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SUCCESS STORY

A growing family business builds on its success with Sage

Sage X3 helps roba Baumann streamline its global toy and furniture production.

As consumers, we all want things faster and cheaper—but without a drop in quality. For Ebersdorf-based toy and furniture manufacturer roba Baumann, Sage X3 enables it to seamlessly absorb online orders and keep its most demanding customers happy: parents.

The path from wine barrel manufacturer to children's toy brand is not an immediately obvious one. But it is one that roba Baumann has made successfully.

Robert Baumann founded the business in 1927 originally working as a cooper. Baumann started using offcuts from the wooden barrels to make children's toys in the 1950s. Today, the business manufactures toys, furniture, and a huge range of children's accessories.

Company
roba Baumann

Location
Ebersdorf, Germany

Industry
Process Manufacturing: Toys, Furniture, Home Accessories

System
Sage X3

Release
Version PU9

Partner
Etiscan Identifikationssysteme



"We remain a family business, with the soul of a family," says Volker Ring, head of finance at roba Baumann. "In good times and bad times, the atmosphere never changes. The paths are short, even an apprentice can knock on the door of the boss."

The challenge

roba Baumann is a long-standing, successful multinational company, with production facilities in Hungary and China, a workforce of 900, and commercial relationships with some of Germany's largest retailers. It also has a growing online sales channel.

Connecting production to warehousing to customers to suppliers is an increasingly complex job. "Time pressure is increasing," explains Ring, "even in the furniture sector. Customers demand quality, but they expect their order to be ready and delivered quickly."

The solution

roba Baumann changed its entire enterprise management system in 2017, replacing an IBM system that had been in place for 25 years. It selected Sage X3 and local Sage partner Etiscan Identifikationssysteme, a mobile warehouse logistics specialist.

"Sage X3 offers a modular and flexible system, which can grow with our business," says Ring. "The multi-company, multi-site option is one of the key features for us, along with the highly customizable import/export tool."

"We can explore more areas of the business, in more detail, more graphically. The Sage interface is very intuitive."

Volker Ring, roba Baumann



Preparation for the switch began in 2016 and went live in January 2017. "The cleaner the preparation, the faster the implementation," says Ring. "For financial reasons we wanted to use much of our existing infrastructure, such as the scanner system and WLAN in the warehouse."

The preparation included two months of training for roba Baumann staff, with Etiscan specialists on site to help with issues.

"Processes were discussed with all departments. Above all, we wanted the customer order and purchase orders to be better correlated. The aim was a high level of readiness to deliver orders while not overwhelming the warehouse."

The bottom line

Today, Sage X3 is in daily use across purchasing, inventory, sales, and finance. Manufacturing will be incorporated in 2019. As a result, the business is more automated and efficient, the status of orders, deliveries, and stock is more transparent.

"As wholesaler and manufacturer, it is vital that we deliver on time and within a short delivery window," says Ring. "The Sage solution allows us to work efficiently across all departments."

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This is particularly important as the business plans for online growth, both in B2B and B2C. "It is now easier for us to connect customers electronically, either existing or new," explains Ring. "Previously we could only manage this with our largest customers; now we can integrate smaller jobs. It makes the process frictionless—and fewer manual processes mean fewer mistakes."

Reporting, and the interrogation of data, is also easier. He adds: "We can explore more areas of the business, in more detail, more graphically. The Sage interface is very intuitive."

The future

The next step is to upgrade the production facility in Hungary to Sage X3. Ring says an electroplating subsidiary will also be integrated before the end of 2018:

"Further integration is vital. We want to better illustrate intercompany processes, such as automatic slip flows. This makes communication easier. You don't have to query anything by phone. Everything should be visible, meaning there are fewer errors."

As a mid-sized business, Sage X3 enables roba Baumann to punch above its weight.

"Sage allows highly automated order processing and means any customization can be done by us. Our focus has to be integrating new customers by electric data interchange and better warehouse management. We're more responsive and more timely."

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