

a model of excellence PARAGON

“Before modernizing with newlook it was extremely difficult to find new customers” – Shawne O’Connor, Director

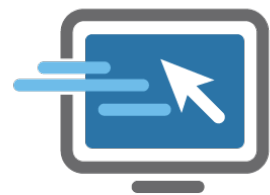
Case Study Overview | ISV creates new business with newlook



100% Customer growth with rich graphical interface



50% reduction in training times



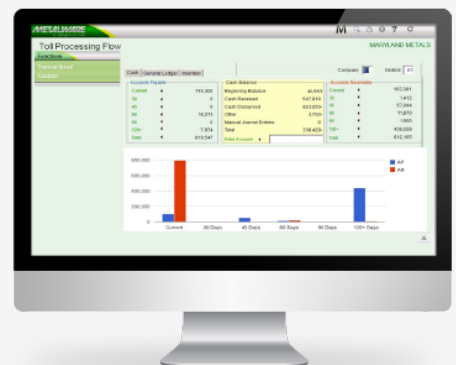
Real-time dashboard to clearly deliver vital information

Background

Paragon Consulting Services provide software for the metals industry in addition to IT and B2B/EDI services. Metalware is their flagship offering, providing full ERP functionality tailored for metal service centers and toll processors. The software has been designed to handle anything from small operations to large, multi-national enterprises. Metalware was initially developed in 1983 and has been developed entirely in RPG.

Challenge

Although very successful in the niche metals industry, Metalware was losing market share because its 5250 green screen interface was being perceived as out-dated. “We reached the point where we couldn’t make any new sales, and it was primarily because of the interface” says Shawne O’Connor, Director at Paragon. However, it wasn’t enough to just reface the existing applications into a graphical version. Shawne further explains, “in order to meet our customers needs, and to remain competitive, we recognized the need to add further value, such as improving the navigation, and integrating with desktop applications and web services. Our challenge was that we needed to do something substantial but we also needed to get it done as quickly as possible”



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– Shawne O’Connor, Director

Solution

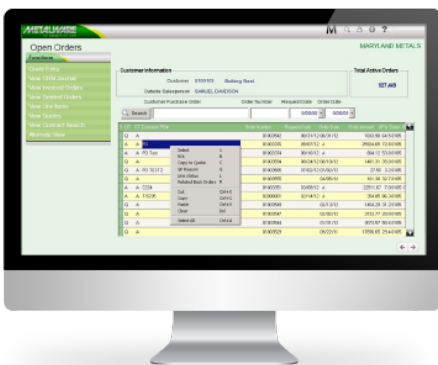
Paragon had very specific requirements, which helped them move quickly through their research and evaluation process. “We needed a solution that would get us results with the least amount of effort and time, but that could also provide a very modern, integrated and responsive user experience. We also wanted something to help us in long term, enabling us to adapt to technologies such as mobile and the cloud, knowing they would become more important over time” says Shawne.

Paragon selected newlook and smartclient after evaluating their options. “Once we understood what newlook was capable of, it was an easy decision for us to proceed. We were able to take 30 years of RPG development and get quick results. Metalware has a significant amount of functionality and over 10,000 screens”. They showed their early results to some key customers and internal employees to demonstrate which direction they were heading, and also to get feedback so they could prioritize which areas of the ERP should be tackled first.

Results

The early feedback was extremely positive. “Everyone we showed it to was very excited with what they saw. However, we started to receive a lot of requests for added functionality that would help users do their job more productively. We have delivered a dashboard, which includes charting for accounts receivable and accounts payable. We have also integrated extensively with Microsoft Office. We automated common tasks such as creation of email messages, Word documents and Excel spreadsheets.”

However, it was the sales and marketing departments that were the most excited by the new graphical solution. “As soon as we started showing this to our prospective customers, we had immediate results. Our customer growth increased by 100%, which was obviously a big success for Paragon” continues Shawne. “Our existing customer base also benefitted from the new system. At least 50% of Metalware users are already using the graphical version.”



Also, training times for new users was drastically reduced. By using graphical drop downs, date controls, radio buttons and tabs the application was much more intuitive. “It now takes 50% less time to train a new employee how to use the application” enthuses Shawne.

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Products Used:

newlook
smartclient

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