Sage Intacct

Electronics Manufacturer Improves Order Efficiency Nearly 3x with Innovative Use of Sage Intacct, Saves $200,000, and Cuts Days Off Reporting

c3controls

Challenges

c3controls Streamlines Ecommerce with Sage Intacct Platform Services

c3controls has grown over 45 years to be a global leader in engineering and manufacturing electronic controls for industrial systems. Headquartered near Pittsburgh, the company offers more than 15 million configurations of products that include circuit breakers, relays, switches, and indicator lights vital to controlling equipment in manufacturing, oil and gas production, wastewater plants, and other industries. With steady growth over the past five years, c3controls has opened additional manufacturing locations in El Salvador and India to keep pace with rising demand.

A hallmark of c3controls' success has been exceptional customer service and technical support. A focus on personalized and responsive customer service and one-to-one relationships has helped the more than 150-person company compete with larger rivals. c3controls' "customer first" approach is also reflected in initiatives such as same-day shipping, configurable products, payment flexibility, and seamless returns. And now, c3controls is offering customers additional speed and convenience with a revamped B2B ecommerce website that expands capabilities beyond its previous system.

Sage Intacct and its Platform Services offering have played a crucial role in the creation and performance of c3controls' improved ecommerce site, which went live in July 2020. It's an innovative use case that leverages the Sage Intacct API and Platform Services, a toolset to extend Sage Intacct by creating custom objects, pages, and applications. With the core Sage Intacct system handling orders, sales, invoices, returns, and other transactions, the company is dramatically increasing the ecommerce slice of total sales (historically about 10%) while delivering new efficiency and visibility for both customers and the c3controls customer service team.

Solutions

A 'Big Win' in Improved Customer Visibility and Experiences

c3controls initially adopted Sage Intacct for cloud-based financial management in 2015 to replace Oracle NetSuite, with which the company had unsatisfactory experiences and a difficult relationship. Sage Intacct offered exceptional flexibility, reporting, and strong accounting capabilities that c3controls needed. As usage of Sage Intacct expanded over several years, Dylan Harris, c3controls' manager of information systems and technology, began to explore the possibility of utilizing the Sage Intacct open API and Platform Services as foundational components in a modern, lightweight ecommerce site. The new platform would replace an earlier system that required manual data entry, and lacked flexibility and scalability to display customer full order histories and manage the 15 million possible product configurations.

c3controls®

Company Overview

Founded in 1976, c3controls designs and manufactures durable electronic controls that customers use in building equipment critical to a wide range of industrial operations. Learn more at www.c3controls.com.

Executive Summary

Previous Software:

- Oracle NetSuite

Results with Sage Intacct:

- Revamped B2B ecommerce in innovative Sage Intacct use case
- Orchestrating complex processes with Platform Services, API
- Improved customer experiences, accelerated orders 2x–3x
- Saving $200,000 with lean accounting function

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Attending the 2019 Sage Intacct Advantage conference, Harris asked around if other organizations had utilized Platform Services in an ecommerce architecture but found none. With a vision for a revamped website in a JAMstack (JavaScript, APIs, and Markup) model, Harris and his dev team creatively engineered a high-performance site that connects Sage Intacct and an open-source Vue/Nuxt ecommerce platform hosted on Netlify. "Sage Intacct enabled us to build out this custom ecommerce platform that only needs the data in Sage Intacct — there are very few other pieces that it relies on," Harris said. "Authentication is through our Netlify host, but everything else ecommerce related goes straight into or is pulled from Sage Intacct. It relies almost entirely on the Sage Intacct API and Platform Services."

Harris's team has made extensive use of Custom Objects, Custom Fields, Smart Rules, and Smart Events capabilities in Platform Services. For example, a custom object created for each web user ties to various customer data fields in Sage Intacct. The result is that customers have new visibility into their full history of orders and invoices, whether placed via the web, phone, or email (compared to only web orders in the past). Both customer and inventory data are held in Sage Intacct, as are price lists that may be customized to certain customers. "We have a lot of special pricing agreements with select customers, and we can show them real-time pricing across all those SKUs on the web," Harris said. "It's lightweight, high performance, and works really well. It's been a big win for us as a development team."

Results

Up to 3x Faster Order Processing and a $200,000 Savings

c3controls also relies on Sage Intacct for order entry automation, speeding processing times by 2x to 3x by eliminating manual data entry, offering new bulk and recurring orders, and supporting the company's same-day shipping ideal. As ecommerce sales grow, customer service is spending less time on manual phone and email orders. Sage Intacct's API enabled straightforward integration with a MISys manufacturing application, driving daily inventory reconciliations between the systems and downstream fulfillment. API integration also supports customer ability to configure products on the fly with various voltages, amperages, colors, and so forth. As Harris notes, his team built the ecommerce site without an implementation partner or dedicated integration tool, relying instead on the "great documentation" for Platform Services and their own ingenuity.

Apart from the inventive ecommerce site, Sage Intacct has brought new productivity to accounting. Financials are now handled by a three-person accounting team, as c3controls was able to leave unfilled two vacated positions. "I lead a lean group as we have a three-person accounting team now vs. the five-person team we had before, and that's sustainable," said Kate Crisci, accounting manager. "We don't need any additional people at this time because Sage Intacct lets us be productive and efficient." Shifting from a five-person team to a three-person team saves c3controls roughly $200,000 in salary and benefits compared to its previous environment. With efficient accounting, Crisci and team have time to manage inventory data, and ensure accurate data exchange between Sage Intacct and MISys manufacturing.

Crisci also helped create Sage Intacct dashboards for about 20 users, including the CEO and individuals in leadership positions, order entry, and operations. On-demand data with drill-down generates insights into revenue and profitability for informed decisions. "Our CEO knows what sales, cash, accounts receivable, and revenue are at any time," Crisci said. "If something seems off, we can adjust quickly rather than me providing a report at the end of the month." Plus, c3controls has new visibility by replacing a "nightmare" of Excel reporting for demand planning by aggregating Sage Intacct and MISys data in a SQL database. "Again, Sage Intacct API for the win," Harris said. "That report used to take three to five business days. Now it takes five minutes and it's basically real-time data."

> " *Sage Intacct and Platform Services have enabled my team to build amazing systems for the company. The versatility and scalability we have with Sage Intacct are going to allow us to hit our aggressive growth goals over the next 10 years.* "
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> Dylan Harris, Manager of Information Systems and Technology, c3controls

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