



Microsoft Dynamics Customer Solution Case Study



Customer: Esco

Web Site: www.esco-online.de

Number of Employees: 220

Country or Region: Germany

Industry: Manufacturing—Building and construction

Partner: Raber & Maercker

Customer Profile

Esco is a building manufacturer based in Germany. Established in 1965, it became a subsidiary of VBH Holdings—a global plastics, timber, and metal supplier—in 1998.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Dynamics
 - Microsoft Dynamics NAV 5.0
- Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step

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Manufacturer Quickly Deploys Integrated Solution to Manage Business Data

“With Sure Step, we’ve increased the profitability of all our implementation projects by more than 10 per cent. Employees now often finish projects ahead of target and are available for additional project work.”

Harald Schummer, Software Developer, Raber & Maercker

Esco is a manufacturer of steel building fittings, based in Germany. Until recently, its operational data was held in different applications, which made it difficult for employees to work efficiently. In May 2008, Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner Raber & Maercker used Microsoft Dynamics® Sure Step Methodology to deploy an integrated solution based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV 5.0. Employees can now access timely business data from different business applications.

Business Needs

Esco is one of Germany’s leading manufacturers of steel building fittings. Established in 1965, the company became part of the high-profile VBH Holding Group in 1998. VBH supplies plastic, timber, and metal fittings, to customers throughout Europe and Asia Pacific. Esco generated more than U.S.\$112 million in revenue in 2007 and currently employs 220 people at five locations across Germany.

Mr. Maisch—IT Director for Esco—realised that the company’s disparate finance and warehouse management systems had come to the end of their life cycle. Maisch says:

“With our existing solution it was difficult for employees in our warehouse, finance, and sales and purchasing teams to access useful business data or share it with other departments.” Maisch wanted to replace the company’s systems with an integrated solution, which could provide employees with comprehensive data across different business divisions.

In January 2007, he looked for a technology partner to help the company deploy a new information system. Potential partners needed to present a detailed deployment plan and an accurate costing of the resources involved.



Solution

In February 2007, Esco teamed up with Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Raber & Maercker, to implement a solution based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV 5.0. The flexible solution integrates with the company's existing business applications and includes modules to manage finance, warehouse, and sales and purchasing operations.

Raber & Maercker used Microsoft Dynamics Sure Step to plan a seamless deployment with Esco. Sure Step is a management implementation methodology specially created for Microsoft partners. It provides tools, best practice information, and proven processes, to help partner teams plan and seamlessly deploy Microsoft Dynamics solutions for their customers.

"The team at Raber & Maercker presented us with a detailed deployment plan, based on Sure Step. It included a project time frame and the costs required to integrate each module. This is exactly what we wanted from our solution partner," says Maisch. The solution went live to 140 users on 2 May 2008.

Features of the Microsoft Dynamics NAV 5.0 solution include:

- **An intuitive user interface.** The Microsoft Dynamics NAV interface looks and operates in a similar way to Microsoft Office Outlook®, which the company already uses. Employees can easily customise the information on screen to suit their job requirements.
- **Warehouse operations management.** This module was customised to incorporate the company's existing warehouse management systems. Using Microsoft Dynamics NAV tools, employees can view

data such as production orders and resources. Managers can also create visual production schedules to track events—including timelines and order deliveries.

- **Finance management.** This module includes tools for the finance team to easily manage accounts, government tax, and banking reconciliation tasks. Raber & Maercker customised the module to include Esco requirements for invoicing, order response times, and delivery processes.
- **Business intelligence.** Data from all of the company's business division is integrated, so managers can create a range of reports for operations analysis and management.

Benefits

Employees in all business teams now have a single view of the company's financial data and can manage business operations more efficiently. And thanks to accurate project planning with Sure Step, the solution was delivered seamlessly and within the budgeted time frame. Harald Schummer, Software Developer for Raber & Maercker, says: "With Sure Step, Esco was always aware of the project's status. There were no hidden costs and it was easy to track progress and the time required for each task."

- Raber & Maercker has improved the implementation process for its customers, including Esco. Schummer says: "With Sure Step we've increased the profitability of all our implementation projects by more than 10 per cent. This is because employees often finish projects ahead of target and are available for additional work."
- Raber & Maercker accurately planned the deployment, which reduced project overheads for itself and Esco.

- Employees in the Esco finance team have comprehensive business data readily available, and can plan operations easily.
- Esco warehouse employees can plan production resources in line with customer demand.
- Sales and marketing employees at Esco can create useful reports to help them manage customer relationships. They can also use data to identify customer behaviour and new market trends.