



Overview

Fast Facts

Customer: JJ Food Service Ltd.

Web site: www.jjfoodservice.com

Partner: eBECS

Country: U.K.

Industry: Distribution, Transportation & Logistics

Customer Profile:

Established in 1989, JJ Food Service is now one of the leading independent food distribution companies in the U.K. It delivers 500 tonnes of food and food related products per day to 15,000 customers.

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Mushtaque Ahmed, Senior Business Operations Manager, JJ Food Service

JJ Food Service Retains Competitive Edge with Streamlined Operations

For most wholesale and distribution companies, making sure customers get the right product to the correct location on time whilst maintaining a profitable business is the ultimate goal, achieved by ensuring the smooth and efficient running of all business processes from taking customer orders to delivery is paramount to the success of business. **JJ Food Service is constantly striving to fulfil the demands of its customers as efficiently as possible, while controlling costs.** Disparate systems simply can’t support the level of business operations that are needed without wasting time, effort and money, and impacting customer service.

Now Mushtaque Ahmed does not receive customer complaints. Happy customers do not call the Senior Business Operations Manager at JJ Food Service. Instead, they continue to call its call centre with more orders for its products. With customer orders rising at a rate of 50 per cent over the last six months, JJ Food Service is able to look back at the changes it has made in the running of its business and see how far it has progressed.

Established in 1989, JJ Food Service is now one of the leading independent food distribution companies in the U.K. It delivers 500 tonnes of food and food related products per day to 15,000 customers, with a fleet of 150 vehicles from two distribution centres.

Ahmed explains its challenges: “We’re a very dynamic company, operating in a market where there is hardly any value-add for a business. **Customer service, order-taking, and delivery are of paramount importance to the**

success of our operation. We can’t afford downtime.”

With more than 2,000 orders a day from 3,500 customer calls, each telesales operator must take only two minutes to process each order. A reliable and robust system is required to cope with this level of transactions.

Ahmed continues: “**Our existing Pegasus accounting system was 15 years old and wasn’t flexible enough to integrate with our call centre process or warehouse systems.** This meant transferring calls to suitable agents wasn’t as efficient as it could have been. The telesales team then had only limited access to business information, such as stock availability or customer history. The system was not able to meet basic operational requirements such as providing accurate pricing and customer information. We would take a customer order, only to find we had oversold and have to ring the customer back to tell them we had to drop items from their order. This didn’t make for happy customers.”

JJ Food Service recognised that in order to maintain its competitive edge and maintain and expand its profitability whilst expanding its business operation, it needed a single view of its business across all its sites. It was essentially operating the different aspects of its business separately, rather than gaining from having one integrated picture. It needed a software solution that could link call centre management to warehouse and stock management and delivery, as well as all background information on its customers.



“Microsoft Certified partner eBECS were willing to work with us to co-develop a solution specifically for our call centre users, based on the Microsoft Dynamics AX technology”.

Rif Kiamil, IT Manager, JJ Food Service

A Clear Vision of the Future

JJ Food Service recognised that it needed to make a strategic change to its business application technology infrastructure that supports its business, this was a big decision and JJ Food Service conducted intensive analysis of its options in order to secure its investment and how to select the most appropriate business solutions that will support its objectives for the next five years.

Ahmed explains why this was so important: **“We wanted to maintain our leading position in the market by gaining competitive advantage.** There were several new areas we wanted to plan ahead for, such as online ordering, handling multiple storage sites, home working to offer flexibility for workers, and mobile technology for our delivery team. Of course we had to address our existing challenges as well, increasing efficiencies without losing focus on customer service.”

Ahmed continues: **“We wanted to achieve these goals while managing increased customer throughput. Naturally, we didn’t want to increase headcount, in order to maintain costs.** Using a leading-edge technology solution from a company that would be around for the next 10 years and that had a vision for the future was the only answer.”

Finding the Perfect Fit

Acknowledging these requirements, and after extensive evaluation of the market, JJ Food Service decided to introduce either SAP or Microsoft® Dynamics™ AX. JJ Food Service concluded that SAP wasn’t suitable for the future developments it had planned.

Microsoft Dynamics AX was the right fit for JJ Food Service. The total cost of ownership with SAP was much greater than with the Microsoft solution. **Microsoft Dynamics AX also offered greater flexibility.** It adapts to the way

they do business rather than forcing them to fit with the software solution. It is therefore easier for them to take control of their business and integrate the Microsoft solution with what they want to achieve.

Microsoft Gold Certified Partner eBECS was chosen to provide the total business solution including a Call Centre and telesales management solution that is, specific to the distribution industry, which is based on the Microsoft Dynamics AX platform.

Rif Kiamil, the IT Manager at JJ Food Service says “Microsoft Certified partner eBECS were willing to work with us to codevelop a solution specifically for our call centre users, based on the Microsoft Dynamics AX technology. The combination of eBECS expertise in understanding our business with the long term investment and technology vision of Microsoft, gave us the confidence to change our current business management system and transform the running of our business.”

Familiar Solution Helps Empower Telesales Operators, with Immediate Impact on Customer Service eBECS worked closely with JJ Food Service to implement the total solution, including its IP phone system with the order entry system, which took place on time and to budget. One of the key challenges for eBECS was to ensure the “speed and ease of use” of the ordering system for the call centre and telesales staff, by present accurate and relevant information at the right time and help them maximise customer satisfaction and revenue by offering products relevant to the customer needs and all this without having problems navigating through a myriad of screens or applications. Microsoft Dynamics AX has a similar interface to Microsoft® Office, which means people are able to



“When the telesales agent takes the call, Microsoft Dynamics AX automatically shows the relevant customer information directly on its screen.”

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use the solution more quickly and easily. Thorough training meant that on its first day of operations, the transition to the new system went smoothly and users were able to work more effectively, offering an immediate improvement to the service that JJ Food Service could offer its customers, without disruption.

Now, when customers call in, the phone system automatically recognises the number and knows which language the customer speaks so they can be greeted in their language. The phone system then transfers the call to the right telesales agent based on skills and availability. Overall, the customer experiences better and faster customer service.

Ahmed says: **“When the telesales agent takes the call, Microsoft Dynamics AX automatically shows the relevant customer information directly on its screen.** We can see what they usually buy, and recommend products and promotions based on the customer profile.”

Rather than just take orders, telesales agents can influence the customer and help increase profitability of each sale, looking at the most profitable lines available and check on key selling points.

Customers simply want to know if they can have the products that they want delivered at the right time. **Using a series of rules within Microsoft Dynamics AX, the telesales agent is able to tell the customer in real time about potential delivery dates based on post code information and truck routing.** The direct integration with warehousing means that they can also find out if products are in stock and what quantities are available between distribution sites and product deliveries expected from suppliers. JJ Food Service calls this its ‘Available to Promise’ check, helping to keep the customer informed at all times.

Ahmed says: “The new solution is helping to ensure we get the telesales agent in control of the customer situation. We have been able to improve order accuracy by almost fifteen per cent, resulting in greater customer satisfaction. We can refine our service so we are prompted to remind customers of products they wanted last time but which were unavailable. We can also get feedback about our products, such as if they are too expensive or the quality was inferior, thus impacting future orders.”

Immediate Time Savings and Productivity Gains

Organisations are always looking for efficiencies and the more tangible the better. For JJ Food Service, the new solution has delivered highly measurable benefits.

Ahmed says: “Now that our phones are routed automatically to the right telesales agent, we save 20 hours of customer waiting time every day, and twenty hours of agents waiting time, simply in the process of transferring calls. This equates to a saving of 2.8 agents a day or £40,000 a year.”

Faster order entry, combined with the speed and accuracy of information that is available to telesales operators, means they can process more orders than ever before. Within six months, the combination of the new solution and effective promotions has increased orders by 50% to 2,200 a day, without increasing staff.

Employees Freed from Manual Tasks while Boosting Distribution Productivity

Distribution is another area that has benefited from a single, integrated solution. JJ Food Service distribution centre is now capable of handling an additional £31 million worth of business every year, while using the same resources.

“We’ve seen how easy it is for end-users to use Microsoft Dynamics AX and take advantage of new ways of working. We won’t hesitate to extend these benefits to new people in the company.”

Mushtaque Ahmed, Senior Business Operations Manager, JJ Food Service

Before, staff had to manually process each invoice into an order, after which the warehouse could pick and then distribute the order. This meant working until 22:00 every night before the loading process could even begin. The new solution has completely automated this operation by streamlining and integrating processes across the supply chain, which takes place between 17:00 and 20:00 every evening. This means that JJ Food Service can begin loading its trucks two hours earlier every day because it has the information faster. These two extra hours equate to 40 extra truck loads of capacity. On average, its trucks each take out £3,000 worth of goods, thus making its distribution centre capable of handling the additional business.

Kiamil says: **“As a high performing system, the Microsoft Dynamics AX solution is designed to handle this amount of transactions using the same resources.** Handling the process from end-to-end takes away the difficulties of the manual system for our employees. It boosts our business productivity whilst supporting our business growth at no extra cost to the business.”

New Levels of Clarity Enhances Business Decision Making

The single integrated solution has touched all areas of the business. With its ability to consolidate business information in one place and provide a real-time view of operations from buying, finance, warehousing, and stocking JJ Food Service can track all activity and see the status of business immediately. Access to such business-critical data has helped boost business decision making and deliver a high degree of optimisation.

For Ahmed, keeping track of all customer activity used to be difficult and demanding. Before, it was a long and manually intensive process to keep records up-to-date with invoices, credit

notes and payments. **The new route-based payment system has cut down processing time by almost 25 per cent.** As a result, records are fully updated within the same day of the delivery of goods, as opposed to the next day in the previous system.

Ahmed says: “We have a real-time view of invoices, account balances, and can cope with an increase in volume. If a customer calls up, we can drill down into small details about their account with confidence that the information is accurate and up-to-date. We can quickly get to the root of any query and get it resolved.”

Similarly, reporting has been transformed, which has enhanced the ability to make business decision making with greater confidence. Reports can now be delivered when needed from the single up-to-date system and JJ Food Service has an accurate picture of its business activities at all times.

At the same time, **the comprehensive built-in security capabilities in the Microsoft Dynamics AX solution ensures all information is effectively handled and each area of the business has the correct controls in place according to hierarchy.** Used in conjunction with Microsoft® SQL Server™ as the system’s 64-bit database, JJ Food Services has tighter control over system performance, security and monitoring.

Kiamil explains: “We are in control of our business information. If we’re running our business on these systems, we need to know we won’t have any reliability issues. And we don’t just run and we get greater insight into our business every day. We just don’t have to worry about it.”



Ahmed is passionate about the benefits of technology that has streamlined its wholesale and distribution business into an efficient, smooth-running operation that is ready for future expansion.

“We’ve seen how easy it is for end-users to use Microsoft Dynamics AX and take advantage of new ways of working. We won’t hesitate to extend these benefits to new people in the company.”

JJ Food Service is already expanding its home-working capabilities, with users able to easily access the solution from home using a standard virtual private network (VPN). This greater flexibility is a significant benefit for users and offers an inexpensive way of doing business. The next area that JJ Food Service is considering is using hand-held mobile technology with global positioning systems (GPSs) for its delivery team, to provide optimum routes for deliveries and collections, as well as track the progress of deliveries.

Ahmed concludes: “We want to bring the benefits of this system to all employees of JJ Food Service. Not only will this reduce paperwork further, it will make us more profitable and the business less labour intensive. We couldn’t have achieved this without Microsoft Dynamics AX.”

For more information

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Technology to Deliver Power to the People

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