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ROLL FORWARD

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BELFIELD HOME GIVES VERDICT ON MERTEX ERP

When Belfield Home implemented Mertex, they saw immediate benefits. "It gave us traceability and visibility from the off," says operations manager Craig North.

Belfield Home (formerly Design Studio) is the soft furnishings division of the Belfield Group, one of the UK's largest home furnishings businesses, and specialises in high quality made-to-order and readymade curtains, piece goods, cut lengths and cushions. Employing around 80 staff and supplying 700 customers in the UK and Southern Ireland, Belfield Home needed a software solution that matched its ambitions and helped the business to run more smoothly.

From its site in Ilkeston, Derbyshire, it recently launched a branded capsule collection in collaboration with designer and bestselling author Angel Strawbridge, star of Channel 4's prime-time TV series *Escape to the Chateau*.

"We needed a system that would bring new efficiencies to the business and help us realise plans for growth," says Craig who was in charge of overseeing the implementation.

"Everything is more visible to us now. Mertex ERP informs us who has done what throughout the business as every transaction has an audit trail.

"It has transformed warehouse picking as we know exactly what stock we have and where it is located, and it brought us the additional benefit of reducing the amount of paper we use," he says.

"Previously we had to print off a run of orders and take them to the warehouse to be manually processed. Now this is done electronically by Mertex ERP, which also gives the warehouse staff an optimum picking route as well as indicating which is the most efficient roll of fabric for the order."

As well as significantly reducing short ends of fabric and wastage, Mertex ERP is giving Belfield the ability to pick by batch to help with colour continuity.

Customer experience is paramount and,

according to Craig, sales order processing has been hugely improved as Mertex lets staff know the availability of stock at the point of order as well as allowing them to email customers with an order confirmation.

Belfield Home also uses Reflex Analytics which provides up-to-date business information in an easy to view format. "It is fantastic from the point of view of the layout and information it provides us with," says Craig. "We can quickly and easily see what is happening across the business."

Craig adds that as Mertex has become more embedded into the business, the 45 plus staff who use it have started to become more inquisitive about what it can achieve for them.

- To find out how Mertex ERP could help your business, please contact sales@reflexdata.com





'MERTEX IS THE BEST SYSTEM WE'VE SEEN.'

Brendon Shepherd talks to Roll Forward about Warwick Fabrics' upgrade to Mertex ERP.

Longstanding Reflex Data customer Warwick Fabrics UK is taking advantage of the latest version of Mertex ERP which has 'great new features'.

The company creates exclusive furnishing fabrics for domestic and commercial interiors and its sales team based near Gloucester has seen improved methods of working as a result of the upgrade.

Warwick's operations manager Brendon Shepherd has overseen the implementation and says that the process was planned 'extremely well'. "The transition to Mertex ERP went very smoothly," he says.

"The main benefit to Warwick is the standardisation of Mertex ERP meaning that we can take advantage of great new features that are in the pipeline.

"It also means that we now have a system that can be easily managed while retaining all the valuable features of the previous version."

Brendon identifies a number of areas with enhanced functionality in finance, sales order processing, process ordering, warehousing and stock management. He also says the search functionality is greatly improved.

"The biggest impact has been in the accountancy module's general ledger

postings drill-down and inventory integration," he says. "Purchase ledger invoices can now be digitally matched to incoming stock records and approved through the system. There is no need for heaps of paperwork for someone to check and sign off."

The simplification of the sales order processing module has also met with Brendon's approval. He explains that the ability to load multiple product lines into an order simultaneously has vastly increased the speed of sales and sample order entries, with the result that they can process more orders much faster.

"Mertex ERP monitors incoming purchase order dates and can adjust sales order dates accordingly whilst providing customers with expected delivery dates," he says. "This functionality can also be automated to send alerts to customers thereby reducing incoming and outgoing calls."

In terms of search functionality, he adds that Mertex ERP has multiple enquiry screens providing drill-down 'click' functionality which allows users to access information faster. "Previously we may have needed to enter different parts of the system to access information, but now it is seamless. Reflex is constantly updating active fields to provide quick and efficient

access to information and analysis."

Brendon says that the stock management and warehouse system 'is fantastic' and provides a great level of detailed information and accurate movements. "With our plans for investment in new warehouse machinery that we can integrate with Mertex ERP, we'll be able to automate a great deal of what we do and therefore future-proof our business.

"For us, Mertex ERP is the best system we've seen. The core functionality is brilliant and Reflex are leaders in their field. They invest time and energy and are very willing to look after our requirements while not compromising the core system.

"I am excited about future releases which will bring further benefits to Warwick."

Jon-Andrew Ovenstone, the company's managing director, said: "The team at Reflex Data did a great job in ensuring that the upgrade was delivered on time and on budget with minimal disruption, showing dedication in their response to addressing any issues. I felt that the project went extremely well."

Reflex Data's managing director Jeremy Alcock added: "Warwick Fabrics' upgrade has resulted in them having a system that will cater for the changing needs of their business and the wider textile market."

Boost your online sales with Webtex e-commerce



Mertex ERP customers now have access to the latest Reflex Data e-commerce solution Webtex. Built on the industry-leading Magento platform, it meets and caters for the ever growing demand from online retail and is open for business 24/7.

Reflex Data's Steve Jones says that it suits companies with growing sales who don't want to increase costs through additional staff.

"Webtex is a fully integrated solution that can be up and running in a short amount of time. Because it is built on an open source Magento platform, it will be subject to constant development and updates ensuring

that Mertex ERP customers always have the latest in e-commerce technology," he says.

"Other options for our customers would include building an e-commerce platform from the ground up, but Webtex has been developed to work specifically for the textiles and interior furnishings industry and to be fully integrated with Mertex ERP."

Webtex enables B2B and B2C consumers to easily order fabrics, ready-made products, samples, cushions, pads and accessories on account or via a payment online. For customers providing a made-to-measure service, Webtex seamlessly integrates with

the new Made To Measure module in Mertex ERP.

"As Webtex stays in sync with Mertex at all times, this e-commerce system really simplifies the sales process," adds Steve.

Set up involves a one-off data import from Mertex. For more information and a brochure, please contact steve.jones@reflexdata.com



INFORMER SHINES LIGHT ON BLENDWORTH

Hampshire-based Blendworth Interiors now has a software system to match its ambitions. With an upgrade to Mertex ERP and an investment in Mertex Informer, the company sees future growth with clarity.

The independent soft furnishings company is now in its 100th year, and while drawing on its heritage, it is very much a 21st century operation.

Managing director Joshua Dawson says that Mertex Informer has unleashed the power to make business decisions based on fact rather than hunches, and that during the pandemic, it has proved vital in helping the sales team plan their strategies for the coming year. "They can easily identify geographic weaknesses and see how well collections are performing and where," says Joshua.

"Our sales reps want constant feedback and now we can provide reliable information quickly. Previously, we had to request tailored reports from Reflex Data which took time and cost money.

"The beauty of it is the speed in which you can view almost any information and how easy it is to drill down to the detail," says Joshua.

He also credits Mertex Informer with helping to retain (and recruit) customers on the company's loyalty scheme by producing reports which clearly show their return on investment.

The company is currently aiming for an ISO9001 accreditation and, according to Joshua, the new Mertex ERP 'sits beautifully' alongside their progress towards achieving it.

He says that in addition to the expected benefits, its continuous evolution is having an impact through free updates which most recently helped improve Blendworth's sample service.

Blendworth's customer base primarily comprises independent retailers and specifiers, and this is where Joshua believes the



Worth the investment: Joshua Dawson at his showroom.

future lies. As the company grows, Mertex ERP and Mertex Informer will be key to helping them manage an increasing list of small customers and to helping the business grow.

"The investment has been well worth it, and we are even on course to make annual savings," he adds.

Jeremy Alcock, Reflex Data's managing director, said: "We believe that Mertex ERP will be instrumental in the continued growth of Blendworth and we congratulate them on their 100th year milestone!"



'SUPERCHARGED' REPORTING HAS ARRIVED

Reflex Data's Mark Daykin explains how Mertex Informer is empowering customers to take charge of their data.

Mertex Informer marks a new era of insight for Reflex Data customers.

The fully integrated software from Entrinsik has a global reputation for the ease in which people can view and interpret the huge levels of data generated by their businesses.

Reflex Data embedded Informer into Mertex ERP with the intention of empowering customers to interact with their data so that they could make better informed decisions.

Mark Daykin explains. "It's very easy to use and there are so many ways to drill into data easily and quickly.

"Once we have imported all the information from a customer's Mertex account, it works seamlessly and puts them in charge.

"With a myriad of filters, the possibilities are huge, and up-to-date information can be extracted at any point."

Mark says that Informer is useful across a number of business functions, so for example, it could identify all the lengths of pieces in a warehouse or interpret a customer's spending habits.

With the ability to provide different levels of access, it can also boost performance

of various teams and individuals by giving them ownership of their data.

"It's supercharged reporting," he adds.

- Mertex Informer is available with Mertex ERP and is subject to set-up costs and an annual licence fee.
- For more information, please contact Mark Daykin mark.daykin@reflexdata.com



GORDON JOHN PLUMPS FOR MERTEX

Yorkshire-based soft furnishings group Gordon John has chosen Mertex ERP to assist in its next stage of growth.



Right time to commit: Chris and Derek Nott.

Derek Nott, owner and managing director, says they had been considering it for some years and were aware of its market-leading credentials.

“As our MTM manufacturing business has become more important to us and shown consistent growth, we knew the time was right to commit,” he says.

The company is a leading supplier of linings and readymade curtains under its Sundour brand. Style Furnishings was added to its portfolio a decade ago and it has become a prominent and growing

segment of the business through sales of made-to-measure curtains, roman blinds, cushions and fabrics.

Derek’s son Chris, who has been with the company for six years, oversaw the implementation of Mertex ERP into the business.

Chris says that stock control was a major factor in signing up. “We wanted more accuracy, especially when cutting into rolls of fabric. Mertex ERP will identify which roll to use, from which location and will calculate the remaining metreage

providing greater transparency. We see this giving us tremendous benefits across the factory.

“In addition, with Mertex ERP we will be able to give our customers faster, more accurate information whilst reducing our order processing times.”

Derek adds: “We are confident that the implementation of Mertex ERP will transform our business by providing improved stock control, reduction in lead times, improved efficiencies and the elimination of much of our fabric waste.”

BEHIND THE SCENES AT REFLEX DATA

Meet Alfa Isah, one of our software testers.



It takes a particular kind of person to be a great software tester and Alfa has the required qualities in heaps.

An inquisitive mind and plenty of creativity top the list along with an innate ability to step into the shoes of the end user.

Alfa joined Reflex Data’s quality assurance team following a degree in computer science from the University of Hull and a long stint in computer programming.

“The role of a tester demonstrates how much human nature influences software development,” he says.

“The process is thorough and you use every tool at your disposal, going at it from every angle. The ultimate goal is to create the most robust software and best possible user experience for our customers.”

Alfa liaises with the software developers and customer support team to carry out his work.

“There’s a great atmosphere here which makes working with the others a real pleasure,” he says.

“I love the challenges, I love working in software. I’m lovin’ it!” he adds!



APP ADD-ON FOR SLICKER SALES SYSTEM

Reflex Data customers can now arm their sales reps with PixSell - a leading catalogue app that works seamlessly with stock and customer records to make the sales process more visually dynamic, efficient and effective.

The PixSell add-on capability will be included as standard in the next release of Mertex ERP, but a modification can also be carried out to integrate it with prior versions of the software.

Reflex Data recently co-hosted a seminar with Aspin, the company that owns and develops PixSell. If you missed it, you can view it via this link: <https://vimeo.com/529252848>

If you would like to talk to us about PixSell and how it works with Mertex ERP, please contact us on +44 (0)1482 881152 or sales@reflexdata.com

HAVE YOU GOT A STORY TO TELL? Contact our team on: