



PINNACLE

Computing Solutions

SAGE 1000 CASE STUDY: BOOMER INDUSTRIES LTD

sage | Business Partner

boomer

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Sage 1000 helps Boomer Industries Ltd manage profitable growth.

■ CLIENT PROFILE

Established in 1970, Boomer Industries Ltd has grown to become one of the most respected names in the specialist plastics extrusion industry. It supports customers in some of the most demanding manufacturing industries, producing plastic components to critical tolerances.

As well as ready-made products, it also offers specialist custom-designed and made-to-order components. Boomer products are found in applications ranging from portable buildings to caravan and park homes to buses and coaches.

From Lisburn in Northern Ireland, the company serves an expanding customer base throughout the UK and Ireland, Europe, the Middle East and North America. Over the years, its workforce has grown to 68 employees and the business now generates a turnover of around £6 million. As a measure of its success, Boomer recently doubled the size of its production facility.

The company's core strengths lie in its ability to respond effectively to customers' requirements and to work in partnership with them as an integral part of their strategic product development.

■ THE CHALLENGE

By offering ready-to-fit products, Boomer helps its customers in the residential and commercial markets to move closer to being assemblers. By reducing their time, labour, administration and waste overheads, they become more competitive and profitable. However, adding such value places increased pressure on the Boomer business, not least in building and managing effective customer relations.

As Financial Director Andrew Wallace stresses, "Customer service is very high on our agenda. We're not a manufacturing company with customer service bolted on; more a customer service company in manufacturing."

Previously, Boomer experienced a fragmented approach to customer relationship management (CRM). The lack of a centralised CRM application resulted in departments such as sales, customer services and finance generating their own customer information and holding it on local applications. No department had visibility of another's day-to-day interactions with the customer base, which led to significant duplication of effort. For example, a change in a customer's contact details had to be updated on multiple applications by different teams. In addition, data from several disparate sources had to be collated and sifted before it could be actioned by the customer services team.

As Boomer expands in turnover, physical size and market reach, it continually looks to technology to make efficiency gains. So, managers recognised that an integrated CRM system, providing visibility of communications and correspondence with clients and between all departments, would support the efficient delivery of seamless customer service.

■ THE SOLUTION

Boomer already had an established and trusted partnership with Sage Business Partner Pinnacle Computing, which had implemented its Sage Line 500 system some years previously. Pinnacle recommended that, rather than adding on CRM functionality, Boomer consider upgrading to Sage 1000. This would provide a complete, single business management solution, spanning operations from accounting to customer services, sales and marketing.

Andrew explains, "One of the great things about Pinnacle is their ability to supply good reference sites. We took the opportunity to look at how other customers were using CRM. Along with guidance from Pinnacle, this helped us to define our own requirements."

Boomer looked at various software packages but the decision went in favour of Sage 1000 with Business Intelligence. "I liked the way that everything is fully integrated, rather than having to 'paperclip' extra software on," comments Andrew. The dashboard facility and ability to provide powerful reactive management information were also very attractive features.

Work went rapidly forward to implement a 16-user Sage 1000 system. A two-phased implementation approach over a six-week period was scheduled, with a dry run for user testing and acceptance, followed by a live conversion. Careful planning and coordination between Boomer and Pinnacle paid dividends and any teething problems, inevitable with such a major transition, were quickly resolved.

"I can't fault Pinnacle's performance," says Andrew. The completeness of the conversion programs proved a major benefit in the implementation of Sage 1000. Through their execution, all detailed transaction history was brought across in one conversion run, which avoided conversion becoming partial or fragmented.

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Andrew Wallace, Financial Director,
Boomer Industries Ltd.

■ THE BENEFITS

Andrew recalls, "Right from the start, we were impressed with the additional functionality within Sage 1000, as an integrated business-wide solution. It incorporated improved CRM and much more, and was clearly designed to help all parts of our business focus on delivering excellent customer service at a profit."

Boomer has been able to centralise the CRM process, providing a seamless link between sales, customer services, warehousing and other departments. Receiving streamlined customer service management has proved invaluable to the Boomer customer base. Boomer staff's reaction time, ability to provide accurate information and delivery of quality customer service have all improved dramatically, with information on purchases/orders, accounts and outstanding bills being readily available.

Andrew points out that a behavioural change has accompanied the implementation, "We require staff to be very systematic in logging appointments and tasks, recording communications such as notes from telephone calls, and storing documents on Sage 1000. This creates a complete, unified picture of interactions with customers rather than information being held on personal systems."

By sharing information between different departments, Boomer experiences greater efficiency, with fewer errors from re-keying of data. Service levels have increased by making it easier to give accurate, timely information from across the business to customers. The system also incorporates workflow, so managers can define the process for handling customer queries, for example, and prompt staff to take the correct next step. This means queries are cleared much more quickly.

As Andrew notes, "Sage 1000 helps us stay close to our customers. We're no longer employing people just to manage data. Instead, they can focus on the customer and our business. Anyone in the organisation, including our receptionist, can log calls and access data more readily to give an informed response. We've seen a beneficial impact on cash flow. Late payments were historically an issue for us. Now, with problems being resolved more promptly, there is no good reason why customers should delay payment at the end of the month. Furthermore, I can go into a customer file and log a note to nudge the customer on the next sales visit if there is a delay in payment. So, automation and personal contact go hand in hand to produce better results."

The Sage Business Intelligence within Sage 1000 is set to transform existing business data from across the system into real intelligence on Boomer's markets, customers, operations, suppliers and business performance and delivers it directly to users' desktops.

The dashboards have lived up to expectations, providing daily information to which Boomer staff and management can swiftly react. Without complex data mapping or advanced reporting skills, users can see at a glance their key priorities, reminders and other critical information requiring their attention. They can drill down to investigate the underlying reasons on particular issues. "Sales figures, outstanding purchase orders, customers on credit stop...the information is all there for them with no need to ask me," comments Andrew.

■ THE FUTURE

Boomer was an early adopter of Sage 1000 and is rapidly gaining confidence in using the system and understanding its potential to provide even more support to the growing business. To date, the system has been mainly assisting the sales and service teams but, with the foundations now firmly in place, work is under way to roll it out across the company.

The productive relationship with Pinnacle continues. Andrew says, "We have a longterm partnership with Pinnacle, valuing their ability to provide local support, technical experience and excellent customer service."

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Andrew Wallace, Financial Director,
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■ SOLUTION OVERVIEW:

- ▶ A single integrated system spanning Boomer's business operations.
- ▶ Staff empowered to deliver excellent customer care.
- ▶ Improved cash flow through faster problem resolution and visibility of customer issues.
- ▶ Critical business information delivered to managers' desktops.
- ▶ Experienced, knowledgeable support from Sage Business Partner Pinnacle Computing.

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*Andrew Wallace, Financial Director,
Boomer Industries Ltd.*

■ ABOUT PINNACLE

Pinnacle Computing is a Sage business partner providing the full range of Sage Accounting, ERP & CRM solutions. Pinnacle Computing is based throughout the UK & Ireland with offices in Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow, Hull, Maidstone, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Warrington and Worcester. Sage is a global provider of end-to-end business management applications for mid-sized businesses. Look to Sage for fully integrated software that delivers high performance, advanced functionality, cross-product integration and unmatched freedom of choice. Integrating powerful front-office web and wireless capabilities with back-office accounting and operations. Sage provides companies with the solutions they need to enhance competitive advantage and increase profitability.

Talk to us!

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