

Tuleu Sweetens Sales in Africa With Sage BusinessWorks

Jean-Marc Tuleu grew up on a sugar plantation in the Congo, and spent 20 years as a major shareholder and international account manager with CAMECO Industries. In 2001 he established Tuleu Consulting as the exclusive dealer for John Deere International, which had acquired CAMECO as a subsidiary. Today his company sells CAMECO sugar harvesting equipment and John Deere tractors to 12 countries throughout West Africa.

Tuleu Consulting takes orders for sugar cane harvesting equipment from customers in Africa and coordinates shipments from John Deere offices in Germany and the United States. Products include sugar cane combines, specialized loaders, harvesting wagons, and various types of tractors, as well as 350,000 parts for Deere and other agricultural machinery.

Streamlined Quoting for Zillions of Parts

It was this mammoth parts list that prompted the need for a robust accounting package. “We were a brand-new company, with no inventory in-house and no warehouse,” explains Kim Tuleu, secretary/treasurer. “Nevertheless, we needed very powerful inventory capabilities for quote issuing purposes, so we wouldn’t have to key in parts descriptions all day long. We also had an external accounting firm at the time, and wanted our system to be compatible with theirs. They were on Sage BusinessWorks 50 Accounting and recommended it highly, so we followed their lead.”

Tuleu Consulting now relies on Sage BusinessWorks for all of its business functions, and has replaced its external accountant with in-house staff. The system is used to issue complex quotes to customers and create purchase orders for suppliers once the order is confirmed. “Parts descriptions are now stored in our database, so they appear automatically when an order is created,” Tuleu notes. “This saves hours of data entry every day.”

Unlike most applications its size, Sage BusinessWorks breaks out items being shipped from backorders when it generates an invoice. “Our orders can have as many as 500 different line items,” Tuleu says. “Knowing which products are on backorder is key for both our shippers and customers.”

Customer

Tuleu Consulting

Industry

Wholesale Trade—Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchants

Location

Metairie, Louisiana

Number of Locations

One

Number of Employees

Four

System

Sage BusinessWorks

Accounts Payable
Accounts Receivable
General Ledger
Inventory Control and Purchasing
Order Entry
Cash Management

Challenge

Manage thriving export business to West Africa, and maximize use of e-mail for quotes, orders, and confirmation.

Solution

Sage BusinessWorks with financial and distribution modules, inventory parts updated electronically by vendor, and custom shipping forms for individual countries.

Results

Eliminated need to key 350,000 part descriptions onto invoices, and permitted electronic transmission of orders, reducing international faxes and phone calls.

Forms such as quotes and orders can now be sent to customers through e-mail. "We're saving a fortune with fewer overseas faxes and phone calls," Tuleu explains. "We can't e-mail all of our documentation, because paper copies are still needed for customs declarations. But frequently we can e-mail purchase orders to suppliers, and that helps cut costs, too."

Tuleu easily created about 40 customized templates for shipping documents to different countries. "Each nation has its own requirements," she says. "With the help of our reseller, we used the templates in Sage BusinessWorks to design a complete set of highly customized forms, adding extra fields such as international forwarder and bank routing information. Now we just select the form we need, and the system fills it in."

The company offers products from American and European manufacturers, and bills in either dollars or euros, depending on where a product came from. Tuleu runs two separate sets of books in Sage BusinessWorks to handle the multiple currencies. When it comes time to create financial statements, she simply merges the sets to run a single companywide report.

"The reporting capabilities in Sage BusinessWorks are great. I create open invoice and aging reports, and review outstanding payables and receivables.

"One of my favorite features is being able to close a month and still go back and enter activity into it later. This is extremely useful when we have to make adjustments," Tuleu says.

"There's no way we could be where we are today without Sage BusinessWorks," says Tuleu. "We've grown from zero to \$3 million in sales in a year and a half, and the system has grown with us. Even with the complex requirements of a global marketplace, it's giving us everything we need."

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—Jean-Marc Tuleu
Owner
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