

WIRSAM SCIENTIFIC CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

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- Alex Wagner, Director - Wirsam Scientific*



INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES, EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS: WIRSAM SCIENTIFIC'S NETSUITE JOURNEY WITH BLUEBRIDGE ONE

LOCATION

South Africa

INDUSTRY

Wholesale Distribution

EMPLOYEES

11 - 50

VERTICAL

Industry Equipment &
Supplies

PREVIOUS APPLICATION

Sage L100

SOLUTION

NetSuite

INTRODUCTION

- Leading suppliers of laboratory instrumentation in Africa.
- Operates from 5 sites in South Africa with a team of 45 people.
- Diverse customer base across a variety of sectors performing laboratory testing.

Established in 1968 by Peter Wirsam, the company that bears his name is one of the leading suppliers of laboratory instrumentation in Southern Africa. Based in South Africa, the key markets for Wirsam Scientific & Precision Equipment are predominantly sub-Saharan, with customers located chiefly in the Eastern and Southern parts of the continent.

With its head office in Johannesburg, the business operates from four other sites across South Africa's major business centres of Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Vanderbijlpark. A team of 45 people work together, ensuring that laboratories across the region are able to procure scientific instrumentation and access technical and support services to function efficiently.

Wirsam serves a diverse customer base across a variety of sectors, including universities, petrochemical, veterinary, healthcare, farming, utilities, steel and manufacturing. Laboratory testing may be a business-critical activity, and there is a need for Wirsam to continually seek to enhance its operational speed and efficiency.



CHALLENGES

- A number of issues associated with mature on-premise IT architecture.
- Order management and invoicing and accounting systems didn't talk to each other.
- Risks resulting from on-premise server infrastructure.
- Had become dependent on an IT specialist who resigned.

Wirsam Director, Alex Wagner, says, "Like many long established businesses we had developed a mature on-premise IT architecture and there were a few issues. Firstly, we were using two separate systems, one for quoting, capturing orders and customer relationship management and one for invoicing and our wider accounting requirements."

"The two databases didn't talk to each other and we used manual processes to turn orders over to invoicing. This also made co-ordinating credit control with the release of orders for delivery a labour-intensive process," says Alex Wagner.

He continues: "Secondly, our in-house server infrastructure also brought risks, potentially inviting theft and increased insurance costs. Thirdly, we experienced power outages as a result of load shedding, cable theft and various other reasons. This impacted systems availability causing business interruption. Finally, more reliable backup and improving our ability to recover from a disaster were also important considerations."

"So, things had been building for a while. However, we reached something of a turning point when our in-house IT specialist resigned. The IT specialist had programming skills and was continually developing the order management system. Losing this skillset left us with a choice of recruiting a replacement or choosing to do things differently," says Alex Wagner.

SOLUTION

- Selected NetSuite after a 3-month research project evaluating leading solution vendors.
- Wanted a one-stop solution from a single service provider that avoided integration issues.
- From first contact with BlueBridge One to go-live in 3-months.

The resignation was a catalyst that allowed Wirsam to re-think IT and systems. Alex Wagner says, "I did my homework and over three months I researched practically every leading ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) product on the market. I also considered related solutions that could also be integrated to allow us to make the jump and run the business in the cloud."

After boiling it down to a shortlist of three ERP systems, Wirsam finally selected NetSuite. The decision was strongly influenced by the desire for a one-stop solution from a single service provider. Why choose a hybrid solution composed of separate CRM, ERP and a warehouse management component? There was also the wish to avoid an integration project on the grounds that it might mean a longer deployment timescale, increased costs and complicated support.

As the leading NetSuite service provider in southern Africa, Wirsam engaged BlueBridge One at the end of 2015. On 1st March 2016, the project hit the go-live target date. The system unites the key elements of sales orders, invoicing and purchase orders and provides a range of features and capabilities which streamlines processes and operations throughout the business. Although a proportion of the firm's orders are placed with vendors to fulfil customer special orders, the system helps manage 20,000 SKUs, many of them maintenance parts and consumables.



RESULTS

- Faster operations and increased value of roles performed by clerks.
- Multi-currency simplifies international buying and selling operations.
- Reduces overall costs, inclusive of NetSuite licensing.
- Generates cases and enables project-based accounting.
- Implements email through the CRM database for quotes, purchasing, marketing and QM.
- Excellent technical and knowledge transfer support from BlueBridge One.
- Operates with much higher confidence with faster and better customer service.

Uniting orders, invoicing and accounting means it is now simpler for Wirsam to check if customer accounts are up to date and clear special orders for delivery. The Invoice Clerk and the Purchasing Logistics Clerk that were responsible for the manual processes that linked the legacy systems now have reduced workloads, enabling them to add value by becoming more proactive and taking on other duties.

Alex Wagner says, "Our operations are international and we buy and sell in Euros, US dollars, Rands and other currencies. NetSuite is multi-currency and this removes the headache of manually dealing with exchange rates. Previously we would have to manually look up the Forex rates and calculate the equivalent currency values."

He continues: "Even when factoring in the NetSuite licensing, making the jump to the cloud has reduced our costs. We've seen savings from removing servers, lower energy consumption and smaller insurance premiums. The major cost saving is the IT specialist's salary. We don't need programming skills, so we are no longer exposed to the risk of being person dependent."

There are some useful features NetSuite provides which Wirsam didn't really have before. NetSuite generates cases and provides project-based accounting, something which the firm was previously unable to do. It gets much better visibility of the profitability of a project, enabling additional value for customers by providing input from a project perspective.

Handling email within NetSuite introduces another level of convenience. It implements email marketing through the CRM database, enabling customer quotes, purchase orders and the monthly email marketing program to be managed by the system. As an ISO 9000 accredited company, Wirsam performs customer satisfaction surveys. The system makes it straightforward to push out customer satisfaction surveys and access the survey reports for the purposes of Quality Management from within NetSuite.

Alex Wagner says, "To help us be as self-sufficient as possible, I've learned HTML coding which allows easy document layout changes. Within Netsuite it is also relatively simple to create custom fields as required and also to customise reports. BlueBridge One's support has been excellent and they have helped me to learn and improve my knowledge as we have moved forward, tuning and tweaking the system to get more value out of NetSuite."



Discussions on future development currently include implementing electronic service cards. Service jobs are currently documented using paper-based job cards and there is a significant potential to transform efficiency in this part of the business by going digital.

"Overall, Wirsam now enjoys much smoother and efficient operations and operates with much higher confidence. We see greater accuracy because we encounter far fewer errors, and generally stock on the system matches SKUs on the shelf. We provide better customer service and it's far faster to do things. In some cases, we have reduced service delivery lead times by up to 1 week," Alex Wagner says.

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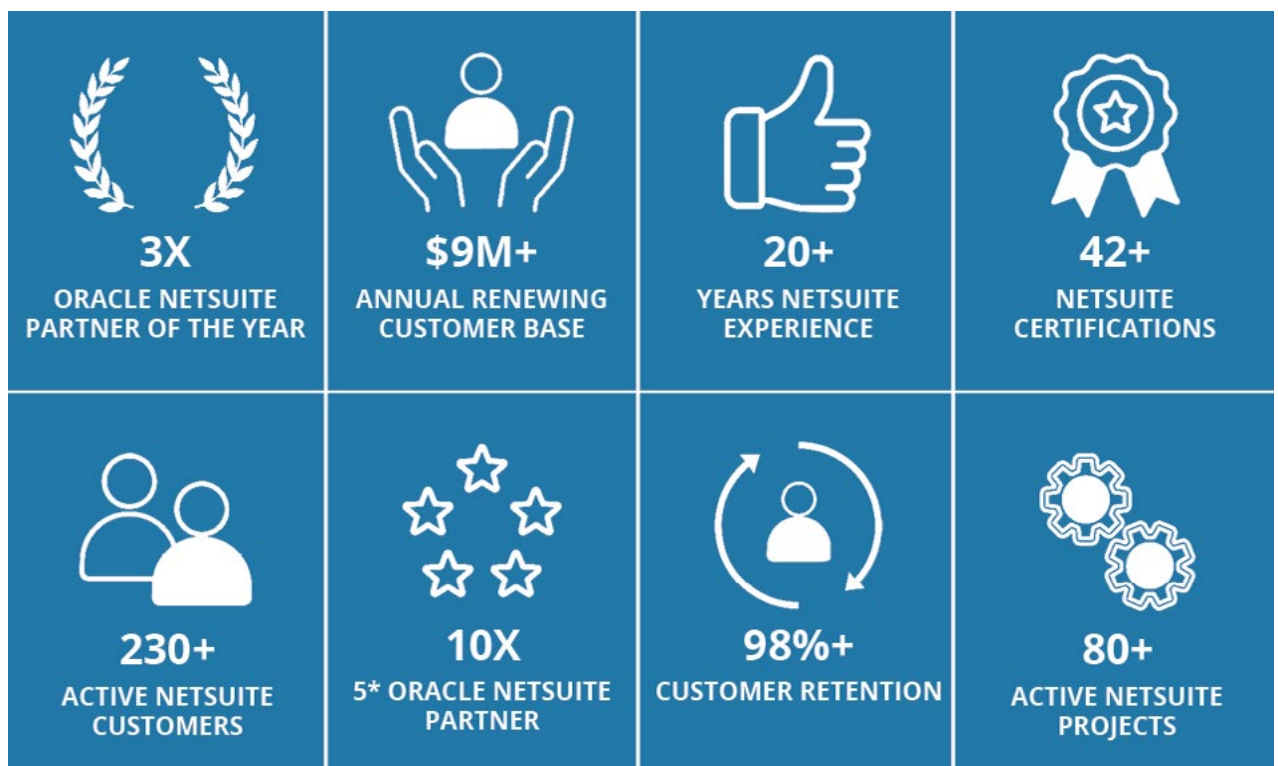
ABOUT BLUEBRIDGEONE

BlueBridge One is currently ranked as the leading Oracle NetSuite Solution Provider for EMEA. As a three time winner of the Oracle NetSuite Partner of the Year award, we are the only Oracle NetSuite EMEA Partner to have attained international 5-Star status over the past 10 consecutive years.

Since 2003, fast growing companies from across multiple industry sectors, including Food & Beverages, Fintech, Power & Renewables, Travel & Tourism, Unified Commerce, have selected us as their trusted NetSuite implementation and support partner of choice.

Skills and experience are a key component of delivering any successful implementation project. Our Professional Services team holds a combined total of 42 NetSuite Certifications spanning ERP, Development, Ecommerce and System Administration. By partnering with us, not only do our Customers experience the full power of the NetSuite platform, they also benefit from extensive product and industry best practice knowledge accumulated over many years.

On-going Customer satisfaction is important. Our highly rated Support Team is available to all Customers over the lifetime of their investment, while dedicated Customer Success Managers are allocated to ensure each Customer maximises the value of their NetSuite investment. With offices in the United Kingdom, South Africa and Romania, BlueBridge One is an accredited NetSuite Solution Partner, an accredited NetSuite Developer Network Partner and a NetSuite accredited Commerce Agency Program Partner.



BLUEBRIDGEONE

AND YOUR BUSINESS

At BlueBridge One our goal is to understand our Customer needs and help drive transformational change in areas of their business where we can truly make an impact.

OUR SERVICES

Assistance and advice negotiating Subscription Contracts with NetSuite

1 Year FREE support via our OneUp•Essential managed service

Life-time Dedicated Customer Success Account Manager

OUR EXPERIENCE

20+ years focuses solely on NetSuite

Substantial industry best practice

The BB1 Way Methodology

OUR PROMISE

Low-risk

On-time

In-budget



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