

ERP Makeover Improves Cosmetic Leader's Visibility



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-Rob Leonardo
Chief Financial Officer
Trish McEvoy Ltd.

Profile in Brief

- Fine make-up design, artistry and distribution.
- Serves department stores, including Saks, Nordstrom and Neiman Marcus, and small boutique retailers
- Manufactures and warehouses in the United States and overseas
- Serves markets in the US and UK

Business Drivers:

- Company Growth
- Evolving Markets
- Accurate Forecasting & Planning
- Retailer Compliance

Trish McEvoy Ltd. is a leading designer, manufacturer and distributor of fine cosmetic products. Trish McEvoy distributes its make-up line through large department stores--such as Saks, Nordstrom and Nieman Marcus--in the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as through smaller, boutique retail establishments.

Over the course of the past 10 years, as Trish McEvoy significantly grew its product-line presence at larger department stores, existing company systems became strained and new process compliance requirements developed. Manufacturing, which is outsourced and is often done overseas, required tighter management of forecasting and planning to ensure that the right products would be manufactured and made available at the right time.

Process Improvement & Control Leads to Growth

Trish McEvoy needed a system that could help take the company to the next level of growth. With revenues increasing, tracking sales performance and profitability by product and customer was becoming more critical. Its existing financial system was unable to handle the accurate inventory forecasting, planning and management necessary to ensure products were on-order and on-hand to meet customer demands and avoid costly out-of-stock situations. The increase in department store business was driving the need for EDI compliance in order to do business with these large accounts and avoid excessive chargebacks.

By implementing a new enterprise-wide system, Trish McEvoy sought to increase visibility into sales and profitability performance as well as inventory status. Through a distribution-focused system, it hoped to improve inventory planning and availability. By enabling EDI, it hoped to streamline transaction processing and meet compliance requirements to reduce chargebacks associated with vendor violations.

Through a business associate, Trish McEvoy was introduced to a consultant who helped evaluate three potential systems. Ultimately, Apprise Software, Inc.'s Apprise® Distribution system was recommended and selected due to its enterprise-wide distribution focus and ability to meet Trish McEvoy's needs.

"The solution presented by Apprise Software had full-functionality to meet the needs of our distribution environment," said Rob Leonardo, chief financial officer at Trish McEvoy Ltd. "The Apprise Software team understood our business and needs, and we felt confident that the system would address our business requirements."

The comprehensive Apprise® Distribution solution enables Trish McEvoy to integrate all aspects of its operations, including sales, customer service, purchasing, inventory planning and management, EDI compliance, shipping, invoicing, and financial management. The comprehensive executive information system provides real-time insight into business performance at the product and customer level for improved sales and profitability analysis and better business control.



Business Impact

- Reduced Out-of-Stock Inventory
- Streamlined EDI Transaction Processing
- Reduced Chargebacks
- Improved Business Insight & Control

Tools Boost Response Times & Relationships

Within the first 18 months of implementing Apprise Distribution, Trish McEvoy experienced dramatic improvements in its business operations. And, several years later, it remains very pleased with the system's ability to meet its current and evolving needs.

Sophisticated distribution resource planning tools enable Trish McEvoy to see, analyze, and plan for product demands. With product lead times as long as 5 to 6 months, and products that go in or out of demand very quickly based on consumer preferences and seasonality, proper planning and forecasting is critical.

"Purchasing is largely driven by customer input and sell-through data," said Leonardo. "Through improved inventory forecasting and planning that

integrates customer buying trends and other customer driven inputs, we are better able to match inventory availability with customer demands and reduce out-of-stock situations." Improved on-time product delivery has earned Trish McEvoy the reputation with retailers for being the fastest shipping supplier in the cosmetic industry.

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- Steve Schweighofer
Director of Distribution
Trish McEvoy Ltd

System integration with a third party EDI transaction network has enabled Trish McEvoy to better meet department store EDI compliance requirements. The system's ability to track and refute chargebacks, based on business rules, has improved chargeback visibility and recovery. "We have reduced chargebacks by 98% since implementing Apprise Distribution—those are dollars returned directly to our bottom line," said Steve Schweighofer, director of distribution at Trish McEvoy. "Retailers look for 'soft targets' with their chargeback processes, and once we had the evidence to dispute their claims over and over, they stopped hitting us," continued Schweighofer.

The enterprise-wide system has greatly improved Trish McEvoy's visibility into business performance. "We don't take physical inventory any more, because with Apprise we run at 99.9% accuracy," said Schweighofer. Customer shipment status, sell-through data, product and customer sales and profitability, and more are all visible in real-time. "Previously, we would constantly receive calls from Nordstrom, Macy's and other retailers about order status; but, now we never get any calls," continued Schweighofer.

In addition, the use of integrated wireless hand-held devices through Apprise® Wireless Warehouse has enabled the company to gain efficiencies in warehouse picking and replenishment.

With significant historical data now in the system, daily, weekly, and year-over-year comparisons and trends are immediately available for business performance analysis and to aid in future planning. Trish McEvoy looks forward to continuing its relationship with Apprise Software. "If you just call Apprise with your questions or problems, they will usually have different ideas and recommendations for solving the issues," said Leonardo.



Apprise Software, Inc.

Headquarters

3101 Emrick Boulevard
Bethlehem, PA 18020
Phone: +1 (610) 991-3900
www.apprise.com

Asia Pacific

6009 Changjiang Science Building
No. 40 Nanchang Road
Nanjing, China 210037
Phone: +86 (25) 8345-5308