



AT A GLANCE



Tegel Foods Ltd

INDUSTRY

FMCG

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE

- Integrate disparate operational and back end systems to improve efficiency and information exchange
- Equip IT team to perform future systems integrations without external consultants

SOLUTION

Flow Software middleware

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Synchronisation of stock and other data across operational and business management systems
- Elimination of manual data entry
- Error free data across applications
- Improved business efficiency through automation
- Developed in-house integration capability

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Tegel chooses Flow for rapid systems integration

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WHEN NEW ZEALAND'S PREMIER POULTRY PRODUCER SOUGHT A BETTER WAY TO PERFORM SYSTEMS INTEGRATIONS, IT FOUND THE IDEAL SOLUTION IN FLOW SOFTWARE...

Business systems which don't talk to one another can cause delays, require manual data handling and can limit efficiency. Be that as it may, disparate systems are a fact of life - and integrating them presents opportunities for gains, particularly if those integrations can be achieved with minimal overhead.

That, explains business analyst at Tegel Foods Lee Stewart, is a situation experienced by the agribusiness.

"We wanted to get away from clunky middleware tools which required a high level of expertise for a simple integration between systems; with the nature of business, ongoing integrations are likely for the future, so we wanted something we could train up on and use ourselves. Flow Software is that solution," he relates.

With three major processing facilities, smaller value-added processing plants, feed mills, and breeding and hatching facilities, Tegel employs around 2,100 people and is a market-leading poultry producer, supplying both domestic and international markets.

Situation

Tegel already has integration toolsets in its business, but found these difficult to use, expensive and time consuming for the agile approach to project delivery it is moving towards.

When needing to integrate messages between its agricultural system (MTech) and mill applications for three feed mill sites in Takanini, Christchurch, and New Plymouth, Tegel tested the market for a better solution.

Thanks to the experience of Tegel's Information Systems manager, Flow Software came to the company's attention.

"On engagement with Flow, it looked a perfect fit for the way we wanted to operate. Flow said it could give our internal IT people a tool which is configurable and easy to manage - and we were interested in finding a streamlined, simple and reliable piece of middleware which would enable robust integrations without the need for expensive external consultants," explains Stewart.

Solution

Stewart says the selection of Flow's middleware was proven to be the best solution before it was even put to work. "That's because the training and demonstration which came as part of the deal was very professional. It spoke to the right levels for our people, from those with technical skillsets, across to those on the business side. Flow's people were able to get the points across well, sharing requirements and specifications which made us confident that we could achieve the necessary outcomes ourselves, without having to engage with expensive external integration specialists."

He adds that the use of 'canned examples' which allowed users to experiment with and use Flow's middleware was invaluable, providing practical skills training with the software. "The right people were available to answer questions and walk through various scenarios which showed how we could use the product throughout our business, and not just on the immediate task at hand."



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Results

Flow Software has played a pivotal role in an integration which tracks the receipt of raw materials linked to purchase orders, through production, delivery and finished feed. Stewart says Flow raises alerts if errors occur in transactions or synchronisations; a particularly useful feature, he adds, is its 'soft fail, retry, and hard fail' error handling. This allows the systems to attempt information exchange several times, often leading to a successful outcome which doesn't require manual intervention.

So thorough was the training, continues Stewart, that Tegel's internal teams haven't used the full allocation of support provided as an integral component of the engagement. "Using Flow, we're able to achieve exchanges of data and integrations which were impossible over the last 5 or 6 years. It is second to none," he enthuses.

As a result of the integration, Stewart says information exchange is substantially improved, driving automation of business processes and accelerating the pace of business. "When sending data, we're confident that it is accurate. A lot of what we've sought to do is master data control; thanks to Flow, things that should be controlled centrally, are being controlled centrally now. That has removed some processes, improved others and eliminated a lot of manual work into a single point of data entry."

But perhaps most importantly, adds Stewart, Flow Software means Tegel's IT department now has an ongoing capability to perform other systems integrations as required by the business. "We've enabled our people with Flow. We are able to run with it, which has really exceeded our expectations."

For more information about Flow Integration & EDI Solutions

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