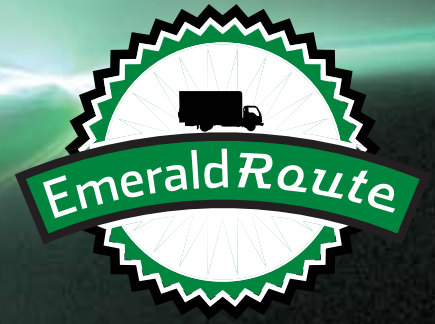




Success Story



Power Distributing is Bullish on EmeraldRoute

“We had a big mess on our hands,” says D.J. Romano, Vice-President of Power Distributing, LLC. “Our business software couldn’t handle our increasing transaction volume. It froze on us and lost data. We were handwriting invoices in the field. And we needed a streamlined system for billing national accounts. But our existing reseller couldn’t help us.”

Fortunately, Romano discovered Emerald TC, a Sage Software Business Partner and Master Integrator. His consultant introduced him to EmeraldRoute, a fully integrated solution specifically designed for soft drink distributors. With hand-held wireless devices for drivers and robust enterprise resource planning at headquarters, EmeraldRoute has automated practically everything for Power Distributing.

Energetic Growth

Power Distributing was spun off from Romano Brothers Beverage Company in 2000, and was one of the first exclusive Red Bull energy drink distributors in the Midwest. Double-digit growth every year has fueled an increase from 12 original employees to a staff of 100, serving Northern Illinois and Indiana.

“Growing so rapidly, we were crippled without automation,” says Romano. “With EmeraldRoute, our drivers visit seven more accounts each day, an increase of 28 percent. And at headquarters, we are processing 32 percent more invoices every day.”

Wisdom of Wireless

EmeraldRoute provides Power Distributing drivers with wireless handheld Pocket Advantage devices from Inventiv Software for route automation. Each handheld contains a complete database loaded with customer and pricing information—everything a rep needs to run their route. A thermal printer measuring just 4 inches wide lets reps create invoices from the delivery truck.

The wireless device integrates seamlessly with Sage MAS 500 in the main office. The field and back-office systems automatically update one another in real time. This is possible because, unlike competing systems, EmeraldRoute is based on SQL technology. It therefore avoids the need for flat files, data extractions or reloading, and eliminates complicated maintenance issues.

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CUSTOMER:

Power Distributing, LLC
Elmhurst, IL

COMPANY PROFILE:

Type of business:
Red Bull distributorship
Locations: 2
Employees: 100
Size: \$80 million sales

Users on Sage MAS 500: 27

CHALLENGE:

Previous software bogged down, locked up and could not accommodate national accounts

SOLUTION:

EmeraldRoute, an integration of Sage MAS 500 and Inventive route management software and hardware

RESULTS:

Field reps serve 28% more stops per day; 32% more invoices processed per day; AR cycle trimmed from 45 days to 30



No More Paper Invoices

“Our biggest pain had been with handwritten invoices,” explains Romano. “Drivers used to write tickets when they sold off their vehicle. They would also call in orders on their cell phones. Then these paper tickets were entered into our system, with inevitable delays and errors. It was even worse when drivers accepted payment in the field. Then we had a real headache matching payments to orders correctly.”

With EmeraldRoute, invoices are sent over the airwaves from the delivery truck to the head office, where data is automatically downloaded into Sage MAS 500 ERP, a robust financial management system. The system stores collection information, reconciles data when a deposit is made with the order, ties off the collection in accounts receivable, closes and transaction and posts it to the customer’s account.

“Just this piece of EmeraldRoute has trimmed our accounts receivable cycle by 30 percent, from 45 days down to just 30 days, which is terrific for cash flow,” says Romano. “Before we had an army of people doing postings, and especially on busy summer days, we had real issues getting our postings done. Now we have only two people doing processing collections—a terrific savings.”

Boosting Productivity

Another important feature of the handheld devices is the ability to enforce credit holds. “If a customer has given us a bad check, it used to take us several days to tell the rep not to take more orders from them. Now, the rep knows immediately when there’s a problem, and they can deal with the customer face to face. Often they are able to rectify the issue in the field and bring in more business from the customer that same day.”

Overall, EmeraldRoute has made Power Distributing reps much more productive. “Each rep used to see 25 customers a day,” notes Romano. “With EmeraldRoute, they’re seeing 32 a day, an increase of 28 percent. In addition, reps now collect important market information using the handhelds, which we’ll use to strengthen our competitive edge.”

Emerald Shines

Romano praises Emerald TC for their role in implementation. “We had had issues with resellers in the past,” he says. “So we were afraid that any migration to a new system would be costly, time consuming and difficult.

“Emerald changed our opinion completely,” he continues. “They were there to serve us, not to push us into a sale. First, they helped us redefine our business needs. Then they demonstrated how we

could get into Sage MAS 500 quickly and easily. Also, they stuck around until the job was completely done. They were so efficient that we were even able to push the go-live date forward by several weeks.

“Emerald TC’s solution transformed our operations. It trimmed overhead, streamlined field operations, and positioned us for even more dramatic growth,” Romano says.

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