**"There is nothing you can buy off the shelf that will do what Accredo does for us."**
Martin Saran, Inventory Manager, Elite Bathroomware (right), with David Scott, Top Flight Computer Services

# Automated order management links front- and back-office processes for improved business control

**Auckland bathroom product supplier, Elite Bathroomware (Elite), has experienced rapid growth in the last five years. With the help of Accredo reseller Top Flight Computer Services (Top Flight) and its Accredo accounting system, it has automated its sales order processing and sharpened its purchasing and dispatch practices to control its expansion better.**

"We were experiencing growing pains," says Elite's Inventory Manager, Martin Saran. "What used to work for us when there were just a handful of people in the business was beginning to hold us back."

Elite went through a significant growth spurt after moving to a new site in East Tamaki in 2016. With owner Josh Burkhead's knack for predicting trends in bathroom products and the pandemic causing people to spend more on home renovations – rather than holidays – sales exploded, and the company grew to a 30-strong workforce. In addition, it developed a trade department dealing directly with house developers and moved its stock to a new, dedicated warehouse.

The company's manual order management and stock control processes were becoming a brake on

efficiency. In response, the family-owned business asked David Scott of Top Flight to introduce more of the powerful functionality in Accredo to help move the company forward.

"Accredo is our key business management system. It's a solution that helps you manage and control your growth," says Saran. "We didn't contemplate replacing it because there is nothing you can buy off the shelf that will do everything that Accredo does.

"I don't believe vendors when they say you can buy this software and you won't need to customise. Every business is unique, and you need software to accommodate that."

**Manual process issues**

Elite asked Scott to tighten its sale order processes so it could invoice in a timelier manner and create better discipline in its inventory management.

"We are a sales-focused business," says Saran. "Our salespeople not only took orders but would also pick products from the warehouse and write up the invoice."

As business activity increased, mistakes crept in. For example, the wrong stock was sometimes picked, and invoices weren't sent out in a timely

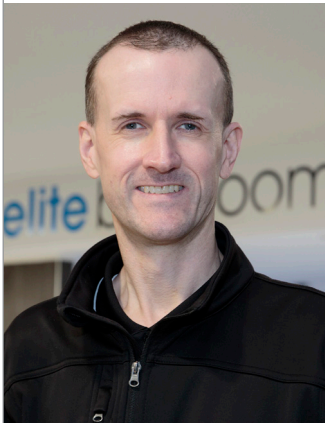# Automated order management links front- and back-office processes for improved business control…continued

fashion. "When you are small, you can do things manually, but when you grow, you need to automate and put better checks and balances in place," Saran explains.

"Our sales staff didn't have visibility of available stock. Due to long lead times, sometimes products meant for one job were being sold to another and weren't available when the time came for them to be dispatched."

## Automated stock allocation

But now, thanks to Scott, Elite has streamlined its key sales, inventory and despatch processes.

"We know exactly where our stock is, how much we have and what stock is already allocated to a sales order. Everything that is dispatched gets invoiced on the same day," says Saran.

"We benefit from the experience our reseller has gained from doing similar projects for other customers."

Martin Saran,
Elite Bathroomware

Elite is now using Accredo's powerful Purchase Ordering module to full effect. Once a sales order is assembled, the system automatically checks to see if stock is available. If it isn't, a purchase order is created and assigned to that particular job, so when the stock arrives, it is auto allocated and held against the order.

All purchase orders are collated to a central point which has improved decision-making about what quantities need to be bought.

"Everyone is now doing their correct role," says Saran. "We have admin executing the purchase orders, our salespeople have more time to create the quote and follow up with the customer, and our warehouse people are in control of picking and dispatching for each order."

## System alerts keep staff informed

Scott is using the triggers and alerts available in Accredo to meet Elite's specific business needs— keeping everyone on track and up-to-date.

"Our salespeople get two emails a day summarising what has arrived into stock," says Saran. "There are triggers to reorder stock when it runs low, and our

warehouse staff get a summary of what has been dispatched at the end of each day."

Elite's trade sales staff receive alerts if one of their assigned customers has interacted or ordered product with another salesperson. "It ensures everyone knows what everyone else is doing in the team," explains Saran.

The company also benefits from new dashboards that provide real-time information about inventory and dispatch processes.

"Our warehouse team knows what orders to prioritise, thanks to David's work with Accredo's Order Entry module. We have custom fields to indicate the status of the warehouse stock. Everyone can see if a product has been allocated, if it has been picked, its dispatch method, and when it is due out."

## Better data, better decision-making

Because that information is now available, Elite can precisely measure the amount of activity in the warehouse, says Saran.

"It has significantly increased visibility into the business," he explains. "The dashboard reporting helps with planning. We can compare order volumes against sales orders and slice and dice the data to quantify accurately. We can see when activity increases and determine if we need to hire more people to cope with the demand. We now have complete trust in the data."

Saran estimates another innovation is saving 30 minutes of administration time per day. "All our packing slips get scanned and attached into Accredo automatically. We have a reader that does them in bulk and assigns them to the correct sales order."

Having Scott available during the change-over process was invaluable, he says. "There are always teething issues, but the great thing about Accredo is that you have a dedicated support team, only a phone call away. David made tweaks to the system post go-live, and now it is smooth sailing. Everyone can find the information they need to perform their roles."

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