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RODE helps Sujana in its 'steely' resolve to be among the best!

Company Name: Sujana

Headquarters: Tamil Nadu

Industry: Manufacturing

Products and Services: Structural Steel and TMT Bars

Website: www.sujana.com

ABOUT SUJANA GROUP

If you've ever run shoulder to shoulder in a race, you'll know just how important the little details are. All too often, the line between the good, better and best is very, very thin. Join Sujana Metal Products Limited (SMPL) in its quest to find out what sets the 'best' player a cut above the rest.

Shouldering heavy responsibilities...day after day

As a leading manufacturer of TMT (Thermo Mechanically Treated) bars that are used in construction, infrastructure and other sectors, SMPL knows the importance of the 'little details'. After all, in this competitive industry, every little ounce matters! What started as a re-rolling mill soon grew to a sophisticated and automated multilocation, multifunctional organisation. The fast-track growth has not been easy and the company has had to deal with a vast number of challenges, the biggest being better control over business operations.

"When we started operations in 1988, we took a very traditional approach and most of our processes were manual," says Manivannan Anandan, VP, Operations, SMPL. "But when we started expanding our operations and our product range, we began to feel the burden of relying on our own strength."

Over the last 20 odd years, the company has catered to a number of high-profile clients and has clinched its position as a leading secondary steel producer within the country. The company is ISO 9001:2000 certified and ensures strict quality control through a three-stage inspection system at each of the production stages. There is also a provision to conduct inspections at 8 to 10 stages during any manufacturing process.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Two is better than one

"The company had been growing so fast and in so many directions that they were almost outrunning themselves! Though they realised that they needed a robust technology to cope, they didn't have time to stop and gear up because stopping would mean loss of time. What they wanted was a technology partner who could 'fit them up' while they kept racing," says Sukumar R, General Manager—Sales, RODE.

Though the company did have routine technology systems in place to handle its management-related processes, these were far from sufficient to handle the increase in transaction volumes and operational expenses.

"We wanted to create a culture of having a readily available organisational database that our employees across locations could refer to. We wanted to make a distinct move towards being a futuristic company that was scalable and flexible, and that could adapt to and meet growth/expansion-related challenges," says Anandan.

The company was also in the process of spearheading a new customer-centric trend. Conventionally, the lead time to process an order was decided by the company and not the client. However, SMPL wanted to change that by aligning its production schedules to suit the needs and deadlines of its clients. Not only would this help them benefit the clients, it would also help them optimise the utilisation of their plants.

Moreover, the company, which had a capacity of 45,000 tonnes of steel per month, was getting set

to enhance the production capacity to 1 lakh tonnes per month. With such a tall order, Sujana realised that they had to rope in the power of technology, they had to unleash the full potential of the company and they had to outdo their performance in the last two decades!

What the company wanted was a competent technological partner - specifically, an ERP solution which could address the burgeoning complexities and link various disparate processes to create a seamless system.

THE RODE SOLUTION

Finding the best better half!

As a company, SMPL realised that the way forward had to come in the form of a system that would blend with their existing systems and processes. It would have to help them optimise their strengths and downplay their weaknesses.

“We analysed several solutions focusing on each solution’s pros and cons. We would compare our list of own requirements against each of the solutions at hand. Ramco seemed to provide the perfect fit and we initially decided to go ahead with Ramco’s on-premise model. However, we eventually zeroed in on its web-hosted model, Ramco OnDemand ERP (RODE).”

There were two reasons for this. One—an on-premise implementation would take an upfront investment of at least Rs. 1 crore and put a lot of pressure on the organisation; two - it would entail a long time for implementation and could not, as had been initially envisioned, be implemented while the organisation was on the run. RODE’s cost and its swift implementation therefore, proved to be major factors in its favour.

Can this really be it?

Yet, arriving at the decision was not quite so easy. Anandan recalls, “ We did have our share of second thoughts and doubts. We wondered whether the Web-ERP system would satisfy the organisational requirements, whether it would deliver value for money, whether it would really be easy to implement and so on. Above all, we were concerned about the issue of data security. Gradually, we realised that the data would be equally or more secure on the Ramco platform than it was under our existing system.”

Another deciding factor was that RODE would help the SMPL management focus on their core function—manufacturing steel products. Having a Web-based ERP meant that the company would not have to hire an elaborate IT team—definitely, an area of concern, since retaining IT talent in a manufacturing company would prove to be difficult. The company now manages with a small team having basic IT skills to render the basic level of support to users.

Braving the future together

“Once we made up our minds there was no looking back,” says Anandan. “In fact, we took two whole months to list all that we wanted from the ERP system. At each location, the expectations and practices were different. Thus, we analysed and adopted the best of all the practices, across locations. We standardised each of our key processes and noted those down as requirements, both at the global as well as at the micro-level and discussed these with Ramco. Ramco has a sophisticated process to understand what customers want, so they were able to add great value.”

The entire process took six months and brought 100 users on board the RODE platform. Apart from production, all other processes like finance, logistics, inventory management, etc. have been covered by the ERP system.

[A whole new life together](#)

“The cultural change that has come about post ERP deployment is heartening, especially with regard to how people are leveraging organisational data. Almost about 80 per cent of our manpower is making use of the organisation database,” affirms Anandan.

Before implementing RODE, the data collection and report generation process was tedious and time consuming since the process had to be carried out manually. With the arrival of ERP, data can be collected at the point of origin and users can generate the kind of reports they require. Besides enabling anytime-anywhere access to consolidated data from multiple locations, the ERP implementation has enabled the availability of real-time information across the organisation from its different units and subunits.

“Considering SMPL’s distributed set-up (with factories and offices in different locations across India), the hosted model has proved to be an ideal fit. All it required for the organisation to go live with the system was an Internet connection with good broadband connectivity. Now users at SMPL can access the ERP from anywhere, anytime,” says Sukumar.

[Can RODE do it for you?](#)

Of course it can! After all, the cloud is the limit! To find out more on how RODE can be stretched (or shrunk) to answer your need, call 1800 425 6667.

CASE STUDY SNAP SHOT

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Disparate systems incapable of handling large transaction volumes
- Difficulty in compiling information across various locations
- Plant capacity not being optimised
- ERP systems that would blend with existing processes

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

- Comprehensive, integrated online solution covering all business domains
 - Support to manage multiple projects
 - No IT infrastructure expenditure
- Easy scalability—users can be added and incorporated in the business process based on increased project activity within a day's notice
- Better disaster recovery and maintenance, which is part of every Ramco OnDemand ERP model
 - Better cost control
- Online financial statements and cash flow projections
 - Anytime, anywhere access

OBJECTIVES

- Link disparate processes to create a seamless system
 - Improve data accuracy
- Facilitate quicker availability of data
- Track information from source of action
 - Improve operational efficiency and control

EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

Non-integrated information systems

BENEFITS

- Availability of customised reports across locations
- Effective data separation across the sister organisations and their subunits
- Availability of consolidated level trial balance for the steel division
- Improved traceability of financial transactions
- Access to consolidated data from multiple locations
 - Availability of holistic view of processes
 - Better management of statutory taxes
- Online availability of financial data, including fund flow and cash flow analysis
 - Trial balance and financial statements under both integrated and non-integrated accounting systems

WHY RODE?

- Pay-per-use feature
- Downgrade or upgrade as per requirements
- Quick implementation time
 - Open to customisation
 - Affordability

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