Success Story
Sonamet

Epicor ERP solidifies business output and processes for leading construction company

Company Facts

Overview
X   Location—Luanda and Lobito, Angola
X   Industry—Oil and Gas
X   Website—www.sonamet.com

Success Highlights

Challenges
X   Unstable, unreliable, non-integrated and heavily customised environment
X   Currency Management and Asset Management
X   Legislative and holding company financial reporting

Solution
X   Epicor® ERP

Benefits
X   Stronger and reliable financial reporting and currency management
X   Stable, fast with limited customisations
X   Integrated and centralised system support within one overall system.

Sonamet is a state-of-the-art Engineering, Procurement and Construction development project delivery company focusing on the oil and gas industry in Angola. Sonamet's mission is to provide state-of-the-art, quality fabrications and survey services to Oil and Gas companies for both shallow and deep-water projects. In the pursuit of developing a true and ingrained success culture, Sonamet continually strives to improve all its activities. "We are committed to achieving high standards in compliance with both product and foreign customer requirements." Said Luis Paixão – Financial Manager at Sonamet.

"Best practice is continually shared internally with improvement teams to optimise organisational processes, the interface with all stakeholders and to provide an enhanced level of service." Paixão continued.

Challenging business environment

Sonamet embarked on the journey of selecting and implementing a full end-to-end ERP system since the Sage domestic finance software system that they were using was discontinued. Within other areas of the business Pro-Watch was used for Security Management, and Maximo was utilised as the Warehouse Management System.

This placed Sonamet in a scenario where the costs of maintaining and supporting multiple systems was high, and, they never had one integrated solution managing the entire business from cradle to grave. "Previous system implementations left Sonamet with disparate systems, from which the reporting results could never be trusted as accurate and correct, causing user and shareholder distrust and frustration." Said Paixão.

Making decisions for growth

During the evaluation process, SAP, Primavera and Epicor where compared, with Epicor being the final selected product. "As a business, we felt that Epicor could manage all our needs from A-Z in one centralised repository for Financial, Distribution, Procurement and Delivery Management, eliminating additional expenses on maintaining and integrating more than one system"; says Paixão. "One of our main decision-making criteria was to have a robust and solid platform that can provide accurate and up-to-date information to better support our decision making, and operational efficiency. Epicor covered all of these bases for us" Sonamet had a very limited budget to work with and was looking for an ERP solution that would be functional, stable, provide the correct decision-making information, as well as bridging the gap for financial reporting to their holding companies that they were experiencing, and after due evaluation, knew that Epicor would be the appropriate solution to help them achieve this goal.

"Epicor is designed as a fully-fledged and functional ERP that supports all our main business areas namely Finance, Procurement, Inventory Management, Asset Management and Services Management." Said Paixão. "It also allows the possibility and future growth to now expand our business management and functioning into previously uncharted territory for us namely Sales, Projects and Fabrication" Paixão continued. "This would allow Sonamet to achieve our overall objective of better decision making, reporting and reducing our cost of non-quality delivery."

"Having previously worked with partners that could not provide a non-customised, stable, and fit for purpose solution, Sonamet knew from the onset that this time we wanted a strong, knowledgeable and trust-worthy partner, who could provide us with an industry best practice system that is fully functional and not heavily customised.

We were willing to adjust and review the way we work operationally every day to fit with the standard best practices as found within the solution, to provide us the future proof and ready for growth ERP system we were looking for." said Paixão.

"At the start of our engagement with Sonamet, we found that their biggest output challenges, with their current systems, was:

- Correct revaluation of currencies and proper currency management between transactional and reporting currencies,
- Asset management and depreciation,
- Multiple financial book management
- A heavily customised environment (in excess of 60) has created a lack of stability and trust within the system."

Says Scott McKenzie, Managing Director of New Era Solutions. "We knew that in implementing Epicor correctly, using the standard system processes as far as possible (the final implementation only had 4 of customisations deployed) along with our almost 20 years of experience in making ERP solutions work, we could solve these problems for Sonamet and provide them with a solid foundation to grow and expand their business." McKenzie continued.

With the Epicor system fully operational within Sonamet, management has now started reaping the results of the correct information being available for decision making.

"The deployment of Epicor ERP within Sonamet has delivered to the highest standard and we now have a system that can support speed and simplicity in execution and operations, with more alignment than previously to local legislation, internal procedures and best practice management." Stated Paixão.

Upgrading to Epicor 10.2.200

After the initial implementation completed in January of 2018 (just four months after inception), Sonamet had spent time on stabilising the newly deployed environment ensuring that all their users are comfortable and proficient with the Epicor Solution.

Along with this, Sonamet were able to greatly reduce duplication of work, through overall reporting, and restore their faith in a fully integrated ERP solution that is able to support Angolan legislative audit requirements and the reporting requirements from their holding company.

When Epicor 10.2.200 was released the decision to upgrade was an easy one for Sonamet. Over and above the benefits the business had already realised since go live in January 2018, the latest version of Epicor also resolved specific functionality sets required by Sonamet at that point in time.

The upgrade was completed successfully in two months and Sonamet continued functioning operationally without disruption to the business on go live the 8th of October 2018.

Sonamet and New Era Solutions also performed preliminary testing to ensure that the Epicor solution will support new tax and legislation requirements that are expected in Anglo towards the middle of 2019. Sonamet is now comfortable in the fact that they know their current ERP system will be able to support these requirements at the time that it is needed.

"New Era Solutions firmly believes in building long term partnerships and investing in our customers on all levels during our relationships with them and we take a very pro-active, professional and hands-on approach, on all levels, during our interactions and engagements.

We don't believe in delivering service at arm's length, in the traditional service provider model, and feel that a journey such as this is a road shared between customer and delivery partner. We have been, and will continue, to work with Sonamet to fully engrain the Epicor ERP solution in their business, restore user trust and confidence, and building on these foundations to future-proof the Sonamet environment even more than what it already has been." Said McKenzie

Immediate benefits and future plans

"Sonamet are already in planning phases to expand our ERP horizons within Epicor through starting the use of the Project Management and Service Management modules, focusing and enhancing the Sonamet activity specification processes more. "Said Paixão.

Paixão concluded in stating that: "New Era Solutions has been a great partner in embracing this project with Sonamet, even with the Portuguese and English language barrier that was a hindering factor from the start. The Epicor ERP implementation has been executed and delivered well, and the most important and key issues identified from previous versions have now been resolved. We now have a less customised, more stable, and trust worthy Epicor installation in place."

"Sonamet is continually working on raising user acceptance and trust levels, and we know that with the Epicor ERP solution we now have in place, we can take our business to the next level."

About New Era Solutions

Founded in 1999, New Era Solutions began with a core focus on ERP implementations in the Financial Services and Distribution sectors. Our customer base has broadened significantly and today most of our customers fall into the Distribution, Manufacturing, Retail and Service Based sectors.

At New Era Solutions, our sole purpose is to improve our customers' lives. We do this by transforming ERP software into innovative solutions that provide total control and the foundation for growth. We believe in building long term relationships with our customers that are based on trust, open communication and adding real value to their businesses

New Era Solutions fully understands and drives full lifecycle implementations of complete business solutions for medium and large businesses in this space. With customers across South Africa, United Kingdom and North America.

New Era Solutions, an Epicor value added reseller for close on to two decades, specialises in integrated and customisable IT solutions in partnership with global specialists in ERP, Warehouse Management Systems (WMS), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Mobility. Offering a single-source solution where customers benefit from one seamless working relationship that has all the right connections.

About Epicor

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software that is designed around the needs of our Manufacturing, Distribution, Retail and Service industry customers. More than 40 years of experience with our customer's unique business processes and operational requirements is built into every solution, in the cloud or on premise. With a deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions spur growth while managing complexity. The result is powerful solutions that free your resources, so you can grow your business. For more information, connect with Epicor or visit www.epicor.com.