



## Case Study: Argos USA



### Argos USA Implements Microsoft Dynamics GP Across Operations for Standardized Data and Significant Costs Savings

By partnering with Tribridge, Argos USA has lowered costs through increased automation and integration with operation-wide Microsoft Dynamics GP implementation

#### BUSINESS SITUATION

With revenues nearing \$500 million and close to 1,500 employees, Argos USA needed to standardize their business and financial operations on a reliable, stable platform that would enable a complete view of their enterprise. To start with, each subsidiary was using a different product to manage their business. Argos USA and the cement terminals were using Peachtree along with several labor-intensive spreadsheets to track inventory and recurring journal entries. Ready Mixed Concrete relied on an outdated Oracle Financials system. Particularly time consuming for Ready Mixed Concrete was the process of mapping their chart of accounts to Argos USA's standard during each monthly close. Southern Star was using Microsoft Dynamics GP that had been tailored to meet their business needs.

With each operation running different systems, Argos USA lacked standardization of data to facilitate financial reporting; real-time access to data; and the ability to process intercompany transactions. Additionally, each business had a different payroll system or service provider.

#### SOLUTION

"Initially, we learned about Microsoft Dynamics GP from our sales and dispatch system vendor, Command Alkon," said Dave Marr, Argos USA's IT director. Several ready-mix concrete businesses were integrating Dynamics GP with Command Alkon successfully. From there, Southern Star was introduced to Tribridge. "We were very impressed with the people who would be working on our account," said Dave. "Their people were seasoned business professionals with experience in several different industries. We also liked their strong relationship with Microsoft."

**SOLUTION:** Microsoft Dynamics® GP

#### ABOUT ARGOS USA

Argos USA is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cementos Argos S.A. located in Colombia, South America. Headquartered in Houston, Argos USA is a major supplier of cement, ready mix concrete and related products throughout North America. Southern Star Concrete based in Irving, Texas; Ready Mixed Concrete Company based in Raleigh, North Carolina; and two cement terminals located in the southeast and one terminal on the Texas gulf coast make up the Argos USA operations. These operations supply concrete to commercial and residential builders as well as for civil projects. While each subsidiary operates under a different name in their respective market, they are known as a competitively priced option with quality service and products.

Tribridge has been front and center throughout our implementation. Their project management team and project methodology has given us a reliable implementation and met our budget expectations. These are some of the smoothest IT implementations we have seen.



"We wanted to drive back-office costs down through automation and integration," said Dave. "With our Dynamics GP implementation at Southern Star, we were able to reduce back-office labor costs by 25%. When Argos USA saw the cost savings we had at Southern Star along with the cost of implementation being significantly less than other products while providing the functionality that was required, it made sense to leverage the expertise we already had and move forward with Microsoft Dynamics GP and Tribridge for all of Argos USA's operations."

The first project was to centralize the HR and payroll functions and migrate all 1,500 employees to Dynamic GP. Next was to move Argos USA and the cement terminals off Peachtree to Dynamics GP. Working with Tribridge, a scalable chart of accounts was designed that would be used at all the business operations.

The next phase of the implementation was to move Ready Mixed Concrete off of Oracle and onto Dynamics GP and the new chart of accounts structure. The final phase was to upgrade Southern Star to the most current version of Dynamics GP and migrate their chart of accounts to the new standard.

## RESULTS

Payroll was the first area that was brought together. "Depending on the location, payroll was either outsourced or processed in house. Either way there was a lot of duplicate entry, which required several people," said Dave. "We were able to more than double the number of people we were processing payroll for without having to increase our payroll staff."

Payroll is centralized and Argos USA saves the cost of additional personnel along with eliminating the cost of an outside payroll processing company. Since there is faster access to data, payroll issues are resolved more quickly, which results in happier employees. "Our payroll manager was used to a very expensive ERP system," said Dave. "Within six months of the move to Dynamics GP she was evangelizing how much easier the Dynamics GP solution was in comparison to the old system."

Payroll has run without issue since the migration to Dynamics GP in 2003. "The ease of consolidated reporting and the ability to download reports into Microsoft Office tools has given me the tremendous power to make decisions that I was not able to do before," said Bob Farmer, Argos USA's HR Director.

"The standardization of all our operations on one chart of accounts was critical," said Dave. "Now we can manage budgets more effectively and are able to close our months more quickly." Consolidated reporting is now a reality. Reports and data are easily accessible. Drilling down to the original transaction has saved time researching issues. Month-end closes used to take five to seven days and now are processed in three days. Intercompany transactions are no longer tracked on spreadsheets.

Dynamics GP made the archiving of historical data along with the required changes for General Ledger account format changes much easier than expected. These changes made it possible to meet a very aggressive month-end close schedule required by Cementos Argos S.A.

With consistent vendor and customer numbers, Argos USA can look at these relationships across all operations. "We are just starting to realize the impact of having consistent vendor data," said Ron Reinke, Argos USA's Business Application Manager. "This year we will be able to consider the centralization of our purchasing and we feel confident that we will be able to negotiate the best prices from our vendors. We appreciate that Tribridge helped foresee this opportunity and structured account numbers accordingly."

Argos USA has been able to integrate their industry-specific sales order processing system, Command Alkon, with Microsoft Dynamics GP. By way of an integration, Argos USA now imports invoices directly into Dynamics. "We are making steps toward a real-time inventory system, which will help with the optimization of inventory," said Dave. "We have a lot of flexibility with the Microsoft Dynamics GP solution and continue to make progress."

"We have relied on Tribridge's depth of knowledge throughout our relationship," said Dave. "Not only do they know the Microsoft Dynamics GP application, but they have experience with infrastructure and SharePoint as well. We will look to Tribridge for future projects such as CRM. They understand our business and their projects come in on time and on budget. We had been very impressed by the continued development of the product."

## SOLUTION: Microsoft Dynamics® GP

### THE RESULTS

- Eliminated processing cost of outsourcing payroll vendor while providing better control
- Total solution was delivered at a third the cost of other proposed solutions
- Standardized chart of accounts across all business operations enables consistent reporting
- Month-end close process reduced to 3 days
- Integration with industry-specific sales order processing system
- Drill down capability into transactions is a significant time savings
- Real-time access to data allows for faster decision making
- Greater visibility into customer and vendor relationships

We have relied on Tribridge's depth of knowledge throughout our relationship. They understand our business and their projects come in on time and on budget.

### CONTACT TRIBRIDGE

Find out how Tribridge can help you simplify your business.

**CALL:** (877) 744-1360

**CLICK:** [success@tribridge.com](mailto:success@tribridge.com)

**VISIT:** [www.tribridge.com](http://www.tribridge.com)



We help our customers become more productive, profitable, competitive and secure.