

Elmer Candy enjoys a full return on its ERP investment in a single season

Elmer Candy Corporation

Industry

Food manufacturing

Location

Ponchatoula, Louisiana

System

Sage X3

Sage HRMS

Sage Payment Solutions

Challenge

An older AS 400 system proved difficult to maintain and lacked the modern capabilities Elmer Candy requires to remain nimble and competitive.

Solution

NexTec Group and Sage X3 were selected after a comprehensive review process. The combination of industry experience, end-to-end functionality, and competitive pricing gave the solution the edge.

Results

- Full return on investment in just one season.
- Comprehensive lot tracking capabilities.
- Real-time data facilitates rapid decision making.

Elmer Candy Corporation is one of the most successful chocolatiers in the United States. Its sweet confections, primarily boxed chocolates, are sold at retailers across the country, including Walmart, Costco, Kroger and Target.

The majority of Elmer Candy's sales occur during the Valentine's Day, Easter, and Christmas holidays. In order to adequately meet the demand of each season, Elmer Candy must accurately forecast sales, ensure adequate supplies of raw ingredients, and then efficiently craft, package and distribute its goods. Miscalculations and inefficiencies are costly, and to avoid them Elmer Candy chooses to invest in its technology infrastructure.

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Joseph Wiley, MIS Director, Elmer Candy

Partner with the professionals

Elmer Candy brought in NexTec Group to design and deploy a sophisticated, hardworking ERP solution that drives efficiency, streamlines operations, improves accuracy, and promotes the high product quality its customers expect.

“We selected NexTec based on their extensive knowledge of the food industry,” recalls Joseph Wiley, MIS Director at Elmer Candy. “They have a breadth of talent and resources at their disposal. Plus, they are well versed in industry best practices and are equipped to enhance and modify the software in the areas where we needed unique functionality.”

NexTec meets the challenge

For nearly 30 years, Elmer Candy had run its operations on a custom-built application running on an AS 400 system. The system was increasingly difficult to maintain, and no longer kept up with the needs of the organization.

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Success Story: Elmer Candy



“We reviewed several ERP solutions before deciding on NexTec and Sage X3,” says Wiley. “Microsoft Dynamics, Aptean, and Infor M3 were all considered. In the end, NexTec offered the single best combination of partner experience, end-to-end functionality, and competitive pricing. We felt confident in our decision from the start, and that confidence hasn’t wavered. We challenged each vendor, letting them know that we would lay the success or failure of the project at their feet. That did not intimidate NexTec. They stood up and met the challenge.”

End-to-end solution

NexTec implemented a full suite of tightly integrated business management solutions, including: Sage X3 financial, distribution, and manufacturing suites; Sage HRMS; Cyber Recruiter; Insperty TimeStar™; Sage Payment Solutions; True Commerce EDI; Solver BI360; and a complete RFID system.

“Think of Elmer Candy as the homeowner, and of NexTec as our general contractor—they locate the best-of-breed solutions, coordinate their implementation, and ensure they meet our business objectives,” explains Wiley. “Throughout the process, they’ve listened to us, and responded to our concerns.”

Efficiency improvements

Inventory accuracy, order allocation, production tracking, and efficiency are four areas where Elmer Candy is seeing significant improvements. “We’ve gone from a centralized to a decentralized model of data collection,” Wiley explains. “Before, everything was written down and passed up the chain to be entered into the software. Now, we have an RFID network throughout the facility, so we capture data at the source. Not only is that more accurate, but it gives us real-time data for rapid decision making.”

Lot tracking, an essential function in the food manufacturing industry, is another area benefiting from technology. It is now possible for Elmer Candy to generate a complete lot traceability report in a matter of seconds. “We can quickly and easily trace raw ingredients from initial receipt through final sale,” says Wiley.

Rapid return on investment

“The entire system will pay for itself within one season,” says Wiley. “The savings are visible and measurable. Through labor savings, quicker turnaround, improved accuracy, strategic purchasing, and streamlined processes, we are in a position to grow the business 10 to 15 percent without adding additional resources.”

While Elmer Candy is already realizing significant benefits of its modern ERP solution, Wiley insists that the best is yet to come. “We are positioned to fully transform our business, and NexTec Group is leading the way. We have additional initiatives in the works that we are confident will allow us to continue to grow and improve while remaining lean and efficient.”

He concludes, “Selecting an ERP solution and a partner is a bit like a courtship and marriage—you have to be careful to pick a partner that you like to dance with. You look for a partner who will stick with you through good times and bad. We have found that in Sage X3 and NexTec.”

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Joseph Wiley,
MIS Director, Elmer Candy

About NexTec Group

NexTec Group is a leading business solutions provider, delivering comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Business Intelligence (BI) solutions targeted to the unique needs of our clients.

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2013-2014

Sage President’s Circle
2013-2014

Sage Top Three North America
2013-2014



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