



ACTEBIS

SAP® SOFTWARE HELPS DISTRIBUTOR TAKE GROWTH IN STRIDE

“Our business environment is constantly changing. And the challenges we face have increased greatly in recent years. Our SAP solutions give us a firm foundation for mastering these challenges – today and tomorrow.”

Walter Schulte-Vennbur, CIO, Actebis Peacock GmbH

QUICK FACTS

Company

- Name: Actebis GmbH
- Location: Soest, Germany
- Industry: Wholesale distribution
- Products and services: Information and communication technology products and consumer electronics
- Revenue: €3.66 billion
- Employees: 1,800 (in Europe)
- Web site: www.actebis.com
- Implementation partner: SAP® Consulting

Challenges and Opportunities

- Keep pace with above-average growth
- Increase operational efficiency and flexibility throughout the company
- Step up international operations
- Enhance customer service and collaboration with partners

Objectives

- Strip out aging legacy applications
- Implement future-proof, comprehensive software for enterprise resource planning (ERP)
- Integrate business partners into key processes
- Support highly specialized, industry-specific processes

SAP Solutions and Services

- SAP for Wholesale Distribution solution portfolio
- Project management, training, and implementation services from SAP Consulting

Implementation Highlights

- Introduced entire range of ERP functionality
- Provided excellent collaboration with consultants from SAP
- Went live simultaneously at 3 Actebis companies on schedule
- Developed new industry-specific functionality jointly with SAP

Why SAP

- Best fit for functional requirements
- Expertise of consultants from SAP

Benefits

- Ability to master business growth of over 25%
- Higher standards of service at no additional cost
- Greater enterprise-wide productivity
- Enhanced collaboration with partners through tight integration into supply chain
- Faster access to important information for internal and external users
- Elimination of many manual tasks thanks to extensive process automation
- Enhanced efficiency and flexibility
- Tailored support for complex wholesale distribution processes

Existing Environment

Heterogeneous landscape including homegrown legacy applications

Third-Party Integration

- Database: Oracle
- Hardware: Hewlett-Packard
- Operating system: HP-UX

ACTEBIS[®]
PEACOCK

“We’ve grown our business by over 25% during the past years – and we couldn’t have done it without SAP software,” says Walter Schulte-Vennbur, CIO at Actebis Peacock GmbH, a German subsidiary of Actebis GmbH. The Germany-based wholesale distributor not only boosted efficiency and flexibility by introducing standard SAP® solutions for many business processes. It also codeveloped new functionality for a number of highly specialized tasks that are specific to the wholesale distribution industry.

With a workforce of 1,800, around 70,000 customers, and revenues of €3.66 billion, Actebis is Europe’s third-largest wholesale distributor of information and communication technology (ICT) products. Headquartered in Soest, Germany, the company is committed to profitable growth, cost leadership, and maximum customer satisfaction. During the coming years, Actebis aims to become a leader in the national markets it serves – and to enhance its competitive edge by providing business partners with innovative services.

Major Growth Means Major Challenges

SAP solutions play a pivotal role in Actebis’s growth strategy. Introduced in 2002 to help the company keep pace with rapidly increasing business, SAP software is at the very heart of Actebis’s business. “Before the implementation, we were looking at year-on-year revenue growth of around 50%,” explains Schulte-Vennbur. “Plus, we were stepping up international operations. The problem was that our heterogeneous, homegrown

IT applications had reached the end of the road and lacked the performance, functionality, and openness needed to tackle these challenges.”

The ICT distributor decided that the time had come to give its application landscape a complete makeover. “We needed future-proof, comprehensive software that would support all our business processes – increasing operational efficiency, driving innovation, and enabling us to respond quickly and flexibly to changing market demands,” says Schulte-Vennbur. Furthermore, Actebis wanted a solution that would automate time-consuming manual tasks, meet various country-specific requirements, and allow tight integration of business partners into the supply chain.

One-Stop SAP Software and Services

After putting products from various vendors through their paces, Actebis opted for SAP for Wholesale Distribution solutions – in conjunction with services from SAP Consulting. “The SAP

software met the vast majority of our requirements,” explains Schulte-Vennbur. “And we were very impressed by the expertise of the consultants from SAP. So it made excellent sense to team up with them on the implementation.”

The scope of the undertaking was nothing if not ambitious. Actebis not only aimed to introduce the entire range of SAP functionality for enterprise resource planning – encompassing over 2,500 distribution, production, and service processes – but it also intended to go live with the new solutions simultaneously at three companies. And all this within a very tight time frame. “Effective collaboration was crucial to meeting our goals,” underlines Schulte-Vennbur. “The specialists from SAP Consulting really took our corporate culture on board. They very quickly became an integral part of our organization and gained a firm grasp of our complex business model.”

Actebis and SAP Consulting jointly headed up the project. The consultants from SAP managed the implementation using the tried-and-trusted ASAP methodology. They delivered quality-assurance services and provided in-house IT staff with targeted knowledge transfer – using a train-the-trainer approach. “SAP Consulting brought a combination of solution-specific skills and a clearly structured implementation methodology to the project,” says Schulte-Vennbur. “And these were key to the success of the initiative.”



“The screen we codeveloped with SAP gives sales staff access to details of customers and thousands of ICT products – at the push of a button. So we can now provide even better assistance. And that ultimately means greater customer satisfaction.”

Walter Schulte-Vennbur, CIO, Actebis Peacock GmbH

Rapid Access to the Right Facts and Figures

In addition to implementing standard SAP solutions, the project partners developed functionality for a number of industry-specific processes for which software was not available at the time. “Working hand in hand with SAP Consulting, we leveraged the SAP software to develop innovative new solutions,” says Schulte-Vennbur. These included a rapid data-entry screen for Actebis’s sales professionals as well as tailored applications for a number of specialized processes.

“In our line of business, speed is of the essence,” explains Schulte-Vennbur.

“The SAP software met the vast majority of our requirements. And we were very impressed by the expertise of the consultants from SAP.”

Walter Schulte-Vennbur, CIO, Actebis Peacock GmbH

“And to deliver the service that customers demand, our salespeople have to field telephone inquiries quickly and efficiently. The screen we codeveloped with SAP gives sales staff access to details of customers and thousands of ICT products – at the push of a button. So we can now provide even better assistance. And that ultimately means greater customer satisfaction.”

Supporting Specialized Wholesale Distribution Tasks

Actebis and SAP Consulting also developed software for price protection – a highly specialized wholesale distribution process. When a vendor reduces the price of goods already sold to a dis-

tributor, the distributor can claim a refund on the original purchase price. The new software delivers comprehensive functionality for all associated tasks and features specially developed screens and a dedicated workflow. “We did some pretty intensive R & D with SAP Consulting on price protection, and we’re very happy with the results,” says Schulte-Vennbur.

Actebis also leveraged its new software to streamline other key processes. “The SAP solutions help us optimize procurement so that we have the right products at the right place – and at the right price,” says Schulte-Vennbur. “Relevant data from our SAP software flows into our data warehousing solution, enabling us

to better analyze and support our procurement processes.”

Growing the Business Without Growing the Budget

Thanks to excellent collaboration and coordination, Actebis completed its large-scale project right on schedule. “We met all our objectives,” says Schulte-Vennbur. “The SAP software fulfills our requirements in terms of performance, functionality, and efficiency. This has enabled us to grow while maintaining our high standards of service – and without pushing up costs. In short, we’ve enhanced productivity throughout the organization and helped ensure our cost leadership.”

A very large number of Actebis’s employees currently enjoy the benefits of the SAP solutions. “Our SAP software has enabled us to automate many manual tasks throughout the group,” states Schulte-Vennbur. “For example, entering new products into the system was a time-consuming chore, comprising 15 different steps. Now we only have to enter three key details and we’re done.”

The SAP solutions also enable tight integration of third parties into the supply chain. “Streamlined data exchange with our partners is key to competitiveness,” states Schulte-Vennbur. “Now they can hook up directly to our SAP software using open interfaces – something that was simply not possible with our legacy applications. We can now transfer information quickly and efficiently – from orders right through to invoices.”

Bigger and Better Things to Come

Going forward, SAP software will play an increasingly important role at Actebis. The company recently completed a technical upgrade to the latest release of the SAP ERP application and is now looking into the business benefits of new and enhanced features. The new release also opens the door to a paradigm shift in its IT architecture.

“We’re working with SAP to draw up a strategy for service-oriented architecture,” explains Schulte-Vennbur. “We already use Web services to provide online access to information in our SAP software, such as pricing and availability. Introducing a full-fledged, service-oriented architecture will enable us to enhance collaboration with customers

and partners even further." Actebis is also poised to extend its SAP footprint by introducing new software including the SAP NetWeaver® Portal component and the SAP Customer Relationship Management (SAP CRM) application.

"SAP NetWeaver Portal will enable us to drive forward our information management strategy – helping ensure that the right facts and figures reach the right people at the right time," Schulte-Vennbur explains. "And SAP CRM will give us comprehensive insight into our business partners, enabling us to better tailor promotions to our target groups."

A satisfied Schulte-Vennbur takes stock of Actebis's track record with SAP software to date: "Our business environment is constantly changing. And the challenges we face have increased greatly in recent years. Our SAP solutions give us a firm foundation for mastering these challenges – today and tomorrow."

50 095 887 (09/08)

©2009 by SAP AG.

All rights reserved. SAP, R/3, SAP NetWeaver, Duet, PartnerEdge, ByDesign, SAP Business ByDesign, and other SAP products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of SAP AG in Germany and other countries.

Business Objects and the Business Objects logo, BusinessObjects, Crystal Reports, Crystal Decisions, Web Intelligence, Xcelsius, and other Business Objects products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of Business Objects S.A. in the United States and in other countries. Business Objects is an SAP company.

All other product and service names mentioned are the trademarks of their respective companies. Data contained in this document serves informational purposes only. National product specifications may vary.

These materials are subject to change without notice. These materials are provided by SAP AG and its affiliated companies ("SAP Group") for informational purposes only, without representation or warranty of any kind, and SAP Group shall not be liable for errors or omissions with respect to the materials. The only warranties for SAP Group products and services are those that are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services, if any. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty.