DROMONE Case Study

Aspera and Epicor challenge the way Dromone Engineering does business, making it better, more efficient and strategic

At A Glance

Company Facts

- Founded: 1978
- Industry: Design and manufacture of safety critical agricultural tractor pick up hitch and construction quick coupler technology
- HQ: Meath, Ireland
- Website: www.dromone.com

Challenge

- Replace outdated legacy ERP system with a future-ready, fit for purpose, alternative.
- Secure an ERP system with strong financial and manufacturing ERP capabilities to support its engineering production environment.
- Identify an ERP implementation partner with local knowledge and Material Requirements Planning expertise.
- Prioritize real-time data access to improve efficiency, collaboration and overall responsiveness.

Solution

Epicor® ERP Version 10

Partner

Aspera Solutions

Lessons Learnt

- Regular communications align vision, generate 'buy-in' and ease transitions.
- If third party software is involved; enforce direct communication between the technical teams of all parties.
- To negate any time delay's between initial training and go-live, ensure that staff continue to use software in Pilot and Demo Environments, to sustain the training that has been received.
- Take advantage of the wealth of Epicor support mechanisms that are readily available.

Benefits

- DROMONE continues to find new ways to customise Epicor that better suit its business and is identifying new ways of doing business that it hadn't thought of.
- Purchasing functionality has been revolutionised, moving the company from an onerous manual system to one that is automated and intuitive.
- Enhanced operational visibility arms senior management with the real-time information they need to make decisions and drive the business forward.
- Day to day functionality has improved, making everyone's life easier!

Customer Story

Nestled within the rolling hills of County Meath in Ireland, DROMONE is a powerhouse of continuous improvement and innovation.

Established in 1978, the company is an industry leading designer of agriculture tractor pick-up hitch technology and construction excavator quick coupler technology, employing over 140 people across a range of design, manufacturer, operations and marketing functions.

When DROMONE identified that its legacy ERP system was naturally coming to life cycle end with reduced support, it set about sourcing an alternative solution that lead them to Epicor ERP software delivered via partner, Aspera Solutions.

Following a comprehensive decision-making process, it was Aspera's capacity to deliver Epicor Material Requirements Planning (MRP) for production, customisation and local customer service desk, that gave it the edge over competitors.

Speaking on the project, Philip Gillic, Process Engineer Manager / Project Manager with DROMONE, commented, *"We are* delighted. *Right from the very start, Aspera's solutions' knowledge was excellent! They sold it for Epicor and continue to add significant value every time they step on the premises!".*

It all Started with Finance!

The need for change was first identified by DROMONE's finance department, who kick started a comprehensive process of intelligence gathering around internal requirements and shortlisted eight potential solution providers.

Speaking on the process, Philip said, "*We put a huge amount of work into understanding DROMONE's current and future needs and I've no doubt that the time we took to benchmark, complete site visits and make reference calls, was the key to our choosing the right ERP provider*."

To help make sense of all the data and requirements, DROMONE used the *Kepner-Tregoe Decision Analysis* Matrix to evaluate solution providers, pitching Aspera Solutions against competitors within categories such as solution capacity, customer support, value and project plan.

 "*In the end it was Aspera's capacity to deliver Material Requirements Planning (MRP) for production, links to the shop floor, customisation capabilities, matched project timelines and a local customer service desk, that gave it the edge over competitors*."

Go Live or Go Home!

The project included three phases.

Phase 1:   Training

Phase 2:   Business Process Review and Design: Included Finance, Sales, Purchasing, Inventory, Engineering, Manufacturing, Quality, WiCam nesting integration and reporting.

Phase 3:   Implementation

Interestingly, minimal customisations were done prior to go live because DROMONE wanted to adapt on the go. Following a two-week transfer window, the system went live on August 13th 2018.

Thanks to the teamwork and training supplied by Aspera Solutions, DROMONE's go-live "couldn't have gone better", with the company back invoicing immediately with zero down time. In addition,

80% of the company's Highest Volume Product Sales in terms of Bills Of Materials (BOM) & Bills of Operation (BOO) were uploaded within two weeks.

According to Philip, *"Naturally the transition wasn't plain sailing, but on reflection 90% of the issues faced related to the cleanliness and volume of the transition data"*.

Lessons Learnt

So, what are DROMONE's key ERP implementation lessons? Here are Philips top 5:

1. Open communications channels right from the start! Regular meetings between the stakeholders and implementation team helps to align vision, generate 'buy-in' and ease transitions.
2. Cut out the middle 'man'! If you are customising third party software into your implementation, insist that technical personnel meet to thrash out a solution - without involving sales and management layers.
3. Groups meetings in teams (finance, production, purchasing, etc.) so that you can identify and deal with similar issues as they occur.
4. Negate any time delay between initial training and go-live by ensuring that staff continue to use software in Pilot and Demo Environments.
5. Take advantage of all the Epicor support mechanisms that are readily available. From Aspera's support desk to Epicor's official training videos, the Epicor Support Group (EUG) to online ERP forums and EPCIOR clients, there is a wealth of experience available to ease your journey.

Results

Post Go-Live, DROMONE is delighted with the impact Epicor ERP and Aspera is delivering to its business.

Thanks to Aspera's expertise and experience, DROMONE is finding new ways to customise Epicor that better suit its business, and it is identifying new ways of doing business that it hadn't thought of before.

"In the past, we had to mould ourselves to fit the old legacy system, but with Aspera's help we either make Epicor mould to our needs or we learn better ways to do things through Epicor's global experience. As a result, Aspera and Epicor are challenging the way we do business, making us better, more efficient and strategic".

In addition, Epicor has greatly improved purchasing functionality within DROMONE, moving the company from an onerous manual system to one that is automated and cognisant of quality standards for everything from order writing to customer service, on-time delivery and shipping.

Epicor's MRP and Manufacturing Execution System (MES) functionality is another improvement, allowing DROMONE's team leaders to plan & the plan to be followed, without complication or redundant information.

Enhanced operational visibility arms senior management with the real-time information they need to make decisions that drive the business forward and take advantage of opportunities.

Day to day functionality has improved significantly, making everyone's life easier!

Looking to the Future

With goals to further increase operational efficiencies and sales, DROMONE can continue to rely on Aspera Solutions to provide it with the data needed to help forecast and plan for growth. Philip concludes, *"DROMONE has come a long way but we're always moving forward. I'm excited by the opportunities I can see for future projects & know that Aspera Solutions will always strive to deliver an exceptional customer experience."*

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