THE ANSWER COMPANY

OSTARA

Client
Ostara
Nutrient Recovery
Technologies Inc.

Industry
Chemical
Manufacturing

Offices
Vancouver, BC
Brandon, Florida

Operating Sites
Seven worldwide
(Six more under
construction)

System
Sage ERP X3

A Scalable, Sustainable ERP Solution for Ostara

Ostara Nutrient Recovery Technologies Inc. (Ostara) is a clean water company whose proprietary technology recovers otherwise polluting nutrients from municipal and industrial water streams and transforms them into a slow release, eco-friendly fertilizer. Ostara's solution has earned the company numerous awards and media attention. To power its fast growing operation, Ostara requires a scalable, flexible, and comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution. For Ostara, that solution is Sage ERP X3, backed by the professional team at The Answer Company.

Positioning for Growth
The company started out using Sage 50 Accounting, but four years ago began looking for a more robust ERP solution to better position it for growth and expansion.

"There were three major considerations in our selection of a new ERP solution," recalls Robert Crystal, controller for Ostara. "It needed to have strong core accounting attributes, as we have multiple corporate entities and operate in multiple currencies. The software needed to handle our fertilizer manufacturing process, and it needed to support our construction projects where we install and configure our equipment. Finding an integrated software solution that can address all of these requirements is a challenge."

Meet Diverse Business Needs
Ostara evaluated several potential solutions, including Microsoft Dynamics NAV and Syspro, before selecting Sage ERP X3, represented by The Answer Company.

"We selected Sage ERP X3 because it is one of the few solutions that incorporates such diverse functionality in a single solution," says Crystal. "It offers a Manufacturing Project Management (MPM) component, full process manufacturing and distribution capabilities, along with sophisticated financial reporting tools. Plus, The Answer Company impressed us with their knowledge and commitment to our satisfaction. They have a strong reputation, excellent references, and they are local, which was very important to us."

Configurable and Scalable
The company is on a rapid growth trajectory, and wisely geared up its technology infrastructure to support that growth.

"At first, we didn't need large portions of the advanced functionality Sage ERP X3 offers," says Crystal. "As we grow and incorporate our business processes into the software, we see the tremendous flexibility and configurability of Sage ERP X3. It easily adapts to the way we do business, and can be reconfigured going forward as our business processes evolve."

Ostara chose to deploy Sage ERP X3 as a web application, using a hosting service's servers. Users throughout the company—and throughout the world—can securely access the decision-making data they need. "We don't have a dedicated IT department, so hosting is a smart option for us," notes Crystal.

Manufacturing Excellence

Using the phosphorus and nitrogen recovered from municipal and industrial water streams, Ostara manufacturers fertilizer which is then sold on the wholesale market. Using Sage ERP X3's process manufacturing capabilities, Ostara can accurately account for each bag produced, monitor the quality of each bag, and effectively track raw material and finished good product movement throughout its warehouses and ultimately on to its customers.

"Going forward, this division of our company will see the most growth," says Crystal. "The fact that manufacturing and distribution

companies much larger than Ostara are successfully using Sage ERP X3 gives us confidence that it can scale to meet our growth."

Project Visibility and Accountability

Ostara's projects are large, complex, and can last over one year, making accurate and timely cost data highly important. "We sell equipment and then install and configure that equipment," explains Crystal. "Using Sage ERP X3 MPM, we can maintain a sub ledger for each project, tracking actual costs against budgeted costs, to help ensure each project stays on track. In addition, by using the actual costs associated with similar projects, we are able to improve our bidding accuracy on future projects."

Experience and Expertise

Crystal praises The Answer Company for its responsiveness and for the valued business advice its consultants provide. "We are a young business, and we appreciated the advice of the experts to help ensure we set up the software for maximum benefit. They were especially valuable in helping us set up our whole manufacturing process in the software—that's where their industry experience proved most strategic. The Answer Company has consultants who specialize in different areas of business, from manufacturing, to project accounting, to finance, and we benefit from their experience and expertise."

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