



US Markerboard

www.usmarkerboard.com



At A Glance:

- **Company:** US Markerboard
- **Location:** Quincy, MA
- **Industry:** Wholesale/Distribution
- **Challenges:**
 - Growth beyond the capabilities of the previous accounting solution
 - No clear way to integrate Web and back-office operations
 - Disaster required immediate ability for employees to do work remotely
- **Software switch from:** QuickBooks Enterprise
- **Other software considered:** ACCPAC, Peachtree, custom-developed software
- **Results with NetSuite:**
 - Helping support a 25% year-over-year growth rate
 - Expanded accounting capabilities without a retraining period
 - Doubled on-time customer call resolution



“One of the main reasons we chose NetSuite was that it was a product we could grow into rather than grow out of. This was one growing pain I was never going to have to worry about again.”

— Scott Newman, President and CEO

US Markerboard

The Results

US Markerboard adopted NetSuite to run its office supply sales and distribution business, and now enjoys the freedom and flexibility that comes with being able to manage 25,000 customers from any Web browser in the world. “Our agents can now send customers fast estimates in HTML or PDF, and immediately have all customer information in front of them,” says Scott Newman, president and CEO of US Markerboard. The improved access to information has helped the company drastically improve its compliance with an internal one-hour contact resolution metric, from 35 to 70 percent.

The standout performance afforded by NetSuite has also helped the company continue its fast-paced growth, without compromises. “Because NetSuite has made so much of the feel similar to QuickBooks from the onset, it was very simple to put my staff on the computer and give them just a couple of days of training on the new system,” he says. “We’re going to grow into NetSuite, instead of growing out of it.”

Thanks to NetSuite, US Markerboard has been able to continue on its aggressive path of promotion and merchandising agreements, including becoming an Amazon.com partner in the office supply spaces where it offers more depth than its big-box competitors. “We would never have been able to do what we’re doing today with QuickBooks, and we would have paid \$65,000, up-front, to build a package for ourselves, not including upkeep and maintenance.

The Challenges

In January 2005, New England experienced one of the heaviest winter storms in many years. When the 17 employees of US Markerboard, an independent office supply provider based in Quincy, Mass., showed up for work the day after the storm, they found a large furniture truck had slid off the road in front of the building and took out the telephone and electrical pole that handled service to the building.

But just four weeks earlier the company had switched to NetSuite, so Newman was able to send his entire staff home, where they were able to service US Markerboard's growing customer base from their home computers. “I’ll admit, the ability to log into servers remotely is nothing new, but in the wake of our disaster, the ability to have our entire sales staff and customer service team up and

 Find out more: contact NetSuite, Inc. at 1 877 NETSUITE or visit www.netsuite.com



“[NetSuite] was money well spent, because at the end of our four-year contract, we're going to have the most up-to-date, advanced software package there is, a more advanced software package than what I have today, unlike if we had paid for packaged software. From an ROI perspective, I see that as a win-win situation.”

— *Scott Newman*
President and CEO
US Markerboard

running from home—the same day—in real-time, and with the added pressure from our Amazon.com partnership, was truly a life-altering experience.”

US Markerboard became an independent office supply provider in 1996, and has enjoyed dramatic growth in recent years as collaboration and planning products have continued to register heavily on business spending agendas. “As our company evolved and we got onto the Internet, it changed our entire dynamic and we started growing out of a lot of things—one of them being our software solution,” Newman says. “We started realizing that what was in a box wasn't going to do what we needed it to do.”

Half of the company's customers come from government or educational markets—rich prospects with constant needs and a strong taste for reliable partners. But growth was outstripping the company's ability to keep up with the needs of its customers. Most customer contacts were falling short of established internal standards for call resolution, and the company was faced with the uncomfortable prospect of having to throttle back its own success.

Specifically, US Markerboard found that its back-office operations could not seamlessly support the number of simultaneous users it needed, and that integration with the growing Web-based operation would prove costly and difficult with packaged software. “We didn't want a product that was going to need constant upkeep. We wanted something that would have the things we needed now, and in two years would have the things we will need available to us.”

The Solution

US Markerboard adopted NetSuite for 14 internal users, including accounting, IT, and customer support staff. By quickly transitioning its business processes to NetSuite, the company has not only cleared the path for further growth, but has opened up a remote-access capability it never had before, turning even the occasional office power outage, as explained above, into an opportunity to continue doing business from home.

More importantly, NetSuite has helped US Markerboard continue its two-pronged expansion plan. “With any business, you have two choices—you can either find new products for existing customers or new customers for existing products, and if you're smart you do both.” Newman is currently expanding his company's use of NetSuite's CRM and marketing capabilities, to stay better connected with customers in all contingencies. “Now, even if a client calls in for a negative situation, the problem is easily logged and we can e-mail them directly out of NetSuite when it has been resolved, and the customer hasn't had to deal with any slowdown in service.”

Not only is US Markerboard expanding its use of the product, but it's expanding the company. “We are about to move into our new location and will be able to handle the needs of our customers seamlessly because there are no servers to move,” says Newman. “We can have staff in both locations working to keep the company running while everything is going on in the background.”

Indeed, Newman has no regrets about investing in NetSuite instead of a different on-premise accounting package. “We signed up for NetSuite training and Gold service, and it was money well spent, because at the end of our four-year contract, we're going to have the most up-to-date, advanced software package there is, a more advanced software package than what I have today, unlike if we had paid for packaged software. From an ROI perspective, I see that as a win-win situation. One of the main reasons we chose NetSuite was that it was a product we could grow into rather than grow out of. This was one growing pain I was never going to have to worry about again.”

 **Find out more: contact NetSuite, Inc. at 1 877 NETSUITE or visit www.netsuite.com**