

# SPEARHEAD

## CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

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## INDUSTRY

Spearhead International is a leading company in the food and agriculture industry that has been running operations for over 50 years since 1966. Internationally, the group farms approximately 90,000 hectares of farmland across Europe and the UK and sells produce to suppliers, including supplying crisp manufacturing companies with potatoes for their products. The company also farms grains, vegetables, seed crops and more.

The company leases all its farmland rather than owning it, allowing them to expand over a wide area to grow as many crops as possible. This allows the company to cooperate with third-party growers to supply them with agricultural products and, additionally, to work with and provide services for independent farmers. This has resulted in the business doubling its farmed land over the past 10 years and expanding operations in five countries including the UK, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania and Slovakia.

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## THE CHALLENGES

Due to the widespread nature of operations, the businesses in the UK under Spearhead worked internally. This meant that these businesses operated with their own ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) systems, resulting in a lack of cohesive structure for the company as a whole. Spearhead knew they needed to implement some kind of enterprise-level ERP system that could handle multiple currencies, languages and entities. Nick Flack - Group IT Manager, explains that "we wanted to introduce a new ERP system, we were looking at it from an enterprise level and we were looking at it saying "well, we want it to be multi-currency for sure, as we're dealing with all these currencies and we also wanted multi-language and multi entity.""

Spearhead also knew they wanted something cloud based, as they did not want to have to worry about maintaining and updating their own servers as this would be costly as well as complicated due to the international nature of their business. Mr Flack said that "we wanted something cloud based rather than sitting on a server in some cupboard somewhere. [...] Netsuite is purely cloud-based, it's all updated automatically. We don't even have to think about the machine it's sitting on and making sure that's up to date". Invoices was another area of improvement that management knew they needed to improve on. There was currently no system-wide approval process for invoices, meaning that authorizing invoices was a slow and painful process requiring employees to effectively physically hand pieces of paper to each other in order for the approval process to work.

## SOLUTION

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Spearhead decided to approach BlueBridge One rather than independently approaching NetSuite directly. This was because the company and their management had very little knowledge on how NetSuite would integrate into their overall systems architecture, meaning they needed expert guidance from BlueBridge One to help them along their journey. They knew they had the tools outside of their current financial system, but they needed help integrating everything together under NetSuite.

Spearhead began by slowly implementing NetSuite within their financial division, giving about 20 employees access to the software to see how it coped with their needs. "We did a financial lift-and-shift" he explains, "we picked up data from SAGE and shifted it into NetSuite. That was the first part of the process". Spearhead began NetSuite implementation in 2017 and finished their first full implementation in early 2018 for their employees working in finance. As operations grew, they moved on to implementing the system for their operational employees:

"We wanted to integrate with external databases. We're now doing dispatches with iPads in the fields where potatoes are grown. You can imagine trucks turning up, loading up with potatoes and dispatched using an iPad into Netsuite. [...] The process in the business changed where we wanted more operational people involved, and we now have a NetSuite environment with about 80 people. The initial idea was on the financial side, but it ended up coming across the business." This wider implementation began in 2018 and wrapped in 2019, taking just under a year to fully implement NetSuite across all aspects of the business.

## RESULTS

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With a large body of Spearhead's NetSuite being used by employees in operations, this has led to the speed and accuracy of information regarding dispatches to customers being greatly improved. This is thanks to NetSuite's cloud functionality allowing any operational employee with an iPad to log the delivery as soon as it goes out.

"The more accurate and timely the information going in, such as when a specific dispatch happens, or when something's being received, the better the process can support it and make speedier decisions" Spearhead also found that NetSuite solved their invoice problem by allowing their teams to communicate and verify invoices digitally. Their approvals are now all done automatically, improving the business cash flow and creating a more streamlined work experience. Mr Flack testifies that "Our process of being able to bill for products that we've dispatched is now faster and that improves cash flow. If you can get your invoice out more quickly and more accurately, the faster you're more likely to get money"

At the end of 2019 the COVID pandemic began to take hold of the world and businesses across the globe struggled to keep up with a rapidly shifting work environment. However, with NetSuite, Spearhead was able to adapt to the changes quickly thanks to the platform's digital functionality. Mr Flack explains that "if we hadn't adopted NetSuite, we would've been in all sorts of pain trying to deal with that. [...] What it does show is the huge shift from paper-based to an electronic based system has enabled us to take the lockdown process in our stride. Had we continued the way we were, it would've caused us all sorts of pain."

Spearhead is now looking to expand its NetSuite usage internationally to their farms in Europe to replace legacy ERP systems currently in use and replicate the success they experienced whilst using the system in the UK.

# 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 seven consecutive years.

Since 2003, more than 165 growing companies from across multiple industry sectors, including product distribution, services and not-for-profit, 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 your business needs, to provide industry best practice advice and to deliver quality services and solutions you would expect from the UK and EMEA's leading NetSuite Partner.

### OUR SERVICES

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Assistance and advice negotiating Subscription Contracts with NetSuite

Life-time FREE support

Life-time Dedicated Customer Success Account Manager

### OUR EXPERIENCE

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17 years focuses solely on NetSuite

Substantial industry best practice

Proven implementation methodology

### OUR PROMISE

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Low-risk

On-time

In-budget



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