



## GROUP CASAIS

# SAP® SOLUTIONS SUSTAIN GROWTH

### QUICK FACTS

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**António Carlos Rodrigues, CEO,**  
Group Casais S.A.

#### Company

- Name: Group Casais S.A.
- Location: Braga, Portugal
- Industry: Engineering, construction, and operations
- Products and services: Engineering and construction
- Revenue: €200 million (2006)
- Employees: 1,300
- Web site: [www.casais.pt](http://www.casais.pt) (Portuguese only)
- Partner: CaseEdinfor II S.A.

#### Challenges and Opportunities

- Internationalize company, requiring refined management control
- Improve overall view of business by moving away from separate, isolated information solutions

#### Objectives

- Align information systems strategy with the business
- Support and streamline business-critical processes
- Integrate systems and internal value chains

#### SAP® Solutions and Services

- SAP for Engineering, Construction & Operations (SAP for EC&O) solution portfolio
- SAP® Business Suite family of business applications

#### Implementation Highlights

- 4 months for conceptual analysis
- 4 months to deploy SAP Business Suite, plus 7 more months to deploy SAP for EC&O
- 10 internal key users involved in deployment
- 10 external consultants
- 116 users at 9 Casais companies

#### Why SAP

- Perceived fulfillment of needs
- Breadth of solutions for various company needs
- Solution's scalability and potential to evolve
- Functionality to handle diverse currencies and languages

#### Benefits

- Greater reliability and integration of information
- Better access to information
- Less duplication and discontinuity in business processes

#### Existing Environment

Complete enterprise resource planning software

#### Third-Party Integration

- Database: SQL Server
- Hardware: Hewlett-Packard
- Operating system: Microsoft Windows 2003 Enterprise



### SAP Customer Success Story

Engineering, Construction, and Operations – Nonresidential Construction



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With 50 years of history in engineering and construction, Group Casais S.A. is the largest construction company in the Minho Province and the fourth-largest in northern Portugal.

Successful management and engagement in large projects gave rise to the company's sustained growth, while a constant search for new business opportunities ultimately led to internationalization, starting in Angola in the 1990s. The company also expanded into other countries such as Germany, Morocco, Belgium, and Russia through its involvement in major projects.

As a result of this rapid expansion – from a €74 million annual turnover in 2002 to €200 million in 2006 – Group Casais is now Portugal's ninth-largest construction company and an international player in its own right. Its activities extend widely from construction and public works to conservation, restoration, rehabilitation, trade, industry, tourism, and services.

Following extensive restructuring, the company needed an information software solution to match its new circumstances. "Given the company's growth, we began to feel the need for a system offering more information and more refined management control," says António Carlos Rodrigues, CEO of Group Casais. "And we wanted a scalable platform that could evolve with the company."

### Tough Challenges

Many challenges stood in the way of this ambition. Group Casais's existing information systems were comprised of various self-contained solutions that did not communicate with each other, requiring information to be duplicated and obscuring an overall view of the business. Visibility of data was restricted, says Rodrigues. "A major motive for us to invest was to gain real-time access to profitability, enabling assessment and correction if necessary."

Having identified limitations in its information systems, Casais sought the best solution for its growth prospects and business scope under its restructuring process. In the end, it chose the SAP® Business Suite family of business applications and the vertical solution, SAP for Engineering, Construction & Operations (SAP for EC&O) solution portfolio.

"We are experiencing a growth phase, and it is hard to find a solution that covers as many business areas as SAP software. We deployed the SAP solution for construction, but we know there are other SAP solutions to allow us to keep growing in other business areas," says Rodrigues. He added that past experiences with SAP at other engineering and construction companies also influenced the decision.

### Conceived for Quality

Before the solution was deployed, an assessment was made of Group Casais's needs, with the enterprise resource planning (ERP) software and vertical industry solution from SAP identified as best fulfilling those needs. This phase followed the company's quality certification process during Group Casais's restructuring. The project, called "Casais Synergy," involved a major change in the group, defining and enhancing processes in every department, and laying the groundwork to think about future needs and about deploying SAP solutions.

Four months after deploying the SAP Business Suite with the various department heads, the company embarked on the project's second vertical application phase: deploying the vital company functions through ERP first, and then moving forward to SAP for EC&O.

### Positive Outcome

The first deployment phase was completed in January 2004, and the SAP for EC&O implementation was launched in June of the same year. SAP solutions were thus adopted during an extremely busy time in the company's history as Group Casais was working on major projects, namely the Braga and Guimarães stadiums for the UEFA Euro 2004 soccer championship.

"The company's restructuring occurred during growth phases, but we thought this growth cycle called for reorganization



“We needed a foundation to support our needs so that, without worrying about our information systems, we could focus more on our business and less on management tools.”

**António Carlos Rodrigues**, CEO, Group Casais S.A.

and change management to prepare us for the less-favorable economic cycle predicted at the time,” says Rodrigues.

The outcome has been positive, with many of the goals of information accessibility and data reliability achieved. The SAP software for equipment and tools management, for example, is a powerful vertical solution that enables Group Casais to manage construction equipment on-site – a sizable task given the scale and diverse international nature of the company’s operations. With the functionality, managers can trace the location and availability of all valuable equipment assets, allocate them to sites as required, manage leasing contracts, obtain a real-time picture of equipment costs and profits, plan

and visible to all relevant personnel in real time. Data can be entered at each construction site and sent to the accounting department in the central offices. BOS also serves as a central repository of legal and commercial documents.

Overall benefits to Group Casais include a global view of all its projects; faster, more efficient budget control; and the automation of the majority of its internal processes.

### Looking Ahead

However, Group Casais believes the project must be taken further for the company to capitalize on the solution’s full potential. Short-term plans exist

“We know we have a platform for continued sustained growth. In our business, you need the right conditions to construct a building. We needed a foundation to support our needs so that, without worrying about our information systems, we could focus more on our business and less on management tools.”

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maintenance, and minimize idle time. This efficient management avoids unnecessary rental of third-party equipment.

The bill of services (BOS) software is another vertical solution, which handles requests for quotations, the flow of materials, and subcontractor activity. All Group Casais’s business processes are covered: budgeting, planning, and after-sales, which – under Portuguese law – extends to five years after project completion. Information is integrated

to tailor the solution to reflect the company’s mobility and to monitor the movements of construction works in progress. Analysis is currently under way.

The idea of using the SAP NetWeaver® Business Intelligence component is being assessed for the medium term, although SAP Business Suite must become more thoroughly embedded for the company to effectively foresee potential gains, says Rodrigues.

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