GMT EUROPE

Every industry changes over time. What's not that common, though, is for an industry to shift into a completely different business model in the space of just a few years. This is the unusual challenge that GMT Europe found itself facing recently. The industry once known as "Waste Management" became the "Raw Materials Trading" field almost overnight. In the new "Circular Economy," many waste collection companies in Europe are now positioning themselves as raw material collection companies with an ethos of "Waste no more!" or "Zero Waste". As a provider of specialized enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions for waste management firms, GMT had to adapt quickly. With its core products built on the Progress® OpenEdge® platform, GMT found that it could innovate and extend its solution at a pace that kept its clients competitive.

STAYING AGILE TO HELP CLIENTS COMPETE

GMT Europe has been serving the ERP needs of the worldwide waste management industry, focusing on the European region, for over two decades. The Netherlands-based company has been valued by long-term clients for its deep knowledge of the waste management industry and the specialized requirements that waste management creates for ERP. GMT clients include SITA France, SITA Poland, Trashco Dubai, SITA UK, Selikor (Curacao), Dublin City Council, and Van Gansewinkel. GMT's CLEAR suite enables them to deal with the complex logistics, route optimization and business transactions whilst remaining compliant under shifting environmental regulations.

One major example of this is the trend toward the "Polluter Pays" Principle called "Differentiele Tarieven or DIFTAR" in the Netherlands and "principe du pollueur payeur" in France, where a household or company pays based on the amount of waste they produce. In France, for instance, which is instituting many "principe du pollueur payeur" regulations, the waste management entity needs to be able to work closely with its clients to determine an optimal approach to collection. CLEAR makes this possible, with a clear and transparent interface that enables real time awareness of collection and payments. GMT has been able to develop CLEAR and other comparable iterations of its core products, at a pace that matches the evolution of the waste management industry. Also GMT's route optimization solutions have expanded. Besides advising the most safest route, real time information today also ensures a garbage truck avoids school areas during playtime.

The rate of change is accelerating dramatically, however, putting more pressure on GMT to keep its clients relevant and competitive. The industry is shifting into a business where principals compete to source and sell raw materials. For instance, over a period of about three years, paper recycling has essentially become a sophisticated export business where waste management contractors handle the deal making and logistics

CHALLENGE

Keep up the pace of ERP innovation in a rapidly changing waste management industry.

SOLUTION

The innovative GMT CLEAR Suite is based on the flexible and reliable Progress® OpenEdge® development platform.

BENEFIT

Increased client competitiveness through innovative new ERP modules offered via mobile and cloud.

involved in shipping waste paper to Chinese manufacturers. Peute, an international paper recycling company, is an example of this trend. The company grew its business, processing up to 1,300,000 metric tons of old paper and plastic in 2011.

Because of the rapid growth of trading activities Peute looked to swop their application. GMT quickly enhanced CLEAR with a trade and customs transit module to meet Peute's business needs. Peute is now a GMT customer.

"Where customers used to be satisfied with waiting half a year for something new," said Mark Abbas, Managing Director of GMT. "Now, they want something tomorrow. And we provide that, with a piece of technology where we can be flexible using Progress technology to change whenever a customer or prospect changes its processes, or changes its business needs."

WRINGING INEFFICIENCY OUT OF THE WASTE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

GMT also collaborates closely with clients for solutions that drive operational efficiency. They leveraged the OpenEdge platform to roll out a string of add-on offerings, such as CLEARWeigh, a CLEAR module for obtaining and registering weight data on local weighbridges and scales. CLEARWeigh allows for faster turnaround times in both manual and automatic weighing processes. And, GMT customers are increasingly looking for visibility into business processes and workflows. For example, a construction company that wanted waste containers removed would traditionally have phoned or faxed the pickup order. This manual process on the customer side was mirrored by a manual order creation process at the waste management contractor. The CLEAR internet application is a process-oriented solution to this problem that enables the waste collector to automate the entire request process from web portal, planning to the communication to the on board computer. GMT is going further, though, with new development under way to embed OpenEdge-based business process management (BPM) functionality into its solution frameworks.

GMT's waste management APP for mobile devices also allows local governments to take advantage of the CLEAR suite. For example, in several European cities civilians can report abandoned waste by taking a picture of it and request for pickup using their Smartphone. These requests directly go into and are processed in the waste management application. Private company Van Gansewinkel had it personalized into MyContainerAPP to which their customers have access and can log requests for container pick up.

PROGRESS: A STABLE PLATFORM AS THE FOUNDATION OF A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

GMT and Progress Software have forged a strong partnership for success based on the capabilities of the Progress OpenEdge platform. GMT's large installed base demands an exceptionally robust platform. According to GMT's Abbas, Progress has supported this requirement with virtually no serious outages in a dozen years: "With 8,000 users online, at clients that range from five users up to 2,000 concurrent, we depend absolutely on the reliability and stability of the back end of the database. We have loads of devices connected, and the platform never goes down. It's always up and running." Abbas further noted that GMT had reviewed other cloud-based platforms but concluded that no other could handle the number of transactions that the company is processing at any given moment for its customer base. "And, OpenEdge can run any database – all at a low total cost of ownership."

The partnership between GMT and Progress has thrived as the two companies continue to challenge each other. "Progress helps us to compete. They're working as a partner together with us," said Abbas. "With their innovations, they challenge us as an ISV to use new

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✳ PROGRESS

technologies to be more competitive in the markets towards our customers. In turn, we can then challenge our customers with concepts like BPM and cloud integration."

MEASURABLE RESULTS FOR A QUANTITATIVE INDUSTRY

The waste management industry is famously quantitative, tracking success in terms of service times, vehicle utilization and revenue per ton of waste. For GMT, any improvement it can deliver to its clients' businesses must be immediately correlated with a quantifiable operational or financial gain. "With our IT solutions we enable our clients to grow their businesses, typically by a minimum of 20%," said Abbas. "They accomplish this through improved operational excellence, legal compliance and high quality services without the risks of long lasting and costly IT implementation projects."

ONWARD TO INTERNATIONALIZATION

Working with Progress, GMT is pioneering a new internationalization strategy. With people and offices in the Netherlands, France, Spain and UK they expect to sell more into the European market. GMT is now working with SITA on the rollout of a unique ERP solution in Europe. However, this is merely step one for a major project that will include connecting operations in multiple countries. Mr. Abbas concludes, "If somebody were to ask me what development platform to use, I would definitely recommend Progress. It is easy to develop in OpenEdge. The product is very reliable, very efficient, and you can have really good results in short time frames."He continued, "We're excited about our ability to offer our software as a cloud-based service and our ability in the future to leverage mobility and emerging technologies to continuously improve our product. We're evaluating adding smartphone access to our app and considering other major enhancements and we know that the OpenEdge development platform is flexible and extensible enough to allow us to rapidly add new functionality to address new market opportunities."

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ABOUT GMT EUROPE

POWERED BY PROGRESS

GMT Europe, a provider of specialized ERP solutions to the waste management industry, found itself challenged by a very rapid rate of change in its clients' businesses. As the industry evolved from one of haulage and landfill to what is essentially a global commodity trading business, GMT had to innovate quickly to help its clients stay competitive. Aiding them in this process was a two-decade relationship with Progress Software and the foundation of the Progress® OpenEdge® Platform. GMT has been able to leverage OpenEdge to extend its ERP platform in numerous, innovative directions while confidently relying on the platform's celebrated stability. The results include the introduction of new ERP modules for mobile transactions, cloud-based delivery, among many client-facing enhancements.

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