

Success Story

How does a kitchen manufacturer stand the heat of competition?

Sage X3 is the secret ingredient for UK-based company Burbidge



Over the years, Burbidge has made everything from cricket stumps to automotive parts but today the company specialises in manufacturing and distributing premium quality kitchens to the independent retail sector across the UK.

The challenge

Sage software has been a part of the organisation's success for many years. And as Financial Director Graham Heaven explains, that's about strong business relationships as much as industry-leading technology. "We've had what is now known as Sage X3 since the early 1990s," says Graham, and we've seen it evolve and pass through various hands until it has become a flagship solution. The quality of people at Sage very much mirrors what we look for amongst our own people so we've built very strong working relationships—particularly on the technical side."

The strength of those relationships has meant that Burbidge deal directly with Sage rather than through partners. Graham adds: "It feels like quite a privilege to be working with the people at Sage. We find they respond very quickly to any questions we raise. Particularly when we are going through any periods of change with new products. On projects like these, small hitches can hold things up very quickly—so getting that prompt technical response is very important."

Sage

Company
Burbidge

Location
United Kingdom

Industry
Manufacturing: Premium Kitchens

Sage Products
Sage X3 Version 11



BURBIDGE

About Burbidge

Based in Coventry, Burbidge is a fifth generation manufacturing business employing around 75 people.



Burbidge's Sage X3 deployment has become rich and diverse, supporting many parts of the business.

The solution

As Graham explains, this long-standing relationship means that Burbidge's Sage X3 deployment has become rich and diverse, supporting many parts of the business: "We use many modules within the Sage X3 platform. We're a manufacturing business—so clearly the manufacturing modules, stock control, and costing are key. But we're also a distribution business. We have a warehouse and we distribute to our customers. So, we have a fairly complex challenge, having to manufacture and despatch to order, and also supply and distribute both from stock and made-to-order products."

Coordinating both sides of the business is critical because the product that Burbidge supplies is a unique manufacturing proposition. A kitchen comprises many component parts—and in the case of a Burbidge kitchen, that may often mean many premium bespoke component parts.

"We're effectively supplying a kit of parts and we sell those parts literally kitchen by kitchen to our retail base," says Graham. "In terms of ensuring the availability and coordinating the dispatch of all those parts, it is a complex business and the Sage solution we have is well suited to ensuring that we're able to achieve a very efficient operation. I think that's one of the great qualities of the software. It can be moulded to fit your business rather than your business having to be moulded to fit it."

Because Sage X3 is designed as a coherent platform, these modules integrate in a way that allows the business to run smoothly and efficiently. Graham explains: "We use the sales order processing module extensively for the distribution side of the business and that ties in seamlessly with the manufacturing module. We see them as different options on the one menu, so the experience is that you're using one solution rather than a series of separate modules. That's what you need when you're running a sophisticated business with quite a lot of transactions going through. You need that automatic, seamless integration to work smoothly—and it really does with Sage X3."

The bottom line

These technical characteristics translate directly into business benefits for Burbidge by supporting innovation and speed of response. "The major advantage we get from Sage X3 is the fact that we can develop our business with new ideas and we can get the software to adapt to those ideas," says Graham. "We can operate our core operation in the way we choose and try different things as well that may need to be operated in a slightly different way."

Graham goes on to explain how this has become a key competitive edge and helped shape the direction of the company: "It's a real strength of the solution—and I can give you a good example of how that has made a difference. Our business came originally from a stocked solution. We then expanded on that to include colour choices so we could create bespoke designs, matching any colour that the customer requires."



“Having a team there that want to work with you and help you get the most out of the software is fantastic.”

Graham Heaven

Financial Director, Burbidge

“Obviously, operating in a manufacturing environment where you are spraying specifically to many differing customer requirements—particularly on a small number of units—is quite complex when you are set up to manufacture in bulk and supply a stock situation. But Sage X3 has proved adaptable enough to meet that challenge whilst still allowing us to manufacture stock items too. We’ve been able to do what we want as a business and the software has fully supported us.”

The future

With such an established track record as well as continuing innovation, the collaboration between Sage and Burbidge looks set for a strong future.

That’s partly about the software—but also about the people.

As Graham concludes: “One thing that’s really key for me is people. As I mentioned before, I’ve always found the people at Sage extremely helpful, extremely friendly, and extremely willing to make it work for us. I think that resonates with people here. In fact, I can’t emphasise enough how important that is. Having a team there that want to work with you and help you get the most out of the software is fantastic.”



Sage

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