



“We respect Accredo because they know New Zealand business and get things done with a minimum of fuss.”

Baden Prentice, General Manager, Supply Services (right)
with Jason Weaver, Zeal Systems.

Accredo helps precision engineering firm control rapid growth

A software system that adapts to meet the needs of a growing business can save owners a lot of time and money, not to mention pain and heartache. Over the last 15 years specialist importing and engineering firm Supply Services has reinvented itself and the Accredo business management solution has helped it meet many of the challenges encountered along the way.

In the last 10 years the Mount Maunganui-headquartered company has tripled in size and General Manager, Baden Prentice, says the company is vastly different now compared to when it was established by his father over 30 years ago.

“We have changed and grown constantly. We began as a chemical importing company and then started to import industrial engineering products, namely conveyor chain, which we sold into the domestic market. In 1997 the chemical side of the business was sold and we developed our engineering arm.”

Now Supply Services is one of the country’s leading suppliers and fabricators of chains and plastics,

servicing a diverse range of industrial companies in support of engineering and maintenance processes.

“We are particularly strong in the saw mill and pulp and paper fields, and with our plastic engineering work we have customers across many manufacturing areas. We import raw materials and via our machine shop we value add, making bespoke components to order. We do a lot of one-offs as well as repeat fabrication.”

The firm installed Accredo in April 2004 and Prentice says the change provided a big leap forward for the business. The firm had outgrown its existing NZA Gold product which was in the process of being sold to MYOB.

“We had some trepidation about what was going to change and we needed features which at the time neither NZA Gold nor MYOB could provide.”

Fortuitously, at the time Prentice was going to market for a new system he came across an advertising flyer from local Accredo reseller Zeal Systems.

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“Accredo captures a great deal of informative data and you can report on it in an almost unlimited number of ways.”

Baden Prentice,
Supply Services

“I was considering a number of different options, but when I learnt a bit more about Accredo I knew it would be a great fit for our business.”

Prentice says one significant factor for choosing Accredo was the ease with which his customer service staff could drill down into transactions.

“In the old system we were spending a lot of time moving between modules trying to find the right information. Being able to quickly and easily find relevant customer details, as well as previous orders and invoices is a great timesaver.”

But the key revelation was Accredo Saturn's ability to handle multiple stock locations, Prentice says. “We now run around 15-20 different stock sites – one each at our branches in the Mount, Auckland and Christchurch, and a number at our key customer sites.”

The improved visibility of stock has simplified inventory management, helping the company keep its stock at an optimum level for continuous supply.

Back ordering has also become a lot easier to manage since swapping to Accredo, Prentice says. “In the past, keeping track of order fulfillment was a very manual and time intensive process. But Accredo's back ordering functionality has taken this problem away completely.”

Supply Services can now track back orders electronically and can assign multiple invoices to the same customer order – something that was impossible with the previous system.

As the business has grown and changed, Prentice says Accredo has provided all the necessary software features to accommodate the new business processes. The firm has around 25 people who use the system day in and day out – from engineers on the machine shop floor to warehouse workers, right through to customer services and administration staff.

“I think we have used every standard module available in the Accredo system, including Forms Designer – one of the two customisation modules.”

When Supply Services needed a better way of processing complex overseas engineering orders it altered the way the software operated.

Using Forms Designer, the firm tailored data capture fields to the exact specifications of staff, which made receipting and executing orders much more efficient.

Careful modification to Accredo's Job Costing module has also allowed Supply Services to increase efficiency in its fabrication process – a key factor in its growth and success.

“From the time a customer sends us an order to the time we deliver back the finished product there are nine different people involved in the creation and decision-making process. We have tailored Job Costing so we can process jobs through the workshop in such a way that the machinist can understand exactly what is required – and we capture all the time and material costs along the way.”

Prentice says to remain competitive the company has to adapt quickly to customers' demands. To do so it has a constant wish list of changes it would like to see in the software.

“One of the things we respect about Accredo is that you can work with your QSP to tailor the software to meet the desired need, but on top of that, the company is also open to making alterations to the core product suggested by the customer.”

Prentice cites the improved transparency of his offices' operations as a significant benefit of using the software. “Being able to view stock across locations is important, but we have also gained improved visibility into how each branch is performing thanks to more in-depth management reporting.”

Having the right information to hand to maintain close control of the business during its rapid growth phase was essential, says Prentice.

“Now it is all about enhancing how we operate and ensuring we take on the right mix of work to secure our future.”

Prentice says the reseller support provided by Zeal Systems is both responsive and reliable. “Having a software company that understands New Zealand businesses and a support supplier only a phone call away has proven invaluable to us, because it lets us get things done with a minimum of fuss.”