



Helm Welding - Made-in-Canada ERP

Who They Are

Affordable, dependable, and Canadian-made; these are the elements that strike at the root of Helm Welding's success. For over 40 years, Helm Welding has been hard at work refining their leading-edge manufacturing processes to establish themselves as leading manufacturers of agriculture equipment. What started as a small welding, repair, and machine shop in Lucknow, Ontario, has since grown into a state of the art, 34,000 square foot operation. Today, the company's seasoned Luck Now brand offers farmers a full line of agriculture products to support the entire agricultural process from cultivation to harvest. From four augers and vertical TMR mixer feeders, snowblowers, grain buggies, rotary tillers mowers and material handlers, and Luck Now agriculture equipment is known to stand the test of time.

Already a trusted name in the Canadian market, more than 80% of Luck Now's product sales now come from international markets making it a highly recognized global brand. Helm Welding continues to extend its business reach with a worldwide dealer network; distributing Luck Now products to new customers in the US, Mexico, Europe, South America, Japan, and China.

“ Customer satisfaction is a lot higher because our response time has drastically shortened with Sage 300 ERP's reporting system. ”

Joanne, Accountant Helm Welding

The Challenge

Operating in a global market means finding innovative ways to stay ahead of a greater number of competitors. By leveraging its extensive manufacturing knowledge, Helm Welding is able to continuously improve its catalogue of agriculture products to align with new innovative technologies and modern manufacturing processes. However, the company realized that if it was to continue growing, it would also have to modernize the business management software that supports its business. By upgrading to an integrated

business management solution, the company could increase visibility and efficiency throughout its business and supply chain to achieve scalability needed for global operations. The company outlined several key challenges that it wanted to overcome with the new solution:

- **Manual Inventory Management**

Having grown into a manufacturer with a global supply chain, Helm Welding's biggest challenge was inventory management. Purchasing managers need to know production schedules ahead of time to ensure adequate stock is available for production, however, with multiple warehouses and a large catalogue of parts, inventory accuracy was an issue. The disconnect between inventory and ordering resulted in delays in production while waiting for building materials to arrive at the warehouse or sorting through duplicate printed orders.

- **Disparate Business Processes**

Another challenge facing Helm Welding was improving visibility into its operations. Having adopted a dealership business model, the company had successfully positioned the Luck Now product line as a global brand; establishing new market segments across the world. To keep up with demand, the company hired additional workers to increase efficiency and process a higher volume of orders. However, without a modern, integrated business software system to allow employees to share information, it was difficult to communicate which tasks had been completed and which were outstanding.

- **Lack of Operational Visibility**

For a company as large as Helm Welding, the year-end audit had become a time-consuming process for its accountants; underpinning the challenges the company had with internal reporting. The lack of a modern business back-end to collect data and provide real-time reporting had implications throughout the business' operations. For inventory, Helm Welding's employees would need to physically go to each warehouse and verify quantity and quoting took a long time as well, resulting in a customer satisfaction issue.

The ADS Solution

Helm Welding's partnership with Atlantic DataSystems, a leading technology provider of Sage business solutions dates back to an industry tradeshow. The company had seen ADS' product demonstration and very quickly realized how the application could benefit their operations. However, just as Helm Welding had modernized its manufacturing process over the years, so too had Sage. If Helm Welding was to continue growing its business, it would need to upgrade to Sage's modern business solution, Sage 300 ERP. "Helm Welding was experiencing growth on a global scale, and we needed a solution to support it" said Joanne Lang, Accountant Helm Welding. "With our longstanding relationship with ADS, it was a natural and easy progression to move to Sage 300 ERP."

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Joanne, Accountant Helm Welding

- **Sage 300 ERP**

For a growing manufacturer like Helm Welding, Sage 300 ERP is the next step to continue supporting business growth. The solution offers robust financial management, real-time reporting, and inventory processing needed by the company to effectively manage its business. “Moving forward, we are working with ADS to further leverage the solution and maximize the benefit it provides to Helm Welding as the company continues to grow,” explains Ms. Atkinson. “For example a new payroll feature in Sage 300 ERP will provide us with even more efficiency by emailing paystubs directly to employees.”

- **Implementation Partner, ADS**

In addition to Sage business application, the other element of a successful ERP implementation is ADS and its team of knowledgeable consultants. The company is key in providing insight to Helm Welding about how they can best leverage the solution to the fullest. “The real value in our longstanding partnership with ADS is having access to knowledgeable consultants that can provide a quick response to our questions,” said Ms. Atkinson. “When we have a question about how to use a certain feature of Sage 300 ERP, we have access to the support we need.” The high level of interaction with dedicated ADS consultants allowed them to work as an extended member of Helm Welding’s team. The proven implementation methodology of ADS ensured that they learn the ins and outs of Helm Welding’s operations to align an appropriate technology recommendation. This provides the right business solution to carry Helm into the future.

The Results

After upgrading to Sage 300 ERP, the benefits were realized immediately. With ADS as its implementation partner, Helm Welding was able to align their business processes and improve inventory accuracy with the solution to overcome their growth challenges. Since implementation, all operations at Helm Welding are now tied together, providing them with the ability to easily report on key information and have visibility across the company. Key benefits experienced by Helm Welding through the implementation of Sage 300 ERP include:

- **Improved Inventory Accuracy**

With Sage 300 ERP all orders that are entered receive order confirmation at the same time. In this way reports can be run to determine what building materials are presented in stock, in transit to the factory, or needed to be ordered to complete a customer order for agriculture equipment. Instant access to the business backend through a computer terminal also circumvents errors associated with flipping through a paper binder to see what was released and what was still needed. “With Sage 300 ERP we can run a report on stock to see

what's left in the warehouse and what we need to order," explained Ms. Atkinson. "It makes the manufacturing process so much simpler for Helm Welding."

- **Integrated Business System**

By integrating Helm Welding's business and manufacturing processes, the company was able to provide visibility across the organization. Now each employee can see each stage of a customer order and determine when they will be able to take over and continue working through to the manufacturing stage. "From order confirmation, ordering supplies right up to invoicing the customer, Sage 300 ERP has helped Helm Welding integrate our business processes for visibility across our entire operations," described Ms. Atkinson. "Each employee can now see the status of everybody's task which is much easier than having to follow the paper trail."

- **Access to Real Time Reporting**

With the implementation of Sage 300 ERP, Helm Welding was able to achieve a competitive advantage over its completion with efficient operation that has resulted in a better turnaround time for customers when providing quotes on equipment. "With our new order confirmation, cash flow is a lot more consistent now that the invoicing has been simplified," Helm Welding's Atkinson explained. "Invoicing now takes place instantly through email, and ultimately Customer satisfaction is a lot higher because our response times have drastically shortened with Sage 300 ERP's reporting system."

“ Sage 300 provides us with visibility into our operations. From the order confirmation through to the ordering of supplies and customer invoicing - we know what work is being done. ”
Joanne, Accountant Helm Welding

About ADS

ADS is a leading ERP and IT solutions provider throughout Canada for small to mid-sized businesses (SMBs) delivering strategic and technical consultancy, IT outsourcing services, and a comprehensive range of ERP and CRM solutions to help growing companies better run their business.

Through extensive industry knowledge, proven and consistent service delivery, and strong technology capabilities, ADS builds long lasting partnerships with our customers to enable a measurable return on technology investment. With offices throughout Atlantic Canada and Ontario, the ADS team of experts is committed to helping businesses leverage technology to achieve their goals.



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