

# CASE STUDY STAPLES CHILLED FRESH VEGETABLES

## FUTURE-PROOFING WITH MICROSOFT DYNAMICS AX

### **The Company**

Staples is a multi-site operation located across Lincolnshire and the Isle of Wight employing 120 full time staff and growing at an impressive 20% year on year. Multiple sites spread across Lincolnshire and the Isle of Wight, as well as dedicated suppliers in Spain and Portugal, spreads production to take full advantage of different climatic and other growing conditions - allowing the best possible connected continuity of supply.

Staples own and manage all the factors of production resulting in complete control of all the stages that a product passes through from seed to customer. Direct control enables the company to co-ordinate traceability, quality assurance, continuity, customer service and cost efficiency and, ultimately, to ensure customers receive a superior product. However, maintaining the level of control requires an advanced technology solution to overview the total process and ensure quality and service does not falter.

### **Business Issues & Challenges**

The existing computer system was becoming obsolete and Staples was not able to offer its full guarantee of service. Requiring significant manual effort and for reasons of obsolescence Staples Managing Director, Vernon Read, looked to the market to provide an integrated solution that would be easily upgradeable and provide its 120 staff with the software to be able to perform tasks at the optimum level.

The evaluation process ruled out other systems, which could not meet the exacting requirements of Staples, and definitely not wanting to write their own solution, Read narrowed the evaluation down to two Microsoft Dynamics ERP solutions; MS Dynamics NAV and MS Dynamics AX. Dynamics AX became a clear favourite as it demonstrated full flexibility against competitive offerings and has easy upgrade and scalability paths to meet the growth expectations of the Staples business.





### Why Dynamics AX and K3

The industry specific functionality required to understand and handle fresh produce stock handling, provided by K3's 17 years experience in the sector, was key to gaining the confidence of the Staples management team.

Fresh Dynamics is designed using the flexibility and scalability of Dynamics AX with the addition of modules specifically for the fresh produce industry. Additional modules covering all aspects of fresh produce farming and distribution include batch consignments, grower's payments, spray records, stock control, sales order processing, procurement, packhouse, imported product, traceability reporting, account sales and retrospective rebates.

Fresh Dynamics, therefore, provides full management and operational control of all the factors of production as well as integrated quality control. Additionally Fresh Dynamics offers customers the ability to take full advantage of the latest mobile technology to ensure staff have full access to all aspects of the ERP solution at their fingertips whether working out in the fields or in the office.

### The Solution

"It is important to us that the solution worked over different telecoms such as VPN and Wireless so that we could track consignments and have full information as to how long the products had been in the field, on the lorry and at Quality Control. This way we can ensure that we continue to provide the best quality produce to our customers at the optimum time," continues Read.

The Fresh Dynamics solution provides full information about what part of the process to ensure complete freshness and quality of produce is required then and where no matter where an individual is on the site to full live traceability across the disparate sites.

### The Benefits

Staples are expecting to realise a number of substantial business benefits through the implementation of Fresh Dynamics These include better analysis and management of labour and more accurate stock management. This has resulted in the ability to reduce costs in the business and increase profitability.

### Future Plans

Staples is a future facing organisation that constantly searches for new ideas and products to further improve the product, its services and the value offered to its customers. Using the latest technology to increase efficiency in all areas of the business has an important positive knock-on effect in improving the customer experience. Implementation of Fresh Dynamics has given Staples all the best ERP technology that will grow and adapt with the company supporting the total success and future of the company.



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### K3 AX Limited

2 Minster Court, Tuscam Way,  
Camberley, Surrey GU15 3YY

Tel: +44 (0) 1276 686 555

Fax: +44 (0) 1276 686 376

dynamics@k3ax.com www.k3ax.com