Client Success Story

Leading Apparel Provider Shifts to Third-Party Support, Improves Service and Profitability

Superior Uniform Group

Client Profile: Superior Uniform Group is one of the foremost providers of uniforms and image apparel in the United States, with a unique business model that provides valued-added, service-based uniform programs and garments to a broad range of customers.

Industry: Services/CPG

Geography: Headquartered in Seminole, Florida

Revenue: $265 million USD

Employees: 1,600

Products Supported: SAP ECC 6.0 and Apparel and Footwear Solution (AFS), Microsoft SQL Server Runtime 2008 R2

Superior
UNIFORM GROUP

"There is no need for us to migrate to S/4HANA because SAP's Fashion Management Solution does not offer the comparable functionality that we customized into the current apparel and footwear (AFS) system. That would require us to rebuild all our custom functions. When we decided to maintain our current SAP ECC as our system of record, it was a no-brainer to make the switch to Rimini Street."

Mark Decker
CIO, Superior Uniform Group

Superior Uniform Group was at a crossroads: Its customized SAP system met business needs, but new enhancements SAP was making to the core ECC platform were of little value to Superior.

The Superior Uniform Group Challenge

Superior Uniform Group's existing apparel order management system had been specifically tailored from the very beginning to meet the unique way the company manages inventory, creates custom uniforms and invoices customers. The company has operated using a series of SAP ECC versions for 18 years and has customized the Apparel and Footwear Solution (AFS) module to meet business needs. There were very few support issues that needed to be logged with SAP, because seasoned internal SAP developers could solve most of them. But with over 400 users of the system, Superior's support costs were high and rising.

Mark Decker, CIO at Superior Uniform Group, explains, "We had a very large support contract that also included annual increases. It climbed up to over $350,000 annually, and we felt like we weren't getting anything out of the support — the upgrades and enhancement packs weren't meaningful to us, we certainly weren't getting any applicable new functionality. We were doing it just to stay on a supported version of the product." The company was upgrading its systems without any business justification, going from R3 to ECC 6.0 over the 18 years, simply to remain supported. "That's a lot of upgrades to retain our original customizations. A lot of work, time and expense for no new functionality where it counts."

Decker participated regularly in SAP events focused on future enhancements to AFS in hopes of getting features that would benefit the company's unique business processes. But it appeared that SAP wasn't going to continue investing in the ECC application and was putting its focus and resources toward S/4 HANA. "ECC 6.0 is at the end of the road in terms of new features and capabilities," continues Decker, "but our ECC 6.0 release more than meets business requirements." Therefore, Superior could not justify the significant cost, resources and time required to re-platform to S/4HANA.

"There is no need for us to migrate to S/4HANA because it does not offer the comparable functionality that we customized into the current AFS system and

Benefits

– **Avoided S/4HANA re-implementation:** Superior avoided a potentially risky and disruptive re-implementation to S/4 HANA while continuing to grow and evolve using its stable and mature ECC 6.0 application.

– **Gained better support for mature applications:** Questions about issues on customizations and even interoperability- and integration-related issues with third-party applications are quickly addressed now, as opposed to receiving "it's not within our support scope" or no response at all from the support vendor.

– **Added savings back to the bottom line:** Funds and staffing resources that have been liberated from ongoing SAP maintenance and support by moving to Rimini Street go directly back into the bottom line for Superior Uniform Group, directly impacting its earnings per share.

"Being a publicly traded company means there is a lot of visibility into how we manage costs and ensure operational efficiencies. Rimini Street has been instrumental in delivering substantial cost savings back to the business, so our executive team is very happy we made the decision to switch over."

Mark Decker
CIO, Superior Uniform Group

For More Information

To learn more about Superior Uniform Group or to read other client success stories, visit www.riministreet.com/clients.

foundational changes were made in the Fashion Management System that would require us to rebuild all our custom functions," says Decker. "So there we were, high support costs for little value and no new functionality coming down the line for ECC. And with a difficult upgrade path to S/4HANA, it was clear that it was time for a change in how we received support for our SAP applications and how much we paid for it."

The Rimini Street Solution

Decker was well aware of the option of using third-party support to reduce costs. "When we decided to maintain ECC 6.0 as our system of record, we looked at Rimini Street's service model and pricing and completed reference calls with Rimini Street clients who were going down the same path. After all of that, it was a no-brainer to switch to Rimini Street."

The transition to Rimini Street support began in the middle of 2016, and within six months all entitled software had been downloaded and archived. Any technical capabilities that Superior would like from the newer support packs are available to be implemented, since the company retains the right to upgrade to Enhancement Pack 8. "We can still upgrade to those anytime we like, or not, while consistently getting the support service we were looking for."

Decker's team noted the differences in support service right away. "We never had a lot of tickets with SAP. One could argue that the reason for that is because it took so long to get a response, if we got one at all, or we ended up fixing the issues ourselves. We had a couple of support questions we sent to Rimini Street during the onboarding process, one of which I know SAP would've turned away saying it was a consulting question, not a support question. But not with Rimini Street; they answered it without hesitation."

Client Results

Rimini Street provides support for Superior's level 3 and 4 SAP ECC issues, and like every Rimini Street client, Superior is assigned a named, regionally based Primary Support Engineer (PSE) backed by a team of functional and technical experts. The customizations that make Superior's system unique and perfectly aligned with its business needs are also covered by Rimini Street, at no extra cost.

"I've had my people say they were amazed that they put in a ticket, and 20 minutes later they'd received a response. The quality of support is heads and shoulders above SAP support, and faster, than SAP, no question about it."

Superior is maximizing the value of its existing SAP ECC and AFS applications while saving half of previous support costs, all the while avoiding disruptive, time- and cost-intensive upgrades that would result in lost functionality. "The funds we have liberated by moving support to Rimini Street are a great contribution back to the business," remarks Decker. "As a publicly traded company, our executives and shareholders appreciate the impact these savings have on our earnings per share."