



## Manufacturer Extends Information with ERP System, Achieves Sizable Productivity Gains

### Overview

**Country or Region:** Canada

**Industry:** Manufacturing

### Customer Profile

With 300 employees, Domfoam International is a leading manufacturer and wholesaler of sponge and polyurethane foam, serving the Canadian and U.S. markets since 1963.

### Business Situation

With an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system that was unreliable, lacked future support, and required 19 additional custom applications, Domfoam needed a dependable, consolidated ERP system.

### Solution

Domfoam partnered with Nexxlink to implement a viable ERP system with sophisticated data management tailored to meet Domfoam's industry-specific needs. The solution was rolled out to 20 employees.

### Benefits

- Increased productivity of report generation by 90 percent
- Extended information access
- Empowered employees
- Gained competitive advantage

“What’s amazing about Microsoft Navision is that it’s not your typical ERP system. It’s got the best ERP functionality with the best in data management—you’ve got it all in one.”

*Jim Maisonneuve, Controller, Domfoam*

Quebec-based polyurethane foam manufacturer and wholesaler Domfoam International was struggling to get its business-critical information from its existing enterprise resource planning (ERP) system and 19 business applications. The information was there, but it was buried deep within the database structure and was not usefully presented, so one employee with relational database skills was the sole contact point for all reporting needs within the company. The company consolidated its business applications by using Microsoft® Business Solutions–Navision® (now part of Microsoft Dynamics™) with Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000. Customized to meet Domfoam’s industry-specific needs, Microsoft Navision opens the flow of useful information throughout the company and empowers employees to run their own reports.

“With the customization capabilities of Navision, we were able to tailor a solution by making several industry-specific customizations.”

## Situation

Domfoam International has grown to be one of Canada’s leading manufacturers and wholesalers of sponge and polyurethane foam since it incorporated in 1963. From its 260,000-square-foot Montreal, Canada, plant, Domfoam services the demanding polyurethane market in Canada and the United States by meeting the tough industry standards and requirements of that market.

Domfoam was using a Macola enterprise resource planning (ERP) system with a Retrieve database to manage its accounting processes and 19 customized Delphi applications to help manage its manufacturing and wholesaling processes.

Unfortunately, the Macola system could not easily meet the manufacturer’s specialized industry needs. Also, the system could not track production units—the only meaningful units of measure for the foam industry. Each time Domfoam needed a sales report, someone had to manually run a Delphi process that would write to a separate file. This would then be sorted into various foam subcomponents, by using one of the many front-end applications, before the company could run the report. What’s more, reporting processes were so cumbersome, only one employee in the company had the database knowledge and skills to produce reports.

“With Macola, the information was there, but it was much harder to retrieve,” explains Jim Maisonneuve, Controller at Domfoam. “The information it presented up-front, compared with the information we needed, didn’t work for us.” Domfoam also experienced system reliability issues with its system, and support for the products in the Canadian market segment was becoming increasingly difficult to find. With quick order turnaround in the custom foam industry, any system downtime was problematic for Domfoam, putting it at risk for not meeting customer demands.

“We make the foam, cut the foam to customer specifications, and then ship it the next day,” Maisonneuve says. “And, when we can’t process an order because the system is down, that puts us at risk.”

## Solution

Domfoam needed an integrated, reliable solution that could be highly flexible and customizable to meet the custom foam cutting industry’s exact needs. The company considered upgrading its solution, but with 19 front-end systems to recompile and lack of support for the Macola and Retrieve products, Domfoam knew it needed a more viable solution. “It was clear that we needed a Microsoft® product. Microsoft has the resources to support its customers, and we knew we’d have the support we needed far into the future—unlike our other solution,” Maisonneuve says.

Domfoam partnered with Nexxlink, one of Canada’s leading providers of integrated information technology (IT) solutions since 1977, to roll out a new ERP system to 20 employees: Microsoft Business Solutions—Navision® and Microsoft SQL Server™ 2000, which provide core strengths in manufacturing and wholesaling combined with sophisticated, reliable data management.

With General Ledger, Payables and Receivables, Purchases and Payable, Inventory, and Shipping and Receiving modules, the new solution gives Domfoam all of the consolidated production information with useful units of measure the company needs. “With the customization capabilities of Navision, we were able to tailor a solution by making several industry-specific customizations,” say Reginald Howatson, Practice Manager at Nexxlink. For instance, Microsoft Navision enables Domfoam to

“With an integrated ERP system built expressly for our needs, we can make decisions more quickly and be more responsive to our customers, giving us the competitive advantage.”

Jim Maisonneuve, Controller, Domfoam

easily apply complex cost and price calculation rules associated with cutting and customizing foam products for each of its customers. In addition, using this solution, Domfoam eliminated 17 of its 19 additional applications right away.

### Benefits

Domfoam now has a powerful, consolidated ERP solution tailored to meet its needs, and the solution has opened the flow of useful information throughout the company. As a result, Domfoam employees have the information they need to do their jobs, and employee productivity has increased. “What’s amazing about Microsoft Navision is that it’s not your typical ERP system. It’s got the best ERP functionality with the best in data management—you’ve got it all in one,” Maisonneuve says.

### Increased Productivity

With its previous ERP system, extracting useful information was a laborious, manual process, requiring users to convert foam component and subcomponent quantities to production units of measure using several additional front-end applications. Now, with the highly customizable Microsoft Navision, those measurement conversions are built right into the ERP system and do not require separate applications to make available information useful. As a result, Domfoam has witnessed a 90 percent productivity gain when running reports.

“It used to take 20 minutes or more to run a sales report with meaningful information for one customer, but with Microsoft Navision, that process takes less than two minutes,” Maisonneuve says. What’s more, with a reliable ERP solution and powerful database technologies, employees have quick access to the information they need, helping to increase their productivity. “Before, employees would sit there and watch things

go in circles before the system would respond,” explains Maisonneuve. “Now, they have the information they need within seconds and can work seamlessly without system delays.”

### Extended Information Access

Before implementing Microsoft Navision, generating reports was so complicated—doing so required relational database skills—that one employee at Domfoam did all of the reporting for everyone else in the company. Microsoft Navision, however, comes with hundreds of customizable reports right out of the box and a navigational interface, so employees can run their own reports, without needing specialized database knowledge.

“That’s the power of Microsoft Navision,” Maisonneuve explains. “It has extended information throughout our organization to the people who need it and has empowered employees to complete these tasks themselves.” Now, everyone, from executive management to sales representatives, can easily access the information they need to do their jobs better.

### Gained Competitive Advantage

With Microsoft Navision, Domfoam has an ERP solution that corresponds to the demands of a competitive industry that provides customized services to all its customers. Because Microsoft Navision is flexible and highly customizable, the company can tailor it to meet industry-specific needs—from production to financials—in one, consolidated solution. “With an integrated ERP system built expressly for our needs, we can make decisions more quickly and be more responsive to our customers, giving us the competitive advantage.”

## For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to: [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

For more information about Nexxlink Technologies products and services, call (514) 828-4428 or visit the Web site at: [www.nexxlink.com](http://www.nexxlink.com)

For more information about Domfoam products and services, call (514) 325-8120 or visit the Web site at: [www.domfoam.com](http://www.domfoam.com)

## Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to: [www.microsoft.com/dynamics](http://www.microsoft.com/dynamics)

Microsoft Business Solutions-Navision  
Now Microsoft Dynamics NAV

### Software and Services

- Microsoft SQL Server 2000
- Microsoft Dynamics
  - Microsoft Business Solutions-Navision

### Hardware

- Compaq Proliant Server with Pentium 3 1.4-GHz dual processor and 1 GB of RAM

### Partners

- Nexxlink Technologies

© 2004 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. This case study is for informational purposes only. MICROSOFT MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS SUMMARY. Microsoft, Microsoft Dynamics, Navision, and Windows are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation or Microsoft Business Solutions ApS or their affiliates in the United States and/or other countries. Microsoft Business Solutions ApS is a subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

Document published August 2004

**Microsoft**