Connectrac®

Cable Management Systems Provider Untangles Business Complexity with SAP Business One

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>
> *Scott Livingston,*
> *Director of IT, Connectrac*

Name: Connectrac

Industry: Telecom and cable management

Products: Wireway – Cable management systems

Location: Dallas, Texas

Website: connectrac.com

Previous System: QuickBooks

The Solution: SAP Business One

Company Description

Based in Dallas, Texas and founded in 2005, Connectrac is a privately-owned company with representatives throughout the US and Canada. It sells its products through electrical distributors, AV channels, contract furniture dealers, and others throughout the world. Connectrac is the go-to solution for top corporations, government agencies, schools, and universities.

Challenges

- Lack of integration between business areas.
- Inefficient process for PO creation through to product fulfillment.
- Accounting software unable to keep up with 40% year-over-year growth.

Why SAP Business One

- An integrated business management solution that simplifies IT.
- A single view of the business that helps you stay in control.
- A scalable solution that supports continued business growth.

Benefits

- Flexible/adaptable to meet requirements for part numbering.
- Enhanced visibility across the company with real-time reporting.
- CRM integration for increased customer satisfaction.

Connectrac's founder, Clint Strong, was inspired by a drive to solve the problems he encountered when working as an architect on corporate interiors projects. In the telecom and cable management industry, hiding connectivity wires in high-rise office spaces means trenching out concrete floors, which is costly and sometimes against the building code. So, Connectrac carved their niche in corporate interior projects by not carving anything at all. Their unobtrusive products meet the demands for new technology connectivity and maintain the aesthetic and structural integrity of a building without core drilling, trenching, or floor boxes.

Today, the company's products are the best floor-based cable management solutions for bringing power, data, and communications from the wall to all interior commercial applications. With 40% growth year over year, Connectrac set out to solve the next problem: Supporting business complexity while keeping the bottom line connected to superior customer service. With SAP Business One, Connectrac's operations – from CRM, WMS, and reporting – are all hardwired into a single integrated solution.

Connectrac was growing fast; in just over a decade, the company's employee headcount grew by a third – every year. And when they needed someone to head their ambitious IT projects for managing growth and maintaining excellent customer service, Scott Livingston joined the team as Director of IT.

With a product for the end of 2019 winning awards before its launch, the company is confident its next big product will receive positive market acceptance and success. Following the rapid success of new product launches, the company realized to successfully manage growth meant getting in front of the product cycles.

According to Livingston, the problem that Connectrac needed to solve was, "How do we get ahead of that curve so we can sustain the growth while being responsive to new opportunities?"

Untangling the Business Complexity

Initially, Connectrac utilized QuickBooks, a small business accounting software package. For small businesses, QuickBooks is excellent for keeping cash flowing during the early stages of business, which is necessary for growth. Despite that, the software doesn't provide fast-growth businesses with performance, functionality, and scalability to overcome growth challenges.

For Connectrac, it didn't take long to connect the dots. Their exponential growth required a scalable business management solution they wouldn't have to replace.

Connectrac's decision to move to SAP Business One was pragmatic. One concern businesses often have when moving from a small business accounting software like QuickBooks to SAP Business One is downtime. As Livingston notes, however, the motivation to move to a scalable platform early on was because they couldn't grow into QuickBooks.

> " Connectrac wanted to invest the money into SAP Business One because they knew they could grow into it," explains Livingston. "The biggest part of this decision was avoiding another companywide migration to another system in the future. "
>
> *Scott Livingston, Director of IT*
> *Connectrac*

Had they maintained the status quo with QuickBooks, Connectrac would have gotten stuck in the limitations of a software that wasn't designed to follow a business to the top. However, by choosing SAP Business One, which is designed for growing small to midsized businesses, Connectrac got ahead of its growth.

"I know some companies that have gone through the pain of switching to a completely different system, and that's a lot of work and a lot of money," says Livingston. "Connectrac was wise to see that SAP Business One was the right direction to go and invest in it at a young age for a company."

Investing in SAP Business One Means Investing in Your Customer

Many technology investments Connectrac makes are driven by the company's focus on customer experience.

"Our profits go back into the company to grow it, but we're also investing to ensure we can sustain our high level of customer service," says Livingston.

The company sells to architect firms, resellers, and electrical companies that also install the equipment across the US, with global interest for their products in Canada, Australia, Brazil, and Europe on the horizon.

"We're very customer-oriented and always have been," says Livingston. To be able to respond quickly to our customers' needs, usually from the time they come to us we're typically shipping the product out the next day with layouts and drawings we've done ourselves."

Translating Part Codes Translates into Customer Service Offering

Livingston's responsibilities as Director of IT include maintaining SAP Business One. One project the company has pursued following SAP Business One's implementation is finding ways the solution will benefit Connectrac's customers.

Enter the custom part number decoder.

"We've built a tool that translates customer-facing part numbers to Connectrac's part number system in SAP Business One. It's one of the ways we're simplifying things for our customer," explains Livingston.

The part number translation tool will go a long way of provided benefit to customers. The ability to implement such tools is proof of SAP Business One's flexibility. Unlike off-the-shelf business applications, SAP Business One allows businesses to meet their unique process requirements.

"I've been really impressed with how flexible SAP Business One is in how you can integrate with it," adds Livingston. "Nothing is impossible; you just need to pick up a few database skills, SQL skills, and the rest is fairly self-explanatory."

The Right Technology and the Right Support for the Job

Think of technology in its simplest form – a tool like a lever, for example. A lever amplifies an input force to provide a greater output force, giving the user greater leverage. Fast forward to modern technology – specifically business management solutions like SAP Business One – and you'll find similar results: greater output for growing businesses like Connectrac.

With one difference: the leverage you gain from a solution like SAP Business One requires a skilled partner who can translate how its robust processes and features can benefit a business.

For over 20 years, Vision33 has partnered with growing SMEs at various junctures in their growth. This means having the foresight to see where a business is going, listening to their goals, and aligning the platform's adaptable processes so they dovetail for each client.

The Industry-leading Vision33 TOTAL Care Program

To help Connectrac leverage SAP Business One's features, Vision33 offers an industry-leading dedicated customer support program, Vision33 TOTAL Care. The program offers something Connectrac couldn't get from other SAP resellers: comprehensive training opportunities, access to resources, and a dedicated support team for all their SAP Business One needs.

TOTAL Care allows customers to take advantage of all SAP Business One functionality and maintain long-term value. Because SAP Business One is comprehensive, it offers relevant information from a user-customized cockpit view. The cockpit provides an onscreen dashboard where users can view the business reports relevant to their roles. Leveraging these features requires understanding SAP Business One's advanced reporting capabilities – another thing the training opportunities Vision33 TOTAL Care helped Connectrac with.


Busy at the Biz.One Conference

Recently, Livingston went to SAP's Biz.One Conference, where other Vision33 customers from North America meet for learning, training, and collaboration in all things SAP Business One. As a platinum sponsor, Vision33 extends the founding principle of the Vision33 TOTAL Care program in providing customers with opportunities to discover new ideas, share experiences, and actively participate in face-to-face events to leverage their investment in SAP Business One.

"It was good for me to go to Biz.One and see what was available – what could be done with SAP Business One," says Livingston. "I talked to other Vision33 customers and saw what they were doing. It helped us see some of the reporting tools we could make use of."

All Lines Point Towards Success

What's next for Connectrac? With SAP Business One in place, the company can move forward with new projects. SAP Business One is at the center of many new initiatives, including integrating the company's customer relationship management (CRM) system.

"We're quick to fulfill customer orders, so we want to sustain our growth. SAP Business One enables us to maintain the same customer experience we did when we were a smaller company," states Livingston. And as they continue growing, the focus remains on customer service – that's just how their employees are wired.
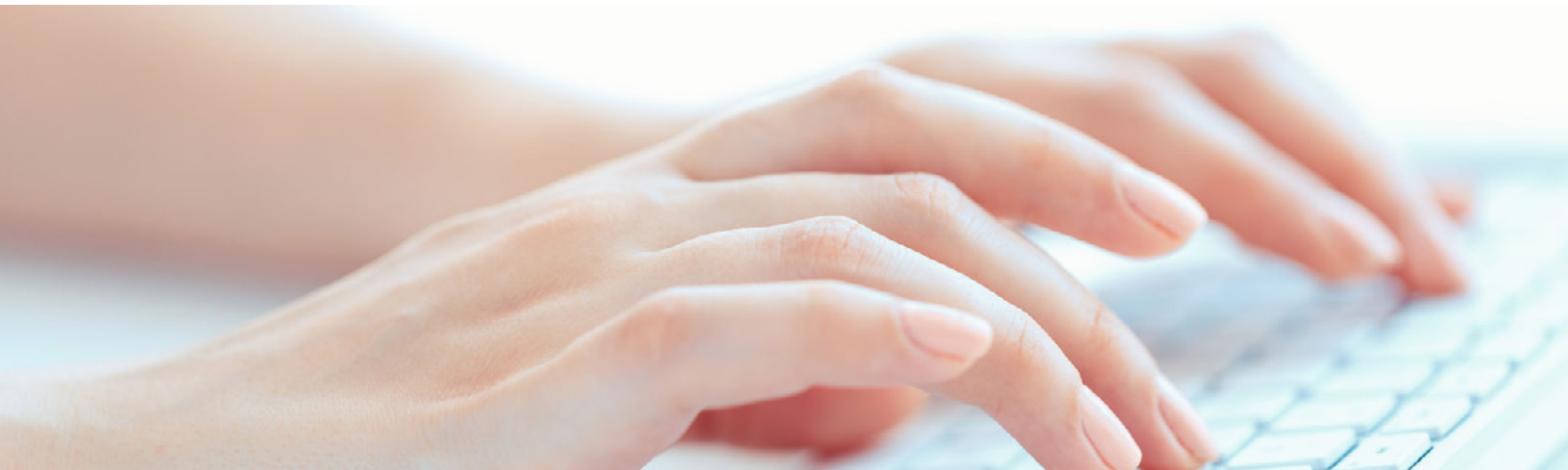
About Vision33, IT Professional Services Partner

Vision33 Inc. is a global IT professional services consultancy that solves customer business challenges through the promise of technology and the value it delivers. They partner with organizations in both the public and private sectors to understand their vision and help them reach it with the right blend of strategy, consulting, and technology. Vision33's global team of results-driven resources provides world-class experience through office locations in North America and Europe. For more information about Vision33, visit www.vision33.com.

Vision33's SAP solutions provide scalable and integrated ERP technology. With Vision33's help, their customers connect their business processes, from finance and expense reporting to procurement and inventory, to transform their operations and manage their subsidiary operations more efficiently. Vision33's dedicated customer support program, the world-class TOTAL Care support program, ensures businesses have the tools they need to leverage their technology investment.

For More Information

When you're ready to take the next step, please contact a qualified Vision33 consultant in your area.

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