1-800-Pack-Rat Gains Visibility and Consolidation Across Locations

1-800-PACK-RAT
The simplest way to store or move your stuff.

Company Profile

Client:
1-800-Pack-Rat

Industry:
Transportation & Warehousing

Profile:
1-800-Pack-Rat is a portable storage and moving company

Web Site:
www.1800packrat.com

Size:
63 employees

Years in Business:
Established in 2004

Corporate HQ:
Bethesda, MD

Locations:
80 stores throughout the U.S. and an operations facility in Wake Forest, NC

Microsoft Dynamics GP Solution:
Financial and Distribution Series for 18 users

BUSINESS READY SOLUTIONS, LLC

The Challenge

Since it began in 2004, 1-800-Pack-Rat has become the fastest growing portable storage and moving company in the U.S. by providing simple, flexible solutions for moving, buying and selling a home, downsizing and renovating. 1-800-Pack-Rat plans to increase its number of nationwide stores from 80 to over 100 by 2010.

1-800-Pack-Rat first began using QuickBooks for its accounting software, but the company had to use four different QuickBooks databases to run the corporate office and its first three stores. They relied on Excel for reporting and had limited views of the company as a whole.

Controller Jane Gilpin says it was difficult to differentiate and track the activities of each of the three stores, and tracking liabilities between the stores and the parent became very cumbersome.

In addition, 1-800-Pack-Rat's internal system for scheduling storage units, supplies, and point of sale generated financial data did not integrate with QuickBooks. Because the company was planning an aggressive rate of growth in its first three years, it needed the ability to incorporate new franchises into the internal scheduling system in order for them to start business with an established accounting system as part of the franchise agreement and retain visibility over the financial performance of the consolidated company.

1-800-Pack-Rat needed a business management system that could provide intra-company functionality, complete visibility across all locations, consolidate company-wide accounting, integrate with existing IT applications, and generate different financial statements quickly and easily.

The Solution

1-800-Pack-Rat evaluated different business management systems and selected Microsoft Dynamics GP, a complete and scalable business management solution with robust financial and operational functionality. Microsoft Dynamics GP had the best potential to give 1-800-Pack-Rat visibility and conformity of accounting and business processes across all locations.

While it evaluated business software, 1-800-Pack-Rat also assessed solution providers. Although they spoke with national Microsoft Partners, 1-800-Pack-Rat chose to work with a local firm, Business Ready Solutions, to implement and support their new system. Business Ready Solutions' local support presence, extensive knowledge of Microsoft Dynamics GP, and deep accounting and business process expertise were deciding factors for 1-800-Pack-Rat.

Business Ready Solutions achieved a seamless implementation of Microsoft Dynamics GP for 1-800-Pack-Rat through its four-phased approach of Project Planning, Functional Design, Pilot Program, and Implementation.

Included in the installation were Microsoft FRx, Supply Chain Management, SmartList and SmartList Builder. These components gave 1-800-Pack-Rat ease of sophisticated reporting, greater control of inventory, the ability to link to and customize Microsoft Dynamics GP data from Microsoft Office applications, and better integration of sales and purchase order processing with other systems.

After implementation, Business Ready Solutions was available for post-implementation support when its team assisted 1-800-Pack-Rat's Microsoft Dynamics GP users through the first 90 days after the implementation date. A closing meeting took place to determine required levels of additional service needed for 1-800-Pack-Rat to optimize Microsoft Dynamics GP and its business processes. In addition, as new franchises came on board, Business Ready Solutions developed and executed training programs for the new franchise users to prepare them for using Microsoft Dynamics GP.

The Results

Ms. Gilpin is quick to point out major results for 1-800-Pack-Rat from working with Business Ready Solutions and Microsoft Dynamics GP:

- Extensive financial statements for multiple locations prepared quickly and easily with Microsoft FRx
- Consolidation of company-wide accounting processes enabling greater insight into every location
- Detail-rich reporting that allows better intra-company visibility
- Business management software that is easy for franchisees to implement and use
- Full transparency over internal billing/payables between companies or franchisees and the parent

Every new 1-800-Pack-Rat franchise is given a sub-license for Microsoft Dynamics GP and the company's internal scheduling system. This gives the corporate office tremendous visibility into how each franchise is doing, and enables comparison of financial performance between similar sized stores even though each store has different ownership.

"Our employees are more productive and efficient, especially with invoicing and accounts receivable," says Ms. Gilpin. "We can track and monitor invoices and credits much better. There are so many good functions in Dynamics GP like SmartList, which lets us go in and pull information quickly even if we just want to look at one account or one journal entry. I think Microsoft Dynamics GP is easy to use and relatively intuitive concerning retrieval of information from the system."

In addition to extensive reporting with Microsoft FRx, another huge benefit has been 1-800-Pack-Rat's use of the Distribution Series of Microsoft Dynamics GP for its operations facility to quickly generate purchases orders from existing sales orders.

Says Ms. Gilpin, "Whenever we have a question or need to get something fixed, we turn to Business Ready Solutions for an answer. The company is very responsive, and when I send an email or leave a voicemail someone always gets right back to me. We really value our long-standing relationship with them."