



## Newsletter Vol. 86 - Introduction

Softengine News is dedicated to keeping you up to date with the latest information regarding SAP Business One systems, Softengine solutions and Best Business Practices.

### What's New?

#### Spotlight on our Customer: Firefly Home Collection – Another Softengine Success Story

##### Firefly Soars into the Future with SAP Business One and Softengine Extensions

Founded in 2000, Los Angeles-based Firefly Home Collection ([www.fireflycollection.com](http://www.fireflycollection.com)) is a highly acclaimed designer and manufacturer of decorative accessories and home furnishings, including tabletop, wall decor, storage, garden, furniture and seasonal products. Firefly works with skilled artisans around the world to create highly distinctive and sophisticated home décor collections that are available at many of the top furniture stores, department stores and national chains, as well as well-known specialty, catalog and e-commerce retailers. The company maintains distribution centers in Los Angeles and Dallas and showrooms in major markets such as Atlanta, Las Vegas, High Point, North Carolina, Hong Kong and Xiamen, China.

#### Challenge

##### Help Wanted ... Basic Accounting Software Fails to Deliver On-demand Inventory, Product and Customer Data

As is often the case with early-stage businesses, Firefly commenced operations with an entry-level accounting system that proved to be no match for the unique needs of the company's business. The deficiencies were often on display at trade shows where customer interaction requires quick access to a wide range of information such as product specs, inventory availability, previous discounts and other data that could help close a sale. If that information is not readily available, uncomfortable situations can arise where customers are waiting while reps frantically dig through paper files in an attempt to find answers and keep their customers or prospects engaged.

According to Jack Sahagian, Firefly's CEO, "It was challenging to know on the spot what discount and shipping arrangements were already in place for a customer when we were at trade shows. We often had to rely on memory because we had no system in place to call up that data. And there's nothing worse than not being able to respond quickly to an impatient customer when you're conducting business at a trade show."

Inventory tracking was also a daunting challenge, whether trying to conduct inventory counts in all of the warehouses or simply accounting for transfers between locations. "Without a full-blown ERP system that could automate all of our

inventory management functions, we had to resort to manual processes to try to keep track of our inventory and that led to widespread inefficiencies and less-than-stellar accuracy,” said Sahagian.

“One recurring issue was our difficulty in tracking inventory transfers between our main warehouse in Los Angeles and our showrooms across the globe. If we wanted to transfer a product from our Los Angeles warehouse to our Las Vegas showroom, the old system could not accommodate that transaction. We had to rely on manually created spreadsheets to document it and that occasionally led to errors. And that’s just one of the many issues we faced at the time.”

## **Solution**

### **Cloud-based ERP Solution Tackles Longstanding Inventory and Reporting Issues**

“We all knew that we needed a more robust ERP system – one that was dynamic and customizable to manage the complexities of a business like ours,” said Sahagian. “We were very diligent in researching many of the most popular ERP software solutions on the market, checking reviews and talking to other businesses that were using those products. We even brought in a few reps of competitive products to give us demos so that we could decide which solution would best presented a demo of SAP Business One and right away our management team felt confident that this was the right solution for us. One thing that really appealed to us was that SAP Business One offered most of the functionality we needed right out of the box and any customizations could be implemented quickly with a minimum of development time and much lower costs than we would have faced with other solutions.”

Softengine interviewed management and staff and took the time to study Firefly’s business processes in detail. From this inquiry, Softengine was able to determine how best to deploy the functionality of SAP Business One and augment the core system with key enhancements to help fulfill Firefly’s unique needs. A few of the key objectives of the project were:

- Better inventory management
- More timelier financial reporting
- Inclusion of product images on sales quotes, sales orders and purchase orders
- More accurate and timelier sales reporting
- Remote access to SAP Business One data via mobile devices

### **Remote Access to the Cloud**

Firefly opted to employ a cloud-based version of SAP Business One and Softengine created a desktop icon that could be installed on any computer (desktop, laptop or tablet) to enable remote access to the system. This icon has been installed on iPads and other tablets so that management and sales reps can instantly locate key customer, inventory and product data in SAP Business One when working trade shows.

### **SAP Business One Resolves Inventory Management Issues**

Softengine configured SAP Business One to track inventory at 10 warehouses, some physical and some virtual. Firefly’s main warehouse in Los Angeles is the origination point for most items that are shipped to the company’s showrooms across the U.S. and in China.

“SAP Business One provides a clear picture of where every item is located throughout our entire network,” claims Sahagian. “We have to know what is in each showroom at all times and with SAP Business One, when a customer requests a sample of a particular item, I can go right to that item in the system and see where it is currently and then route that item to the most logistically appropriate location for that customer. Thus, if I have a customer in the Northwest, I can view all products that are currently available in our Las Vegas showroom, which would serve as the best location for fast shipment to that customer. The system also lets you see which items are “obsolete” or not selling. We often use this information to create sample sales where we can move these items at deeply discounted prices.”

### **Softengine Item Card Tool Provides Additional Product Information at a Glance**

Softengine created an item card tool, which augments the Item Master Data screen in SAP Business One with additional user-defined data fields requested by Firefly. The enhanced screen includes an image of the item along with data fields that indicate: where the item is currently located (warehouse/showroom), minimum and maximum inventory levels and prices at various discount levels. There are also multiple quantity fields, including a special field labeled “Qty Available to Promise,” which is a time-based snapshot of the remaining inventory of an item, taking into account both incoming deliveries and existing order commitments for that item. This customized tool has proved highly beneficial to sales reps when engaged with customers or prospects at trade shows.

### **More Softengine Customizations Increase Efficiencies and Reduce Errors**

Among the numerous customizations Softengine integrated into Firefly’s new ERP system, here are a few that streamline certain business processes and help minimize errors:

- **Extended Validation Tool** – This function enhances standard SAP Business One validation capabilities with the inclusion of warnings that automatically display if certain key data is missing from the BP Master Add and Sales Order Add screens.
- **Pre-Ticketed Line-Items** – Firefly now has the ability to mark line-items on sales and purchasing documents as “pre-ticketed items.” When set to Yes, these line-items cannot be included in Available-To-Promise calculations, as they are manufactured for a specific customer with ticketing requirements.
- **Special Screen/Print Layouts** – When printing a sales order, sales quote or purchase order (for factories), the screen is automatically populated with item images and many of the same data fields as noted above with the item card, including UPC code, assorted quantity fields and pricing at various discount levels. Any of the data fields relating to customers or factories can be turned on or off by the user. Special print layout templates are available for sales quotes, sales orders, purchase orders, an Availability Report, Pick List and business checks.

## **Results**

### **Six Years and Growing ... SAP Business One and Softengine Prove to be Trusted Partners for the Long Haul**

Jack Sahagian and his associates are big fans of SAP Business One and the Softengine team that designed and implemented a solution that has completely streamlined their business processes – from developing a product to shipping it.

“The functionality of SAP Business One is only limited by your imagination,” asserted Sahagian. “We’ve had the system on the job for nearly six years and it has evolved right along with our business as we’ve grown. By our internal estimate, we’re three times more efficient at addressing customer requests and managing the supply chain! From the accounting and audit trail side of the equation, if anyone wants a robust accounting system that ensures compliance, this is the one. We can trust in the integrity of the numbers, which ensures accurate tracking and valuation of our inventory. It’s a winner!”

Firefly’s partnership with Softengine has also remained strong over the years. “Softengine has been a trusted partner,” claimed Sahagian. “At the outset, they worked closely with us to determine all the customizations we would need to extend the functionality of the system to our unique requirements. Plus, instead of trying to squeeze every drop of revenue from this project, they actually helped us understand what we did NOT need, so we didn’t waste money on a whole bunch of useless options.”

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“Softengine genuinely cares about our business and does everything they can to help us succeed. They constantly check on us to make sure everything is going smoothly and anytime an issue arises, they respond immediately and go to great lengths to come up with a solution ASAP.”

For more information about SAP Business One and delivering on-demand Inventory, product and customer data, please contact Barry Lederman: 818.704.7000, [blederman@softengineusa.com](mailto:blederman@softengineusa.com).

This promotional e-mail provides information on Softengine's products and services that may interest you. If you prefer not to receive e-mail from us in the future, please reply with subject: Unsubscribe.