



UNITOP®
ERP TRADE

INTEGRATED ERP SOFTWARE

Certainly a safe solution

ABUS - August Bremicker Söhne KG



With innovative safety concepts and products such as bicycle helmets, locks and smoke detectors, the medium-sized business ABUS August Bremicker Söhne KG has guaranteed safety since 1924 for its customers in all of life's situations - whether at home or away. ABUS has also made some organisational adjustments to continue guaranteeing for the safety of its customers. As an internationally operating company located in Wetter (Ruhr), the company has various branches throughout the world. ABUS has relied on an integrated company solution since 2011 to establish the same processes in all locations. Together with the IT service provider GOB Software & Systeme from Krefeld on the Lower Rhine, the branch solution unitop Technival Wholesale based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV is implemented at all locations.

ABUS decided on the ERP software Microsoft Dynamics NAV in order to introduce an international trading standard. The partner had to have branch knowledge in trade and experience in the implementation of international projects. With GOB, ABUS finally found the right partner who had both the necessary knowledge and a large partner network to guarantee local support in the individual countries. As an owner-managed, medium-sized company, GOB knows the challenges which companies like ABUS have to handle. Just like all small and medium-sized businesses, ABUS has to manage the available resources efficiently. This results in a sustainable interest in the continual further deve-

lopment of its processes. In order to meet the changes in the branch and the project requirements, the IT project management had to holistically focus on the factors of people, organisation and technology. The consideration of knowledge (people as knowledge carriers) and processes (organisation) with simultaneous observation of supportive IT (technology) leads to the necessary holistic approach. After all, it is about integrating the software in a business context.

AIMS OF THE PROJECT

The holding companies of ABUS KG are furnished with different software solutions to cover the aspects generally specific to the



Security Tech Germany

Function:

- ▶ CRM
- ▶ Financial Accounting
- ▶ Document Management (DMS)
- ▶ Contact Cockpit
- ▶ EDI
- ▶ Digital Document Dispatch
- ▶ Kit Item
- ▶ Items as gifts or discounts
- ▶ Databaseintegrator
- ▶ WMS



rence analysis, the internal processes are compared with the standard processes of the unitop solution based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV in discussions with those responsible for the process at ABUS and the requirements are recorded. From the previously recorded requirements, a binding process is defined mutually for all locations and the necessary functions for the processes are described. As part of the discussions with the branches, only the individual or process-required deviations for ABUS are defined additionally.

This shows that there is a new way of thinking in the approach to IT projects. In order to detect the requirements, the business processes in the company are increasingly becoming the focus of observations. Instead of choosing ERP software depending on individual functions, as it was previously the case, an integrated solution is required, which also establishes cross-departmental processes. At ABUS, the internal company processes were initially modelled with the help of the reference model, which contains the NAV and unitop standard processes. The resulting process model then only serves as a base for the following procedure. All of the steps are carefully documented during the project. This creates transparency on both sides and helps prevent misunderstandings.

ADVANTAGES OF THE SOLUTION

Before introduction of the new IT system, each location worked with different solutions. A consolidation of the ERP landscape could be achieved with the new solution concept. Role-based and process-orientated work has been enabled with Microsoft Dynamics NAV and unitop since the 2009 version. The role in the company is therefore optimally supported by the role and process-based work, because the end user is only shown information necessary to perform his role in the corresponding process. This allows ABUS employees to increase their productivity in the long-term.

„With the introduction of an integrated solution, we are optimising the flow of goods and simultaneously improving communi-

cation between the countries,“ emphasises Wolfram Schäfer, IT manager at ABUS. The implementation of an integrated solution also offers more advantages. With the minimum individual functions, extensions and adaptations in all locations can be undertaken effectively and cost-efficiently for the customer. A company like ABUS, which organises the sale of products such as security locks, alarm systems, smoke detectors and bicycle helmets via specialist retailers, profits from the use of EDI (electronic data interchange). This accelerates and simplifies data exchange with customers and suppliers considerably. EDI is used for shipments to DIY stores for example.

GOB also supported ABUS conceptionally in relation to the system. In order to guarantee the maximum possible securities, GOB has developed an emergency concept for the European sales branches. Data backups, for example, are guaranteed through the availability via GOB computer centres.

CHALLENGE

The implementation of a project of this size generally takes between six and eight months. The trade solution had to be implemented within just three months at the new location in Austria. With the introduction of the standard, this target was achieved despite the tight time frame. The first site, Austria, successfully implemented the unitop trade solution on schedule as of 1st April 2011. With Italy, another site is also already going live. In January 2013 implementation took place in Poland at the Warsaw site and in Spain in February 2013. The project plan is to introduce the trade solution over the next years at three month intervals in all locations worldwide. These include the United Kingdom, Denmark, Hungary, Romania and the USA. In future, ABUS employees in Neudorf (Austria) and in Hong Kong (China) will all work with a standardised international trading standard.

country. The main project task is the technological merger of existing networks from international locations. The internal company processes were thereby analysed and harmonised across the sites with an integrated software architecture. Processes that need to be viewed individually due to aspects specific to the country are excluded from this harmonisation. The standard processes were defined together with the branches and an ABUS specific standard was developed based on Microsoft Dynamics NAV. This standard covers the unitop Technical Wholesale solution and is supplemented with individual functionalities. This overall solution, also referred to as a „core solution“, is provided in a database in each country. This means that all locations use the same applications. It allows analyses, for example, to be carried out in the same way across all countries.

Another central aim was the definition of a standardised item base. This item base was specified centrally as part of the core functionality. The master data administration is carried out by ABUS KG and is provided as a service to the individual national companies. This allows item related analyses, contribution margin calculations and assessments for the overall organisation to be easily realised.

PROJECT SEQUENCE

In order to reach this aim, it is necessary to use IT project management as support. Successful IT project management starts with extensive analysis. This first phase is called reference analysis at GOB. During the refe-