

# Case Study

## Vivid Arts

### Industry

Distribution

### Number of employees

100 +

### Solution & services

- SYSPRO ERP

### The challenge

- Launch business
- Plan for rapid growth
- Seasonality and competitive nature of the market impacting stock
- Shipping from the Far East is volatile due to fluctuations in exchange rates

### The benefits

- Supporting the business for future growth
- Ability to monitor and manage standard costs
- A slick order/accounting operation that saves time



## Vivid Arts builds business success on SYSPRO ERP keystone



NexSys customer Vivid Arts is a superb example of how well a specific and designed IT system backed by excellent support can help a brand new company develop its fledgling business into one that is projecting a turnover of £2 million its first year of business. This effort is due to the enthusiasm of the individuals within the company to success in their mission to achieve an incredible £4-£5 million revenue business within 3 years of start-up. Supporting this enthusiasm is a SYSPRO ERP system that provides the company with confidence to press on with its business goals.

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**“The easy choice would have been to opt for a basic accounts package, but because we wanted to grow rapidly we decided to implement an ERP system on an SQL platform.”**

Vivid Arts was set up by Richard Owen, a seasoned logistics specialist with over 30 years experience in the gardening sector. Owens and his team have built Vivid Arts from the ground up in the fiercely competitive and highly seasonal garden supplies market. He and his colleagues have a total of 40 years market knowledge and backed by Owen’s supply chain know-hoe are proving to be very much a company to watch.

Based in Alltami North Wales, Vivid Arts was established in September 2005 and offers over 205 lines of garden pots and ornaments which it distributes to garden centres throughout the UK. Its customers include the Dobbies Group and major independent garden centres such as Longacres and Byrkley Park. The company sources its products from manufacturers in the Far East with Vietnam, China and Thailand being the main large-scale producers of garden pots and ornamental specialities. Because of the seasonality and competitive nature of the market Vivid Arts has to be on the ball when it comes to having the right items in stock. It means that orders are placed 8 months in advance to ensure adequate suppliers are in the warehouse ready to be shipped immediately to customers.

Vivid Arts took a decisive step to implement an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system from a very early stage. In only 6 months the company’s ERP system was up and running. Spurning the easy route of simply installing an accounts package, Owen guided the management team to look harder at how the company would need a more functional and featured package going forward. This made perfect sense as it meant choosing to work with one system from the outset and then develop it as the company itself would develop.

He had a good understanding of what the IT market offered and soon short-listed SYSPRO ERP from NexSys. Vivid Arts chose to implement a suite of core modules including Purchase order and Sales Order Processing, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Cash Book, General Ledger, Inventory Management, Bill of Materials and Report Writer.

*“The easy choice would have been to opt for a basic accounts package, but because we wanted to grow rapidly we decided to implement an ERP system on an SQL platform. Had we gone down the alternative route, we would have only had to take out the system in a year’s time and replace it with something more substantial,”* said Owen.

Operations Director admits that it is still early days in the SYSPRO implementation and there is much more that Vivid Arts could be doing with the system. For the time being however the company is capitalising on using SYSPRO to drive sales order processing right through to cash collection.

*“We purposely specified a robust suit so that we could develop our usage. At the moment we are finding the sales order processing payment collection an absolute key requirement that is enabling a slick order/ accounting operation. It saves us a phenomenal amount of time and is enabling us to move forward with our relatively small office team.”*

SYSPRO also provides Vivid Arts with the ability to monitor and manage its standard costs. This is extremely important as these can vary because the cost of shipping from the Far East is volatile due to



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fluctuations in the value of the US Dollar. Unit costs are easier to seal with as the cost of pots and ornaments are less volatile. SYSPRO generates a clear overview reports for these standard costs enabling the management team to keep a close eye on the cash flow and stock.

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*“So on the one hand it would appear that our use of SYSPRO is relatively simplistic but they system comes into its own when it comes to delivering management information. This is crucial for our business as we have to maintain a careful balance,”*

Owens explains *“The order comes in via fax and these are keyed in. Pricing is already set up within the system and includes discount schemes. These then sit on the books as unplanned orders. I then generate pick notes for TDG, our third-party warehousing partner situated*

*on the same site as us. The TDG warehouse uses these paper notes to pick from our stock. Larger orders go out on TDG’s trucks and smaller consignments are shipped using the Christian Salvesen shared-user network.”* Looking beyond his explanation of simple usage it is clear the SYSPRO provides a solid system for Vivid Arts’ supply chain management. What’s more, it’s ready for future development.

Owen talks enthusiastically about how he sees using more of SYSPRO’s features, *“ On the supply and warehousing side we will use SYSPRO to generate our bar code labels. We are also looking to implement ERI for integrating the accounts with our banking partner. We will also use SYSPRO to email out documentation with the products to our customers.”*

Summing up Vivid Arts decision to implement SYSPRO,

**“We know we made the right decision to choose SYSPRO. Not only has NexSys provided fantastic software, I have to say that its biggest success is its support. NexSys’ help desk is tremendous. I am not an IT person but I know that it only takes a phone call and any issues are rectified quickly and efficiently.”**

### About NexSys

NexSys is a SYSPRO elite partner, with 40+ years’ experience of delivering Innovative ERP+ solutions to manufacturers and distributors throughout the UK. NexSys technologies grant organisations of all sizes maximum visibility over business-critical information, enabling decisions to be made based on accurate, reliable, real-time insight. The company provides solutions that enable agility, innovation, and competitive edge. As part of the global K3 group, NexSys has specialists that have remained loyal to the business for more than a decade. It provides project management, software development, consultancy, support and training to customers to help them realise maximum ROI.