

TDL Canada: Modernizing Wholesale Distribution with Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central

Summary

Customer

TDL Gentek
tdlcanada.ca



Industry

Distribution

Partners

- LIDD (Microsoft Partner)
- Insight Works (ISV)
- TrueCommerce (ISV)

Solution

- Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central
- Warehouse Insight
- Dynamic Ship
- TrueCommerce EDI

Results

- Replaced legacy ERP with integrated Business Central system.
- Improved warehouse accuracy through mobile barcode scanning.
- Increased monthly order fulfillment from 6,000 to 19,000.
- Streamlined shipping and tracking with Dynamic Ship.
- Automated order processing using TrueCommerce EDI.



Introduction

In early 2023, TDL Canada, a well-established wholesale distributor of consumer electronics and networking equipment, faced increasing operational challenges that demanded a strategic overhaul. Operating with an outdated Adagio system and largely manual processes, the company struggled with inefficiencies in order processing, warehouse management, and data accessibility. To address these issues, TDL Canada engaged LIDD, a consulting firm specializing in supply chain strategy, to implement Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central Cloud. This solution, supplemented by key applications from Insight Works and TrueCommerce, not only improved TDL Canada's operations but also laid the groundwork for future expansion and integration across the business.

Project Background

LIDD led the Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central deployment, enhanced by Insight Works' Warehouse Insights and Dynamic Ship applications, and TrueCommerce EDI. This strategic choice enabled seamless integration within the Microsoft ecosystem, improving functionality and reliability. Mid-project, the acquisition of Gentek prompted LIDD to adopt a phased approach, focusing on TDL's core needs initially, with Gentek's integration planned for a second phase to ensure a smooth and efficient rollout.

Challenges Faced

The transition from a manual to an automated ERP system presented significant challenges, especially in data handling and operational restructuring. TDL's long-standing manual processes for order management, inventory tracking, and backorder handling were deeply ingrained, creating an adjustment period as the team adapted to a streamlined, digital system. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive change management approach, LIDD provided dedicated training sessions for TDL staff, ensuring that each team member could confidently use and benefit from the new technology and processes.

Solution Overview

The solution deployed in June 2023 was designed to be comprehensive and scalable. At its core was Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, supported by Insight Works' Warehouse Insights and Dynamic Ship applications, and EDI from TrueCommerce. Together, these tools created a cohesive, integrated system with functionality tailored to wholesale distribution. Key benefits included:

- **Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central:** Enabled TDL to centralize data and automate workflows, eliminating data silos and manual dependencies. This integration allowed TDL to gain complete visibility into its order-to-cash and procure-to-pay functions, improving order accuracy and fulfillment speed across the business.
- **Warehouse Insights by Insight Works:** Designed for efficient warehouse operations, this tool integrated seamlessly with mobile devices, allowing TDL's warehouse team to:
 - **Scan and Track Inventory in Real-Time:** Mobile-enabled scanning improved inventory accuracy by reducing manual data entry errors and providing real-time updates across the system. TDL used existing Honeywell CK65 mobile computers as well as newly acquired Datalogic Skorpio X5 devices. Warehouse Insight was deployed across about 20 rugged devices. "Adopting mobile barcode scanning with Insight Works' Warehouse Insights was a game-changer," said Lance Tennier, VP of Operations at TDL Canada. "Our team quickly adapted to the Datalogic and Honeywell devices, and the increase in accuracy and efficiency was immediate. The ability to track inventory in real-time has eliminated many of the manual errors we used to deal with daily."
 - **Reduce Manual Tasks:** Barcode-enabled picking and receiving streamlined processes and reduced labor hours, particularly during peak order periods.
 - **Boost Warehouse Productivity:** Warehouse Insight's user-friendly interface enabled team members to quickly adapt to the mobile system, reducing the learning curve for new warehouse procedures and improving overall productivity.
- **Dynamic Ship by Insight Works:** Enhanced TDL's shipping operations by adding critical logistics features directly into Business Central, such as:
 - **Rate Shopping:** Allowed TDL to compare carrier rates instantly, ensuring the most cost-effective shipping options.
 - **Label Printing and Tracking:** Integrated label printing and tracking capabilities into a single system, making it easier for TDL to manage shipments and track order status at every stage.
 - **Automated Shipping Notifications:** In conjunction with EDI capabilities from TrueCommerce, customers receive timely updates on their order status, improving communication and reducing the need for manual follow-ups.
- **TrueCommerce EDI:** To streamline electronic data interchange (EDI) and improve order processing efficiency, TDL implemented TrueCommerce EDI alongside Business Central. TrueCommerce was selected over their previous provider due to superior responsiveness and commitment to meeting an aggressive timeline. Their solution enabled TDL to migrate to its trading partners within two months, just in time for the Holiday Rush.

This consolidated solution offered distinct advantages over custom solutions by ensuring compatibility with Microsoft's ecosystem and simplifying future updates.

Outcomes and Benefits

The shift from TDL's outdated system to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, Insight Works' Warehouse Insights, and TrueCommerce EDI unlocked massive scalability gains.

Previously, operational bottlenecks restricted TDL's ability to handle growing order volumes. The old system, heavily reliant on manual processes, could only support a fraction of the company's potential throughput.

The impact of the transition was dramatic. In December 2022, under the old system, TDL shipped 6,146 orders. Compare this to December 2024, TDL successfully shipped 19,000 orders—a 209% increase in order fulfillment capacity. This level of growth would have been impossible without the new system, highlighting the significant ROI of modernizing warehouse operations.

"Before this transition, our ability to scale was completely capped by outdated processes," explained Lance. "The move to Business Central, coupled with Insight Works' and TrueCommerce's solutions, allowed us to more than triple our order throughput. In December 2022, we shipped 6,146 orders—by December 2024, that number jumped to 19,000. There's no way we could have handled that volume with our old system. This implementation didn't just improve our operations; it completely redefined what we're capable of."

By eliminating workflow inefficiencies and leveraging mobile-driven warehouse management, TDL not only increased throughput but also reduced errors, improved fulfillment speed, and enhanced overall customer satisfaction.

Since deploying Dynamics 365 and Insight Works applications, TDL Canada has observed notable improvements across multiple areas:

- **Enhanced Operational Efficiency:** TDL reduced reliance on manual workflows by automating core processes that previously caused bottlenecks in order processing and inventory tracking. The new system enables faster and more accurate data processing, allowing TDL to fulfill orders quicker and with fewer errors.
- **Improved Visibility and Data Accessibility:** The integrated system provides TDL's team better access to real-time sales, inventory, and order data. This visibility supports more informed decision-making and enables the sales team to respond more effectively to customer inquiries.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Faster order fulfillment and improved backorder management have enhanced customer satisfaction. Customers now benefit from quicker response times, more accurate shipping information, and better support overall.
- **Scalability and Future-Proofing:** The choice to work within the Microsoft ecosystem, supported by regularly updated Insight Works applications, has set TDL up for future scalability. This system design ensures that the company can incorporate additional features and manage new acquisitions, like Gentek, with minimal disruption to core operations.
- **Optimized EDI Workflows:** By integrating TrueCommerce EDI, TDL was able to fully automate order processing, reducing manual touchpoints and improving transaction accuracy. This has led to faster order fulfillment, fewer errors, and improved relationships with trading partners.
- **Seamless ASN Integration with Insight Works:** The EDI solution works in sync with Insight Works' Dynamic Ship, particularly for Advance Ship Notices (ASNs), ensuring that shipping details are accurately transmitted to trading partners in real time. This integration has further streamlined fulfillment operations, reducing back-and-forth communication and improving delivery tracking.

Reflections and Future Steps

The deployment of Microsoft Dynamics 365, Insight Works applications, and EDI from TrueCommerce provided TDL with a much-needed modernization of its supply chain infrastructure. LIDD's decision to employ a phased implementation strategy drove the success of this case, focusing first on TDL's core needs. This approach minimized operational disruptions, allowing TDL to adapt incrementally to the new system while ensuring its foundational processes were streamlined and robust.

"LIDD took the time to understand our challenges and delivered a structured approach that minimized disruption while maximizing results," said Lance. "Their expertise in supply chain strategy, combined with the right technology partners, made all the difference in our successful transition. The phased approach allowed us to keep operations running smoothly while making huge improvements in efficiency and scalability."

Conclusion

TDL Canada's ERP overhaul illustrates the value of a structured, phased approach to complex technology implementations, especially for organizations navigating mergers or acquisitions. By strategically aligning with Microsoft, Insight Works, and TrueCommerce, TDL was able to consolidate its operational tools, streamline workflows, and achieve significant efficiency gains within a few months.

Looking forward, the company's leadership in supply chain technology, supported by LIDD, will be crucial as TDL seeks to maintain its standing as Canada's leading distributor of consumer electronics and networking products while embracing new avenues for expansion and innovation in a dynamic market.



75 Huff Ave
Trenton, Ontario
Canada K8V 0H3

tdlcanada.ca
tdl@tdlcanada.ca
1.613.392.3875



Suite #102, 5661-99 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T6E 3N8

dmsiworks.com
info@dmsiworks.com
1.866.440.7543