NMB

CASE STUDY

VALLEY FORGE FABRICS, INC.

How **innovation** creates a seamless digital transformation journey with **Dynamics 365**

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ABOUT VALLEY FORGE

Valley Forge stands out as a global leader in innovative textile and design manufacturing, specializing in window treatment solutions for the hospitality industry. Renowned among the world's top hospitality brands, designers, and purchasing agents, Valley Forge boasts over 50 years of expertise. Their committed team of product and design experts ensures a constant flow of the freshest, most sustainable, and desirable offerings, gracing travelers in the finest hotels worldwide. The foundation of their success lies in strong family values, a dedication to technology and innovation, and a focus on people, customers, community, and the environment. Most importantly they seek to *Impact the Happiness of Others*. Behind the scenes, a team of project managers, logistics experts, technologists, and data specialists keep their robust digital platform operational from inception to completion.

THE CHALLENGE

Over the years, Valley Forge utilized various business software applications, including CRMs and ERPs, to enhance and streamline their business processes. However, as with any aging technology, their legacy software began revealing shortcomings and limitations. The highly customized system architecture lacked flexibility and automation, resulting in manual processes, communication mismanagement, and excessive transactional work for employees. These inefficiencies became obstacles across all departments, hindering effective business dealings with their global consumer base.

VANESA PATINO

INDUSTRY

Textiles

WEBSITE:

https://www.valleyforge.com/

Simultaneously, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a drastic decline in hospitality occupancy rates, plummeting from 85% to 5%. Despite the evident market challenges, Valley Forge prioritized employee well-being by addressing risks stemming from supply chain deficiencies and the global economic downturn. Recognizing an opportunity to enhance operations, the board aimed to reduce manual processes and controls for employees.

The solution was evident: create a system that proactively alleviated worker stress, automated repetitive transactional tasks, and improved data visibility within their ERP system. By investing in new technology, Valley Forge sought to develop a solution that would, from a business perspective, disrupt the hospitality industry, establishing an end-to-end vision to propel the company to the next level. The ultimate goal was to deliver a solution benefiting the entire company, providing added value, and furnishing employees with a tool that instilled a sense of value and accomplishment.

THE PLAN

Transitioning to a new end-to-end digital solution integrating an ERP F&O platform with different engines and business applications poses challenges for any company, especially one managing a high demand, global supply chain. The stakes are considerable, with little margin for errors or slowdowns stemming from inadequate change management.

Within the vast hospitality industry, characterized by extensive supply chains moving substantial quantities of raw materials and products globally, Valley Forge aimed to strengthen its position as an industry leader. They sought to invest in technology capable of disrupting the hospitality sector, propelling the company to new heights, and aligning with their long term strategic goals, thus staying ahead of the market.

Recognizing the importance of embracing change comfortably before embarking on a digital transformation journey, Valley Forge understood that a successful solution contributing value to the company required effective, harmonious user adoption and a readiness for change. The decision to engage with an intuitive system offering accurate, real-time data aimed to enhance internal transparency through advanced data analytics, signaling the opportune moment for change.

Following internal discussions with the governing board and founders, Valley Forge committed to investing in and developing a new solution. This solution was designed to facilitate workflows, absorb excess transactional processes, and alleviate pressure on employees across all departments.

The implementation team, drawing on their experience, underscored the significance of seamless change management, uniting Valley Forge's people, processes, and technology.

Valley Forge initiated its digital transformation journey with an internal solution modeling project. This project involved evaluating processes in each department and identifying areas for improvement to enhance the overall customer experience. Taking a holistic view to determine business process requirements, Valley Forge engaged with over 50 internal subject matter experts. This collaborative effort broke down inter-departmental silos, identifying areas with the greatest potential for automation. The results paved the way for Valley Forge to shape a solution poised to excel as the best-in-class support for customers and their expectations.

> “It is very important to use all that knowledge that we have internally to create a model where we can become the best-in-class company, supporting customer expectations, even exceeding those expectations, not only through our products but also from the development perspective, from the sustainability perspective, from the lead time perspective.”
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> VANESA PATINO

THE FORMULA

The requirements for the solution were straightforward; it had to be flexible, user-friendly, customizable, and easily integrated with other business applications. Additionally, it needed to enhance and automate real-time visibility across all departments. Increased visibility was the linchpin for achieving faster processing, improved demand planning, and more efficient lead times. Valley Forge aimed to consolidate all relevant information, such as transactional, product, and shipping data, onto a unified user interface.

Following their internal assessment, two critical questions arose:

1. Which ERP would align with Valley Forge's strategy, vision, and goals while supporting their solution?
2. What mechanisms could be implemented to expedite processes, enhance customizations, and extend the current out-of-the-box functionality?

They meticulously evaluated the pros and cons of each ERP, recognizing that some systems were better suited to their industry's specific needs. Microsoft D365 emerged as the optimal choice, offering a harmonious blend of technical capabilities and an intuitive user interface. It served as the ideal platform for crafting a solution aligned with Valley Forge's business visions and strategic goals. Acknowledging the importance of experienced Independent Software Vendors (ISVs) to facilitate a successful transition, Valley Forge, having collaborated with nine other ISVs, sought a partner capable of introducing innovative ways to improve internal processes.

Their assessment of ISV offerings considered limitations, technical expertise, real-time functionality, and compatibility with existing systems. Ultimately, they sought a dedicated partner willing to enhance internal processes and support long-term business goals by introducing new, user-friendly functionalities.

"We don't know what we don't know, and NMB's team was very helpful in coming up with ideas and proposals that would help us as a business."

DIANA DOBIN
Co-CEO

THE NMB EXPERIENCE

Valley Forge identified NMB's Gateway for Parcel as the solution capable of effectively streamlining and automating their supply chain workflows, particularly leveraging NMB's enhanced Rate Shopping and fully integrated carrier services. Gateway for Parcel equipped Valley Forge with the necessary tools to generate quotes, carrier labels, Bills of Lading, packing lists, and process orders seamlessly within Microsoft D365's intuitive user interface.

This integration facilitated Valley Forge's intricate workflows and data exchanges, enabling their employees to stay ahead of customer demands, proactively address potential issues, and conclude their work with a profound sense of accomplishment. The flawless deployment of this end-to-end digital platform solidified Valley Forge's standing as a pioneer in an industry that has only recently begun to recognize the value of leveraging technology to enhance business operations.

MOVING FORWARD

Valley Forge’s digital transformation journey is a success story that highlights how enhanced ERP shipping solutions should synchronize supply chains with business KPIs to deliver strategic business initiatives. The right solution should enhance supply chain visibility, without cutting corners or leaving disaggregated data. Many solutions can be integrated within an ERP, but manual and time-consuming integrations can cost businesses, like Valley Forge, valuable resources.

For NMB Solutions, Valley Forge’s success story serves as a clearcut example for how committed working relationships can help facilitate mutual learning between ISVs and major supply chain operators. It also reminds us that our role extends far beyond the implementation of technological advancements, but also in serving as a conduit for business improvements and adding value at every stage of an organization’s development cycle.