

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Ascentron



Exact MAX's Business Systems Review (BSR) sets Ascentron on the right path to improved efficiency and better system utilization.

About Ascentron

Ascentron is a contract manufacturer offering complete electronic product assembly services, including prototypes, full box build and PCB and system test services. They specialize in surface mount and traditional PCB assembly. Located in White City, Oregon, Ascentron's skilled workforce and its state-of-the-art manufacturing capabilities have attracted customers from all across the western United States and beyond.

The company is highly quality focused and has achieved both ISO 9001:2008 and AS9100C certifications. Ascentron's dedication to quality is apparent in everything it does, including assisting customers with design for manufacturability feedback and process suggestions that help improve reliability and reduce costs.

Business Needs

Ascentron, a MAX customer since 2003, recently decided to consider bar code data collection to improve their efficiency and transaction reporting accuracy. As they began planning for the transition to bar codes, knowledge gaps concerning their use of

MAX surfaced. The company quickly realized they needed to fine-tune how they utilize MAX before transitioning to bar code data collection.

Although Ascentron has been using MAX for over ten years, many of the company's employees have not received in-depth classroom training. Newer employees received on the job training from existing employees in each area, and with each transition a little bit of system knowledge may have been lost. In addition, as MAX's capabilities and features changed over the course of ten years, employees and power users sometimes struggled to keep up to date with MAX's current functionalities. As a result, Ascentron started to question whether they were using MAX to its full potential.

After consistently hearing about MAX's Business Systems Review (BSR), a process that is designed to help companies align their use of MAX with their business goals, Ascentron decided to take a closer look. Kevin Nelson, Ascentron's IT Manager commented: "I heard about the MAX BSR over the years, during my travels to Exact's annual user conferences and from talking to our MAX Account





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Manager. It was suggested that it may be a good time to invest in the BSR, given our possible move to bar code data collection, so we decided to give it a shot to make sure we were prepared.”

With the potential business process changes that Ascentron would face as a result of implementing bar code data collection, the time seemed right for the Business Systems Review.

Business Solutions

Ascentron contacted MAX and arranged for a Business Systems Review with one of MAX’s consultants. The process involved some preliminary work, but centered around a two day, on-site visit at Ascentron’s manufacturing facility in Oregon. During the on-site visit, the MAX consultant met with Ascentron’s key department managers and a few hands-on managers from production control and the stockroom. In order for the MAX consultant to get an accurate picture of how MAX was being used by Ascentron, the company ensured that the power users from each department were well represented during the meetings.

Following the on-site visit, Ascentron was provided with an extensive report that highlighted areas in which the company was successfully using MAX, in addition to areas that needed improvement. The report included a defined plan to improve each area, along with methods for increasing their system utilization and recommendations for future activities and time frames.

“The findings report that was provided to us after the on-site visit was well laid out, with clear goals and means to reach those goals,” said Nelson. “The MAX consultant we worked with was very thorough and seemed to have a good grasp on our business. Overall, I’d say the BSR was very successful.”

Results/ROI

Initially, the BSR process was launched to assess Ascentron’s readiness for bar code data collection. Due to findings from the BSR, the company decided to put their transition to bar codes on hold in the short-term and instead address concerns about the ways in which they were currently using MAX.

As Nelson put it: “We have been using MAX a certain way for a while, because it seemed to benefit us at the time, but we’ve now realized as a result of the BSR that our utilization of some of the features in MAX are contrary to best practices. In order to get a feel for how the company should be using MAX, before implementing new practices in a live environment, Ascentron is conducting training and testing in a separate manufacturing test environment.

“Between the BSR, the on-site consulting, and the testing and training we’ve been doing,” said Nelson, “we realized how much of MAX’s available functionality we were not using. We’re now focusing on finding new ways to take advantage of the functionality we already own. Even if we only



implement two-thirds of what we've be working on in the test environment, we'll see a significant ROI.”

Another important recommendation from the BSR was that Ascentron take advantage of the online training that Exact offers. By gaining a greater understanding of MAX's capabilities through training, Ascentron's MAX users will be able to improve their productivity and help streamline the company's business processes.

Looking Toward Tomorrow

The BSR was such a success that Ascentron brought the MAX consultant they worked with during the BSR process back to their manufacturing site, to help with additional training and advise the company on how they can best be using MAX.

As part of the continued work with the MAX consultant, Ascentron hopes to take a closer look at the Microsoft Dynamics GP integration that MAX offers. Integrating their accounting operations with MAX would help them significantly cut down on the amount of manual work that their accounting team deals with on a daily basis. They also expect to return to the original idea that set off the whole BSR sequence of events: bar code data collection.

When asked if he would recommend a BSR to other Exact MAX customers, Nelson responded enthusiastically: “Yes. The key is to have an understanding of where you are. If you understand your environment and you have a goal in mind, I definitely think the BSR is a worthwhile investment.”

For more information about the products and services that Exact offers, please contact us at 1.855.EXACTMAX (1.855.392.2862) or visit us online at max.exactamerica.com.

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