Mindover Software Helps RJ Star Achieve its Vision by Implementing Acumatica

An Acumatica Success Story

Company Profile

Name: RJ Star

Industry: Automotive Products Manufacturer and Distributor

Location: Minnesota

Website: wizardsproducts.com

Challenge

RJ Star was launching new product lines plus several ecommerce sites and couldn't manage the growth with the current ERP package.

Solution

RJ Star selected Mindover Software to implement Acumatica.

Results

With Acumatica's real-time updates, shared insights, and dashboards that tell the clear story of RJ Star's past successes, they are set up for future profitability.

For more than 33 years, RJ Star has been providing brand name and white label detailing and finishing products to automotive warehouses, jobbers, and dealers. With a long-tenured staff and solid processes, the team was set to happily maintain the status quo. But their CEO and founder, John Schlumpberger, had other ideas.

"After working with a consultant, we realized that we spent all of our time working in the business, rather than on it, and our CEO wanted us to focus *on* the business" said business manager Susan Antonsen. "He was talking about moving us from selling automotive items to expanding into household items, launching several additional ecommerce websites, and keeping inventory and expenses tightly aligned. I just sat there wondering how we were going to be able to do it with software and hardware that hadn't been upgraded since 2011."

"Our systems weren't modern, but they worked," Antonsen admitted. Production, Order entry, AR, and AP were manual processes dependent on individual people's knowledge. "We ran an ERP system but had never purchased the manufacturing module. Our operations manager *was* our manufacturing module! That was a big incentive for change," added Antonsen. "The company needed to be able to keep going if one of us wasn't around." Not to mention, they needed a solution that could support the CEO's plans for growth.

And thus, the team of reluctant upgraders agreed to look at newer solutions.

An Old Partner Brings a New Solution

Fortunately, RJ Star already had a great accounting software partner in place: Mindover Software. "We'd been working with Lloyd Smith of Mindover since 2001," Antonsen said. "He knows us, he knows our business and what we need. He'd already been bugging me for years to look at upgrading."

Already having a deep understanding of RJ Star's current business practices and needs, when Mindover Software began its partnership with Acumatica, Smith knew it was the right solution for RJ Star. Not only was Acumatica a more cost-conscious solution than redeploying our current ERP with the added manufacturing module, it also boasted features that Antonsen and her team had never seen before. "Mindover demoed Acumatica for us and we were blown away by all the new features we could have access to, like dashboards, GL subaccounts, generic inquiries, and customized reports" she recalled.

Mindover knew that RJ Star needed the ability to get the right information out of their ERP solution. Antonsen frankly described how employees had been feeding the old ERP with data for decades, and yet the team got very little out of the program in return. "We just didn't have the data coding set up to get us the information we needed. We had a very basic, unsophisticated accounting process." When Mindover made the choice to support Acumatica, RJ Star did too – even if still a bit reluctantly.

The Road to Success

The changeover and upgrade may have been for the best, but Antonsen admits it was not easy to make such a giant leap forward in technology and capability. "We knew it was going to be hard; we needed to get this brand-new, complex software set up and running while at the same time not letting go of our daily responsibilities,"

> "I wanted to grow and move forward, not just for the business, but for my team as well. And we couldn't do that without a solution and the right consulting team to get us there. That's why we relied on Mindover Software."

Antonsen said. "But we made the call that we'd go live on January 1st and we simply quit the old system and started using Acumatica."

With Mindover's help, RJ Star spent the last several months of 2018 setting up the basics for the launch to get the teams at least on equal footing between the old system and Acumatica. The team from Mindover spent a week on premises setting up data codes, customizing forms, training employees, and ensuring balances were porting across in such a way as not to disrupt the business any further. "We had new computers, we went to Windows 10 and upgraded Microsoft Office," Antonsen recalled. "Everything was new to us; it was a really big jump."

Antonsen credits the success of the set-up to Mindover's knowledge and skillsets. "I couldn't even imagine doing this on my own. You need to have professionals who understand what connects to what in the beginning to produce the reports you really want to see in the end."

The Mindover team came alongside the RJ Star team every step of the way. Whether it was emailed questions, or phone calls about how to make something work or why something wasn't working as expected, Mindover coached even the most confused users until they could comfortably navigate the Acumatica software on their own. "They are very good teachers" Antonsen remarked. "Mindover's team was consistent, dependable, and quick to respond."

Teamwork Makes the Acumatica Dream Work

Antonsen and her team easily move within their new Acumatica system, reaping countless benefits from the up-to-date software. "Acumatica is interactive," Antonsen said. "The old ERP was a batch system; we'd input data all day long, but it didn't post until the end of the day. Acumatica is in the cloud so we can check in as the day progresses and make intelligent and informed business decisions because we have detailed demographic information we didn't have before."

Even with less than a full year of working with Acumatica, already the team at RJ Star has information and visibility it could not access before. The manufacturing module is up and running streamlining production. There is more detailed tracking information on expenses. Order entry and AR processes are more efficient. Customized reports are in place accessing much of the information stored in Acumatica.

But it's not just the software that is the success: it's the team behind it. "Honestly, Acumatica by itself is just a piece of software; an investment." Antonsen admitted. "But Acumatica with Mindover Software - that's the win. Since Mindover has worked with us for so many years, they know what we need. I can't imagine trying to complete this process with a company that doesn't really know us."

And how does the future-oriented CEO and founder respond to Acumatica and Mindover? "We've been in business more than 30 years," said Schlumpberger. "I wanted to grow and move forward, not just for the business, but for my team as well. And we couldn't do that without a solution and the right consulting team to get us there. That's why we relied on Mindover Software."

Now with access to Acumatica's real-time updates, shared insights, and dashboards that tell the clear story of RJ Star's finances, RJ Star's "reluctant upgraders" are starting to get more excited about what this new future holds for the organization. "We had to make the decision to either stay the same company as we were, doing what we'd always done, or expand our product lines and divisions for future growth," Antonsen said. "Having the right tool and the right partner in place is what lets the leadership's vision become a reality."