



CASE STUDY

Spier 1692

NAV 2015



Historic South African wine farm partners with Microsoft

Dynamics NAV enhances its reporting and business processes



Background

With a recorded history dating back to 1692, Spier is one of the oldest wine farms in South Africa. The winery is also one of the most awarded in the country. The four-star Spier Hotel and meeting facilities offer inspiring Winelands get-aways in the tranquillity of nature.

Spier aims to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment. Spier Farm has been organically certified, and follows the Integrated Production of Wine criteria. In 2011, Condé Nast Traveler World Saver Award recognised the estate as the top international destination 'Doing it All'.

“Microsoft Dynamics NAV is such an easy to use system and has integrated smoothly into our operations. It really has enhanced our operations and provided us with great cost efficiencies.”

Karin Smidt, finance manager at Spier Wines.

Challenge

The accounting environment of Spier was implemented more than a decade ago and was no longer fulfilling the diverse business needs of the winery. “In essence, this was a no-frills system that simply gave us a blue screen with information. There was no capabilities to drill down into further business analysis. As it was quite an old solution, we had to build all sorts of systems around it to continue supporting it,” says Karin Smidt, finance manager at Spier Wines.

This resulted in additional challenges as the supporting systems also had to be maintained. Invariably, Spier started having difficulties with the accuracy of its reports with results differing from the one day to the next. From a data management perspective, the system had to account for accurate historical and future financial information to effectively show profitability and the working capital that would be readily available to Spier. In terms of reporting, users would have to be able to combine measurements to identify trends and focus on potential problem areas.

The system needed to be user-friendly and provide Spier with a standard financial accounting system across its business units (Wines, Leisure, Property, and Holdings). Finally, it had to integrate into its business processes to provide for monthly forecasting and insight on the optimal working capital needed to manage the business.

Solution

In May 2013, Spier made the strategic decision to implement Microsoft Dynamics NAV integrated with industry leading winery solution, WineMS.

“We had to replace everything on our side to migrate to the more modern system. But despite the complexity of the implementation, the Microsoft Implementation partner, Linc, provided us with great assistance from a project management perspective. This enabled us to go live on our new platform in February 2014,” she says.

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“Given the broad scope of systems that needed to be replaced at Spier, including the requirement for an integrated cellar management module, our proven vertical solution of Microsoft Dynamics NAV integrated with WineMS was an easy choice for Spier. With a number of successful implementations of this integrated industry solution, the fit to Spier’s requirements was very high.”

Attie Retief, Director and co-owner of Linc, a Microsoft Dynamics NAV Implementation partner.

Spier also appointed an internal project team that consisted of people from the different business units. This provided the Linc team with the necessary input in terms of key internal processes and elements required for the reporting environment.

“The team at Spier really excelled at change management, user participation and adoption and overall internal project leadership - without a doubt one of our more successful projects, and most of it can be attributed to the high level of executive management buy-in,” says Doug Batchelor, Director and co-owner of Linc.

Spier implemented several modules of Microsoft Dynamics NAV including General Ledger, Cash Management, Receivables, Payables, Fixed Assets, Inventory, Manufacturing, and Warehousing.

Benefits

“We are very happy with the Microsoft Dynamics NAV system. It has certainly met our expectations. Such has been the success of the project that I honestly cannot see a time when I will not be using NAV,” says Smidt.

Microsoft Dynamics NAV has enabled Spier to significantly improve its efficiencies. The business has reduced the time it spends on maintenance and it has ticked all the boxes in terms of enhanced support and business integration.

“Using Dynamics across our operations is a pleasure with everything fitting in smoothly. We are already in talks to start implementing Microsoft SharePoint to further enhance our operating environment,” concludes Smidt.



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