



The Weitz Company

was determined to focus scarce capital and human resources on core business competencies.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

The Challenge: Build a full-service integrated data management system—fast and cost-effectively.

The Weitz Company has come a long way since its beginnings as a family-run carpentry shop started by an entrepreneurial German immigrant in 1855. Today, Weitz is a respected, nationally ranked contractor with aggressive goals to achieve over \$1.5B in annual volume. "Our company has succeeded because our business decisions are based on smart growth with an eye towards the long-view," stated Glenn H. De Stigter, President and CEO of Weitz. So when it came time to revamp the company's enterprise resource planning (ERP) technology system that same philosophy held strong.

Weitz had outsourced its IT services since the early '80s, but by the late '90s, the company found its enterprise needs had outgrown the capabilities of its hosting provider. "We were using a VAX system and customized accounting programs that weren't integrated. Employees had to input the same data into many different databases—a real waste of time while creating the potential for increased human error," said Mark Federle, Chief Information Officer at Weitz. Another problem with the old system was an unreliable disaster recovery model. If the system went down, data was inaccessible and sometimes irretrievable."

After extensive research, Weitz decided to overhaul its enterprise system and invest in JD Edwards technology to support an integrated, enterprise-wide system for project management, payroll and daily

Industry

General Construction

Company Profile

Established in 1855, The Weitz Company is a general contractor, construction manager based in Des Moines, Iowa, with 1,100 employees serving clients in more than 30 states. Weitz specializes in construction of retail, commercial, gold course/clubhouses, custom homes, industrial maintenance and construction, and senior living properties, with annual revenues that exceed \$800M.

Situation

Weitz needed to implement one full-service enterprise-wide system. Their goals included the elimination of redundant work processes, real-time access to project-related data, a reliable disaster recovery solution, cost-effective use of limited in-house IT resources, and low capital expenditures.

Solution

Weitz chose WTS, a JD Edwards-focused ASP, to provide application hosting, network management, and an experienced support staff to oversee JD Edwards enterprise solutions, as well as other workflow, documentation, and project management solutions. Using an ASP eliminated the need to construct an in-house data center, provided a world-class disaster recovery solution, and saved Weitz an estimated \$1M in fixed costs.

WTS SOLUTION: PARTNER WITH EXPERTS TO CONTROL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COSTS



operational needs. The next challenge: to implement this new technology in a timely, cost-effective manner.

This was a highly aggressive implementation schedule," said Federle. "Our auditors were floored—they told us it should have taken us twice as long. But there were no problems we couldn't overcome, and WTS really worked with us as one cohesive team to meet our timeline and budget. "With JD Edwards solutions, data only needs to be entered once and is available enterprise-wide, via an easy access Web portal. Integration with Optika, the imaging and workflow solution also hosted by WTS, offers streamlined account payable procedures between corporate and field locations. Project estimating and budgeting is fully integrated with the project costing solution (Prolog Manager and AMX's Prolog Databridge) and enables project reporting to be timely and accurate. WTS also provides the much-needed full-service disaster recovery capabilities for a fraction of what we would spend using an independent provider.

"We pride ourselves in offering customers the highest quality of service, and now we provide that same high quality to our back-end technology," said Federle.

For Weitz, choosing WTS as its ASP was an easy decision. "WTS was the only ASP with both a depth of knowledge about JD Edwards solutions and a depth of knowledge about the construction industry," stated Federle. "Using an ASP eliminated the need for us to build a data center and hire an IT staff with JD Edwards expertise. These two factors alone provided Weitz significant savings, reducing both upfront costs and many ongoing ones."

The migration process started in November 2001, and by July 2002 the new system was fully accessible to Weitz employees—eventually reaching all 570 users—from the CEO, to project managers, to superintendents on the jobsites—on time and under budget.

WHY WTS?

"After a great deal of research, we came to the conclusion that JD Edwards solutions, was the right decision for us. And WTS was the only ASP with the necessary JD Edwards experience and knowledge required to quickly implement the system and optimally manage it—so choosing them was an easy decision," said Federle. "This was the winning combination we needed."

Using an ASP solution saved time and money for Weitz. Without an ASP solution, Federle estimates The Weitz Company's implementation would have been significantly longer (three to five months) and cost significantly more.

"Weitz was so confident in both its employee preparedness and the benefit WTS offered the company, I played six rounds of golf in the 10 days preceding the go-live date," stated Federle. "During this 10 day period, my back swing greatly improved and our go-live was on time and on budget."



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