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SYSTIME Helps Windsor Foods Upgrade to Unify ERP System and Prepare for Expansion

October 2011

The frozen food industry is driven by constantly growing consumer demand for high quality, convenient, safe, value-priced, and great tasting food. To succeed, manufacturers need to constantly find ways to meet customer demands while staying competitive by boosting manufacturing efficiencies and reducing expenses.

Statistics from IBISWorld reveal that the global frozen food market was estimated to be \$218.41 billion in 2010 and is predicted to reach \$261.50 billion in 2015 largely driven by consumer demand for convenience. Further, research by the U.S. Department of Commerce finds that as the U.S. population becomes more ethnically diverse, demand is increasing for ethnic food products.

Windsor Foods is successfully harnessing these trends. The privately held company based in Houston, Texas has grown to 11 plants across seven states, adding to its operations serving commercial restaurants, foodservice operations, and retail customers. To help approximately 3,000 employees extend the company's dominance in the Asian, Mexican and Italian frozen food segments, management decided to unify various legacy manufacturing operations to streamline processes and expand the company's competitive advantage. Windsor Foods looked to Oracle Specialized partner, SYSTIME to deliver a centralized JD Edwards EnterpriseOne 9.0 upgrade.

Stephan Henze, VP of IT at Windsor Foods, observes that automation plays a large role in fueling growth in the frozen food industry. "I see a lot of requests for more applications, getting away from the old paper-based way of handling things," he says. "The penetration of technology across the enterprise is really accelerating."

Several years ago, Windsor Foods IT division consolidated disparate financial, sales, and distribution processes into one integrated JD Edwards Enterprise One system. Then, management began considering consolidating manufacturing systems as well, after a significant process optimization effort (which required visiting every plant location to analyze current processes). "Each plant in each location does certain things really well," says Henze. "We want to find the best-in-class in each particular area. It's not an ERP initiative. It's a best-in- process (BIP) initiative."

To reach its ultimate BIP goals, however, Windsor Foods leadership needed help to take some interim steps. Enter SYSTIME, which, with 30 offices around the world, has one of the largest global JD Edwards practices. The company has achieved Oracle Specialized status in JD Edwards EnterpriseOne, and it has years of experience helping customers reach their strategic goals.

According to Harris Farooq, Vice President, Client Services at SYSTIME, Windsor Foods decided to begin with upgrading financial, sales and distribution processes to the latest release of JD Edwards EnterpriseOne to take advantage of the release's robustness, as well as new features. "We did a technical upgrade to make sure to take advantage of specific features in this new release," he says. "Now, Windsor Foods is in a great position to start implementing and rolling out manufacturing modules to their 11 plants."

Farooq further reports that JD Edwards EnterpriseOne 9.0 offers key improvements for Windsor Foods, giving them opportunities in areas such as basket pricing and forecasting. Such improvements will be critical when implementing manufacturing functionalities.

SYSTIME completed the project in just 22 weeks—finishing on-time and on-budget. Windsor Foods initially selected SYSTIME because it had the latitude and the size to manage the project, and the company is very pleased with SYSTIME's results. "It worked out really well," says Henze. "The individuals we worked with were tremendously responsive. We felt really good about their skills."

Now, Windsor Foods is looking ahead to begin migrating its manufacturing operations to JD Edwards to make its BIP initiative a reality. "When we first implemented JD Edwards years ago, we weren't familiar with JDE functionality, but now we have a better understanding of the application and we've become more efficient," says Henze. "Going through the upgrade process was very helpful to be ready for the next roll-out."