



Microsoft Customer Solution

Case study

Microsoft Business Solutions–Navision

“It’s flexible and customizable. We have been using it since June of 2001, and we have yet to find a barrier—something the system cannot do. Whatever we ask the system to do, and some of the things have been fairly complex, it’s been able to do, which is very important to us.”

Victor Verola
Owner
Vicom Computer Services, Inc.



Vicom Moves to the Web While Streamlining Purchasing and Accounts Payable

Vicom Computer Services, Inc. provides comprehensive information technology services for large and emerging mid-size companies. As a technology service provider, they needed their internal systems to provide the same degree of sophistication that their own cutting-edge technology solutions provided for their customers.

Microsoft® Business Solutions–Navision® provided the real-time web ordering and tracking capabilities that their key customers required and provided the internal efficiencies Vicom desired.

Labor savings of 100 percent were realized in the accounts payable function. Customization of the input for large company orders provided an additional savings of .75 FTE. A savings of 25 percent in labor costs was also realized for the purchasing function. Customers with online ordering requirements like the ability to quickly order and track their orders online in real time.

CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
<p>Vicom Computer Services, Inc. is an information technology company offering comprehensive solutions to a customer base of Fortune 1,000 and emerging mid-sized organizations. Located in Farmingdale, New York, USA, Vicom is a family-owned business founded in 1982.</p>	<p>Vicom needed web ordering capabilities for their customers. They also needed to replace their old DOS-based Data Ease operations system, which was no longer supported. Their goal was to integrate their financial and operations functions while providing real-time web access for key customers.</p>	<p>Microsoft® Business Solutions–Navision® provided the web ordering solution Vicom needed and created efficiency gains in the purchasing and accounts payable functions as well as in shipping and receiving.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time savings of 100 percent in the accounts payable approval function ▪ Customized automation of accounts payable further reduced labor by .75 FTE ▪ Savings of at least 25 percent in purchasing labor ▪ Increased satisfaction and retention of key customers

"Microsoft Navision is very easy to work with. When we started looking at the system, we had a test version. It was very intuitive. For me, it was very easy to pick up. From there, I had some formal training. By the time I had been through that training, I had a very good handle on it and just started picking it up on my own."

Robert Ceraso
Systems Analyst
Vicom Computer Services, Inc.

Situation

Vicom is an information technology company offering comprehensive information technology solutions to a customer base of Fortune 1,000 and emerging mid-sized organizations.

The family-owned business, founded in 1982 by brothers Victor and Robert Verola, provides a full service offering to their technology clients, including hardware procurement, configuration and imaging, storage solutions, professional services, asset management, maintenance and warranty, staffing, and leasing services. Vicom is a Microsoft certified solution provider that demonstrates Microsoft technologies and solutions in their fully equipped and technically staffed Solution Center. In this center, clients have the opportunity to observe the environment and test drive the equipment.

Vicom's products and services are distributed by direct sales. They currently have 34 employees. The company processes approximately 800 orders per month and 3,000 to 3,500 purchase orders per month.

As the company grew, in 2001 the management knew that in order to stay competitive and retain business, they needed to provide internet access. Key customers needed to order online and keep track of the status of their transactions in real time.

Vicom wanted an integrated system that would handle not only their operations, but manage their financials as well. The DOS-based Data Ease system they were using handled their operations, but it was not an accounting system. At the end of the month, they had to import the operations information into their existing accounting system. When their Data Ease application was no longer supported, there was increased urgency to find a new solution

that integrated their operations and financial management functions.

Solution

They considered several solutions, including SAP, but decided on Microsoft® Business Solutions–Navision® and went live on June 1, 2001.

Vicom worked with Access Information Technologies, Inc. (Access IT) a Microsoft Reseller specializing in implementing Navision in mid sized companies. Access IT's value-add approach is based on business re-engineering and a proven implementation methodology. "After a thorough business analysis, we identified several areas where Vicom could achieve significant efficiencies with [Microsoft] Navision," says Allyn Vineberg, President of Access IT. "Victor and his brother Robert were great partners to work with. There was a tremendous synergy between our companies."

Access IT's implementation team focused Vicom's key users on learning the system and reengineering the company's business processes. Once the new business flows were established, end users were trained and a comprehensive pilot program was run. They took about 50 orders, running both the old system and Microsoft Navision in parallel. Victor Verola comments about the implementation, "Allyn Vineberg and our partners at Access IT were insightful and a pleasure to work with. Their willingness to understand our business made our implementation smooth and successful."

From the information technology perspective, "The implementation was very easy," says Yves Mardy, IT Manager. "The database is all contained within Microsoft SQL Server™, and it was just a matter of installing the Navision client on everyone's work station. Beyond that, there was nothing to it."



Vicom Computer Services Solution Center
Farmingdale, New York

Robert Ceraso, Systems Analyst, says “I think Microsoft Navision is very easy to work with. When we started looking at the solution, we had a test version. It was very intuitive, and for me, it was very easy to pick up. From there, I had some formal training. By the time I had been through that training, I had a very good handle on it and just started picking it up on my own.”

Maryanne Hurley, Vicom’s Controller, likes the integrated functionality of the product. “The thing I like about it is that it’s an integrated package. I don’t have to do importing of data. Only minor adjustments have to be made to inventory, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. It provides the ability to run reports without much effort,” Hurley says.

Karen Medina, Operations Manager, speaks of the search capabilities of Microsoft Navision. “What I like best about the system is the ease of searching for anything. Whether you’re searching for information on a customer, a part number, or an order, it’s very easy to go from one level to the next. You don’t have to get out of the system and go back in,” Medina says.

Owner Victor Verola says, “It’s flexible and customizable. We have been using it since June of 2001, and we have yet to find

a barrier—something the system cannot do. Whatever we ask the system to do (and some of the things have been fairly complex), it’s been able to do, which is very important to us. We have not seen any limitations in its ability to give us information or to manipulate or massage that information, to give us reports, or to implement whatever the customers require. This includes the way we do commissions. I feel confident we made a good decision.”

Benefits

Time Savings in Purchasing

Verola explains how the purchasing and accounts payable functions have been streamlined since using Microsoft Navision. In the past, there was no purchase order system. They entered every invoice into the system; it was checked and double-checked. Then another person would call up the invoice, verify, approve, and cut a check. Now the accounts payable approval process alone, that used to take 20-25 hours a week, has been reduced to 9-10 hours a week.

Three major vendors are used for a majority of Vicom’s business. Systems Analyst, Rob Ceraso, has automated the processes for incoming invoices from these

Software and Services

Microsoft® Business Solutions– Navision®

- Financial Management
- Supply Chain Management
- Customization Tools
- E-Commerce
 - Commerce Gateway
 - Commerce Portal

Microsoft® Windows® Microsoft Office System Microsoft Windows Server System™

- Commerce Server
- Exchange Server
- SQL Server™

Partner

Access Information Technologies
Inc.
Melville, New York, USA



vendors. An overnight process imports a file, posts the vendor invoices, and produces an exception report. This automation has saved Vicom further accounts payable savings of 30 labor hours per week, or .75 FTE (a person who used to manually enter every invoice).

Thanks to efficiencies provided by Microsoft Navision, a buyer who used to purchase for three salespeople now can purchase for four to five salespeople. Vicom has been able to add salespeople without adding more buyers to support them. In keeping with Vicom's personnel philosophies, the labor savings have resulted in employees being redeployed to higher-impact work.

Efficiencies in Shipping and Receiving

Verola reports that the shipping and receiving functions have made substantial inroads by automating their processes. Every item coming in and going out is

scanned, and only exceptions require manual intervention.

Real-time Ordering Increases Customer Satisfaction and Retention

Vicom has several major customers who require the ability to order online. Microsoft Navision's web capabilities, which allow customers to both order online and track the progress of orders in real-time, are very important to these customers. Verola says, "We probably would not have their business if we were not able to provide web capabilities."

While much of the value of Vicom's Microsoft Navision solution is intrinsic and difficult to measure, Verola comments, "We know we've saved money. Our management group knows we made a good move. It's just pretty obvious to us."

Microsoft Business Solutions offers a wide range of integrated, end-to-end business applications and services designed to help small, mid-market and corporate businesses become more connected with customers, employees, partners and suppliers.

For more information about Microsoft Business Solutions, go to:
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