

RK PRINT MOVE TO ACUMATICA

How RK Print transformed their business operations by switching to Acumatica Cloud ERP



INTRODUCTION

RK Print (RKP), a leading manufacturer of laboratory and benchtop equipment for the printing and coating industries, transitioned from their previous ERP system to Acumatica Cloud ERP with the help of Applied Business last year. We're about to explore how this move enabled them to modernise operations, improve efficiency, and gain real-time business insights.

Recently, we caught up with their Managing Director Andy James about the transition and subsequent changes that have occurred as a result.

ABOUT RK PRINT

Established in 1962, RK Print has built a strong reputation for quality and innovation. The company provides advanced sample preparation equipment and reel-to-reel pilot coating machines used in R&D environments, particularly in the development of sustainable packaging solutions. They employ 28 people. Their success is driven by:

- A well-respected brand known for quality
- A loyal, global customer base
- A skilled workforce and efficient operations
- Strong financial stability

AN OUTDATED SYSTEM

RK Print had been using their previous ERP system for many years. 'The previous system was viewed as the be-all and end-all for managing the business, despite the fact that its limitations were frustrating our users,' said Andy.

According to Andy, the principal driver for seeking a new ERP system was 'To look for efficiencies in production and manufacturing. In the face of rising costs, supply chain increases, and increasing overheads such as energy costs, rates, taxes etc, I knew that just hiking up our prices was not the answer to maintaining our profit margins.

With a need to stay competitive in the marketplace, I saw looking at the cost of manufacturing as being key to increasing profit margins

Outdated, paper-based processes needed updating and automating, and I saw the need for an ERP to look outward at production and not just the customer-facing front end of the business.'

ERP CHANGE AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Implement a brand-new ERP
- Transition to Cloud
- Find efficiencies in manufacturing
- Replace a well known system

Benefits

- Enhanced Inventory Management
- Improved procurement efficiency
- Better customer service
- Real-time business insights
- 360° view of entire business

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Before choosing Acumatica, RK Print evaluated a number of leading ERP solutions, including SAP BI and NetSuite. However, these did not align with their needs as closely as Acumatica.

So Why Acumatica?

- A Superior User Experience – ‘Our decision to move to Acumatica started with the very intuitive user experience. Moving up and down through layers of information, accessing pages within pages through active links was refreshingly slick compared to what we were used to.’
- Role-Based Dashboards – ‘Acumatica pushes relevant data to users instead of requiring them to search for it.’
- The Overall Feel – ‘From a production perspective the Acumatica system just has that feel of being designed by manufacturers, for manufacturers.’



DURING IMPLEMENTATION WE WERE STILL GETTING THE PRODUCT OUT THE DOOR AND ON TIME.

I NOW FIND MYSELF WONDERING HOW WE MANAGED TO RUN THIS BUSINESS BEFORE ACUMATICA!

ANDY JAMES
RK PRINT

THE IMPLEMENTATION: A SMOOTH & WELL PLANNED TRANSITION

RK Print signed up with Acumatica in March 2023 and went live in August 2023. ‘The process went very well,’ said Andy. ‘The main reason was that we spent quality time on the planning phase. With the excellent knowledge and the transitioning experience of the Applied Business team, we identified which areas of the business were priorities and precisely how and when the transition needed to take place.’

Key factors for success included:

- A phased implementation approach, ensuring stability during the transition
- Process Champions selected from within RK Print to lead the change
- Parallel system usage to prevent disruption to customers



THE CASE FOR THE CLOUD

RK Print’s previous ERP was an exclusively on-premise system, and the move to the Cloud with Acumatica has been a drastic and welcome change.

‘It’s just more fluid and more accessible. Being able to work from anywhere, anytime on practically any device has been a game changer.

We don’t have to worry about hardware, the server, software updates, backups etc. To us, Cloud was a real selling point and it has taken away a lot of the worries we used to have as well as being more secure.’



THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION WAS LARGELY INVISIBLE TO OUR CUSTOMERS



MANAGING THE TRANSITION PERIOD

It would be reasonable for decision-makers in any business to feel apprehensive about suffering from a form of slump or dip in performance during the transition to a new ERP system, but this was not the lived reality at RK Print, according to the Managing Director.

'Importantly, the period of transition was largely invisible to our customers. Acumatica recreated all our standard forms in the same layout and format as they were used to seeing. During implementation, we were still getting the product out the door and on time'



OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Regardless of how well-planned and coordinated an ERP change is, challenges will always exist and obstacles need to be overcome when dealing with such a fundamental shift in a business. The most notable of these for RK Print were:

- Adopting Inventory Management – 'Moving to an inventory management system, the foundation stone for the whole system, and instilling the discipline in users to accurately record and input stock usage was the biggest cultural change. By focusing on key users first, adoption was smoother.'
- Creating Bill of Materials (BoMs) – 'Creating thousands of BoMs was a significant task, but we trained a dedicated team to handle it more efficiently and share the pain! Key people really stepped up to the plate'

THE RESULTS: TANGIBLE BUSINESS BENEFITS

Since implementing Acumatica Cloud ERP, RK Print has experienced significant improvements across a number of areas within their business:

1. Enhanced Inventory Management
 - Stock outages have dramatically reduced
 - Manufacturing bottlenecks have been eliminated, leading to better production flow
 - Previously outsourced components are now manufactured in-house
2. Improved Procurement Efficiency
 - Automated Purchase Orders have eliminated duplication and ensure timely restocking
3. Better Customer Service
 - Sales teams now have real-time access to order statuses
 - Standardised forms ensure a seamless experience for customers
4. Real-Time Business Insights
 - Meaningful management data enables faster, smarter decision-making
 - Role-based dashboards provide critical business metrics instantly



IT'S LIKE WE'D BEEN DRIVING A FORD ESCORT AND NOW WE'RE
BEHIND THE WHEEL OF A ROLLS ROYCE



THE MD'S FINAL WORD

The transition to Acumatica was very much Andy James' baby. Such a transformation and all of the subsequent changes – whether positive or negative – were always going to be the responsibility of the Managing Director. Andy has no regrets about his decision and it's only fitting that we end with his words explaining why.

'The project has been very, very good for business with tangible results, so I would do it again, without doubt.

I now have the tools to identify inefficiencies, and we have already made good inroads into improving performance and driving down manufacturing costs.

It's like we'd been driving a Ford Escort for years and now we're behind the wheel of a Rolls Royce. I now find myself wondering how we managed to run this business before Acumatica!



TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS WITH APPLIED BUSINESS & ACUMATICA

Contact Applied Business, your trusted Acumatica UK partner, to explore how Acumatica Cloud ERP can revolutionise your operations like it did for RK Print.

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