

Tudor Rose International increases productivity through AEB's integrated SCM platform, ASSIST4

Europe's leading export market management company employs AEB's software as part of an IT programme to streamline current operations and enable future growth

Tudor Rose International is Europe's leading export market management company, specialising in building brands around the world. In business for nearly 30 years, the innovative company mastered an ambitious IT modernisation project to streamline current operations and enable future growth. Tudor Rose International now relies on ASSIST4 to manage their end-to-end logistics from order confirmation to final delivery – including warehouse operations, customs processing and time slot management.

It's a great challenge for manufacturing and trading businesses to build up their brands and establish themselves successfully in their home markets. When it comes to global expansion and offering products in new markets across country barriers and company borders, these challenges multiply tremendously. Global trade regulations, scope of investment, regional price politics, diversified consumer demands and competition scenarios are just a few of the many factors to be considered, which is why many businesses hesitate to expand despite the risk of missing out on excellent opportunities.

This is where Tudor Rose International comes in: Whether you are a brand owner looking for brand development across global markets, or you are a distributor looking for quality British brands to expand your existing business, Tudor Rose International's team of export specialists is there for you. Working closely with British brand owners like Baxters, Burtons Biscuits, Organix, Jordans, Ryvita, Premier Foods, Typhoo, Tyrrells and Whitworths, they successfully position all types of fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) in global markets.

Tudor Rose International was founded in 1985 with its head office and warehousing facility in Stroud, Gloucestershire, United Kingdom. In its first year of trading, the company was asked to launch Cadbury Biscuits in the Middle East – an order that formed the foundation for the strategic direction to become an export market management organisation. Over the years, Tudor Rose International has progressively redefined its strategies to develop a global network of trading partnerships, achieving successful results in some of the world's most challenging export regions including Africa, the Middle East, China, Turkey and Russia.

Today the company employs over 50 highly skilled export specialists, and additionally offers comprehensive supply chain management services, contract packing and cost-effective logistics.

Time to modernise

The initial need for IT improvements to better support Tudor Rose International's growing business was identified a few years ago.

"We've been working with a custom developed in-house solution

for the commercial and the logistics side of our business for over 15 years. The system struggled to support the growing business volumes efficiently," explains Barry Wright, Commercial Analyst at Tudor Rose International. The final decision to upgrade existing IT systems was taken in 2012, when latest forecasts and strategic business models projected a planned growth of 100% within the next five years. "It became clear at this point that a more sophisticated IT infrastructure was required to efficiently manage current volumes and importantly, to provide a solid and sustainable foundation for our planned business growth," Barry Wright adds.

The decision to upgrade the current system landscape then kicked off a major project at Tudor Rose International, involving all business areas from sales and procurement to operations and fulfilment. Starting with the foundations, they chose SAP® Business One as the ERP to manage sales, procurement and the financial side of the business. For both logistics execution and control, Tudor Rose International selected AEB to implement a comprehensive supply chain platform, including the solutions: ASSIST4 Warehouse Management, ASSIST4 Time Slot Management, ASSIST4 Transport & Freight Management, and ASSIST4 Customs Management.

Barry Wright explained: "We were very impressed with AEB's global trade and logistics knowledge. It's rare to find a provider who understands the entire supply chain as a whole and also provides integrated solutions for all areas. AEB's integration capabilities in the SAP environment further confirmed our decision, as we were aiming to implement a harmonised system landscape throughout Tudor Rose International. Selecting SAP® as ERP provider and AEB for logistics execution and control presented the ideal solution combination for our business".

In preparation for the major IT upgrade project, Tudor Rose International carefully scrutinised their existing logistics processes and identified various areas in need of change in order to drive maximum efficiency with ASSIST4 upon implementation. Overall goals included the reduction of paper-based logistics processes and the move to standardised and largely automated management of all logistics core tasks – from order confirmation to final delivery.

Streamlining step by step

The implementation of the four AEB solutions to streamline Tudor Rose International's logistics operations was scheduled in three phases – all of which were discussed, planned and executed with AEB in-house experts from the applicable solution areas. The final AEB solution to complete the implementation of Tudor Rose International's comprehensive supply chain management platform

went live in June 2014, with 12 users across different teams and departments in the head office in Stroud, working with ASSIST4.

Loading dock management

ASSIST4 Time Slot Management was the first AEB solution to go live and now supports smooth loading dock management at Tudor Rose International's facilities in Stroud. Prior to ASSIST4, the processes at the loading dock and within the warehouse at Tudor Rose International were largely managed without specialised system support, based on paper-based processes and significant manual efforts. As the business and corresponding volumes grew, these manual processes resulted in inefficiencies, delays and increased overtime of workforces.

AEB's Time Slot Management provides full transparency of all loading docks in operation, scheduled pick-ups and drop offs, booked and available time slots, and offers convenient system access for both Tudor Rose International and applicable transport partners to enable requests and bookings from both sides.

"The new solution now allows for the first time transparent load control aimed at balancing inbound and outbound traffic. We are able to closely monitor and manage all loading bay activities, and no longer need to rely on two dedicated staff members for access to schedules," confirms Clive Scrivens, Warehouse Manager at Tudor Rose International.

Shipping and customs processes

After implementing time slot management without interrupting ongoing operations, the project team continued with the standardisation and automation of export and shipping processes through implementation of ASSIST4 Customs Management and ASSIST4 Transport & Freight Management. This is an important area for the Tudor Rose International business, as Barry Wright explains: "Our portfolio includes export, warehousing and extended logistics services, which targets the needs of manufacturers, retailers, traders and logistics providers. Based on our customers' diversity, we are presented every day with a number of different service demands and logistics challenges that we need to master efficiently. Our team offers a unique skill set and is ready for any challenge. It was high time for the right IT system to step up and combine our own and our customers' various requirements, and address our needs within one integrated solution."

The responsibility for shipping documentation processes at Tudor Rose International was transferred from the administration teams to the logistics department within the warehouse to facilitate more efficient workflows. Prior to the implementation of ASSIST4, the creation of customs and shipping documentation was subject to regular office hours, and last minute shipment requests either involved delays or incurred costly overtime. ASSIST4 Transport & Freight Management and ASSIST4 Customs Management went live on January 10 2014. Closely integrated with the ERP system, the AEB solutions now automatically take over data from SAP to process orders and create delivery notes, arrange shipment consolidations, and manage packing station processes including automated barcode label generation. As part of this comprehensive process, export documents are created in line with applicable declaration requirements, and submitted electronically to the authorities. Barry

Wright explains: "As export market specialists, smooth customs processing is crucial to provide first class customer service. Working with the limitations of our previous systems and portals from official governments resulted in operational inefficiencies and frustrations by our foreign trade experts. AEB's integrated solution largely automates the entire process from order to packing station, fully incorporating all customs, customer and carrier requirements along the way, and ensuring both efficiency and regulatory compliance."

Productivity increase in the warehouse

The fourth solution focuses on the heart of Tudor Rose International's operation: The warehouse – and AEB's ASSIST4 Warehouse Management went live in June 2014. Prior to ASSIST4, there was no dedicated WMS in place. All processes were managed within the self-developed system and supported through significant manual efforts by logistics and warehouse teams. Tudor Rose International is coordinating with three third-party warehouses, 44 suppliers and 300 customers. They facilitate 850 bin locations and over 3,500 different products within their warehouse in Stroud. In an average month, the company processes around 215,000 goods-in pieces across more than 120 inbound deliveries. Considering these volumes, the implementation of a dedicated and flexible WMS to ensure efficient processing in line with customer demands was long due.

Working closely with the other solutions as part of up- and downstream processes, AEB's WMS has significantly increased goods-in, goods-out and intra-logistics efficiencies in the Gloucestershire facility. Warehouse Manager Clive Scrivens said: "From a functional perspective, the warehouse solution is excellently designed, reliable, meets our needs, and fulfils our demands." In detail, this includes optimised batch auditability, providing for end-to-end tracking of orders and visibility of products held in stock, including product attributes such as batch numbers and best before dates. The visibility provided by ASSIST4 also extends to the warehouse workforce, enabling better planning and balancing of warehouse staffing levels to ensure more staff is available as volumes increase, and numbers are adjusted adequately during periodic lows. The overall productivity and warehouse throughput-capacity has also been increased through the elimination of paper-based and time-consuming processes.

Chris Couzins-Short, Managing Director of Tudor Rose International is pleased with the results: "We derive significant benefits from AEB's comprehensive solution portfolio. It enables the integration of TMS, Customs, WMS and Load Control to drive smooth and accelerated end-to-end operations. The modular ASSIST4 system structure is highly convenient, too, as it allows for adding functionality as requirements change, or the business grows. We're confident to have selected the right solution to support our business now, and in the future – especially in light of our ambitious growth plans." He also values the partnership between Tudor Rose International and AEB: "Working with AEB throughout the different project phases has been excellent – the teams were highly professional and knowledgeable, always available to listen to our needs and answer our questions - truly a pleasure to work with."