

CUSTOMER SUCCESS



Sage MAS 200 Fits Oregon Chai to a Tea

High in a village in the Himalayas, college student Heather Howitt tried her first taste of chai, the sweet and spicy tea drink of the region. Upon returning to Portland, she began experimenting with recipes, settling on a unique formulation she called Oregon Chai. Her mother urged her to brew it into a business.

Soon Oregon Chai was such a success that they had to rent another kitchen. Next, they turned to Oregon State University's food service experts for advice on scaling home recipes for mass production.

Today Oregon Chai and four other fine blends are available throughout the U.S. and Canada, Guam and Indonesia. Sales have grown to almost \$11 million a year, and are still growing at a staggering 60 percent.

Old System Creates Bottleneck

During its first few years, Oregon Chai made do with an off-the-shelf bookkeeping package. However, as business took off, the single-user product proved too limiting. It couldn't deliver the reports required by banks and finance groups, much less keep up with the company's growth. The system created bottlenecks; it was time for a change.

Taking Oregon Chai to Next Level

Kurt L. Peterson, Oregon Chai's vice president of finance, was familiar with Sage MAS 200 ERP from his public accounting experience. He encouraged the switch to Sage MAS 200 with a multi-user platform, so everyone would be able to access sales and accounting information from their desktop.

"We converted to Sage MAS 200 without so much as a hiccup while getting our product out the door," explains Peterson. "Suddenly, all the data we needed to track sales was right there at our fingertips. Plus, we could completely automate our manufacturing, ordering, and invoicing records. My only wish is that we'd changed over to Sage MAS 200 sooner."

Customer:

Oregon Chai

Industry:

Beverage manufacturer/distributor

Location

Portland, Oregon

Number of Locations: Five, with 14 virtual warehouses across the U.S.

Number of Employees: 18

System:

Sage MAS 200

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Bank Reconciliation
- Bill of Materials
- Custom Office
- Crystal Reports®
- e-Business Manager
- General Ledger
- Inventory Management
- Purchase Order
- Sales Order

CHALLENGE

Upgrade to an automated system with a multi-user platform that can enhance operational efficiency and service in manufacturing and distribution, and handle huge swells in volume.

SOLUTION

Sage MAS 200 financial, distribution, and e-commerce modules.

RESULTS

Fast, flawless conversion; complete automation and seamless data flow; streamlined transactions and boosted efficiency; increased customer satisfaction and reduced overhead; linked company with remote access.

The company now relies on Sage MAS 200 to manage everything from manufacturing and distribution to invoicing. Using Custom Office, staff members can work directly within Sage MAS 200 to set up new accounts, automatically generate welcome and thank you letters, determine credit limits, explain terms of sale, and perform other tasks in Microsoft Word.

Peterson is grateful for the ease of use and speed of the system, "Sage MAS 200 is so fast it practically screams."

The next realm of expansion for Oregon Chai was into the Internet. They added the Sage MAS 200 e-Business Manager module, which Peterson reports was very easy to set up and has substantially streamlined transactions. Large accounts can now place orders and check status electronically. In addition, the built-in WAN capabilities of Sage MAS 200 allow the entire company to be linked. Employees can access the data they need from remote locations.

"We've really been strapped for staff members as we grow," Peterson points out. "We had to use technology to our maximum advantage to create and maintain an appropriate presence in the marketplace. MAS 200 with e-Business Manager played a major role in allowing us to do this."

Peterson has been pleased with the speedy implementation of e-commerce through the e-Business Manager module. In just four weeks, customers were eagerly placing orders, checking prices, and confirming shipments on their customer-specific screens.

Oregon Chai's online presence was the first exposure many of their customers had to e-commerce. In fact, two key accounts used Oregon Chai's innovation as an excuse to get their own offices wired. "Many companies that are a lot bigger than we are turned out to be way behind us on the technology curve," says Peterson. "To our amazement, we've become part of the leading crest of the wave."

"I can't speak highly enough about Sage MAS 200. My only wish is that we'd changed over to it sooner."

Carla A. Powell, a co-founder of Oregon Chai who started the accounting department, emphasizes how important it is that Sage MAS 200 with e-Business Manager can grow with the company. "In just a few years we have expanded from one manufacturing site to five and from one warehouse to 14. Our sales orders last month totaled more than we had for the entire year of 1996. I never dreamed we could handle such volume. But we have—and I'm confident that Sage MAS 200 and e-Business Manager will be able to keep pace with us in the future."

ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software supports the needs, challenges, and dreams of more than 2.7 million small and mid-sized business customers in North America through easy-to-use, scalable, and customizable software and services. Our products help manage a complete range of business functions including: accounting, operations, customer relationship management, human resources, time tracking, merchant services and the specialized needs of the construction, distribution, healthcare, manufacturing, nonprofit, and real estate industries.

