure."

– Mark Snape
Finance Director
BHL

Smooth Implementation Leads to Visible Improvements

BHL chose to license Apprise's standard ERP package in the fall of 2014, commencing an implementation process that culminated in a few months. From start to finish, the conversion was extremely smooth and kept to the original plan, aided by Apprise's dedicated support staff.

"We were extremely impressed by the hands-on approach of the Apprise team in ensuring the success of the implementation process," said Snape. "They were knowledgeable, efficient and quick to respond to all of the questions and issues we posed to them."

In the wake of BHL's implementation of the Apprise ERP solution, the business has since licensed the Apprise Customer Portal, an eCommerce solution. They've also experienced tangible improvements over its previous system. Enhanced reporting and analysis capabilities, fueled by the integrated nature of the solution, have aided team members in information-sharing. Furthermore, the system's credit-checking and order-import capabilities have streamlined what were once cumbersome aspects of BHL's business.

Because of the Apprise® ERP solution and the process improvements, within a year, BHL has increased sales 9% without adding additional labor hours. Overall, the leadership feels that implementing the Apprise ERP solution has given them greater control over their operations, greater visibility into the business, and has helped them increase profitability.

"Apprise's integrated ERP solution has given us a level of control and certainty that we never thought possible," said Snape. "The improvements have been so clear and tangible that I have never looked back."



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