

Customer success story
Hydrosteer

Industry
Manufacturing

Location
Australia

Greentree product suite
Financials
Distribution
Job Costing
Manufacturing
CRM
Supply Chain Management
Workflow
Human Resources
eReporting

HYDROSTEER IS DRIVEN BY GREENTREE

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Foreign Currency invoice preparation plummets to 2 minutes from 45 minutes
- Foreign Currency module circumvents the need for a separate database
- Greentree integration improves data accessibility, visibility and knowledge sharing
- Single data entry point removes the need to enter data up to 7 times
- 35 – 40% reduction in time consuming manual tasks
- Improved Inventory management reduces risk of incorrectly ordering overseas items
- Timely reporting ensures collective organisational efforts are focused on the same goal
- Sales effort improves due to better reporting and communication
- Job Cost and Inventory 'binoculars' enable drill down to detailed manufacturer part numbers
- Outstanding performance from Greentree partner pre and post implementation with continuing quality support

It was a case of 'eyes wide open' when management at Hydrosteer, a specialist steering and technical service company, made the informed decision to implement Greentree last year. Hard on the heels of a rogue accounting system implementation was a visit to a software tradeshow, where they were surprised to learn about the many possibilities before deciding Greentree was the best possible fit.

The business situation

Business growth had become constrained by an outmoded DOS-based system plus separate databases which required data to be re-entered, thus compromising the integrity of business information.

Darryl Martyn, Managing Director at Hydrosteer explains that the key requirements were "for a solid accounting package, excellent inventory management, the ability to handle foreign currency for purchasing and sales, manufacturing control, a strong

Customer Relations module and above all, sufficient flexibility to allow a degree of tailoring to suit our particular needs".

Imported purchases simplified and charged in any foreign currency

Phillip White, General Manager, explained that due to long supplier lead times (up to six months), the old DOS-based system could not provide sufficient order tracking information; one stock item may have four active purchase orders with different ship dates. To adequately manage trading stock purchases a separate database had to be run recording stock items on order, the cost in foreign currency, and shipping information.

Once the shipment was received, costing was done using a spreadsheet. Greentree now ties this all together, allowing the seamless transition from supplier currency to Australian dollars.



"Greentree has delivered drastic improvements right across the board from providing mechanics with their precise work related information to reducing time-consuming manual tasks and providing structure around our manufacturing and business processes. All this is in addition to providing up to the minute reports enabling business decisions to be made with confidence."

Darryl Martyn, Managing Director, Hydrosteer

Inventory management: improved accuracy reduces risk

Phil explained that because of the need to run up to three systems to track stock purchases, it was difficult for all sales staff to know exactly when to expect shipments of a particular stock item – this was a real problem for sales staff at the Perth and Laverton branches. In addition, the stock order process required the entry of one part number seven times from when the purchase order was raised, to when the item was costed and entered into inventory.

Greentree has replaced the three software packages previously used to manage stock, resulting in a significant saving on workload with the added benefit of current order data being available to all sales staff. Phil also stated that due to Greentree's ability to record supplier stock codes and to automatically use these codes on purchase orders, transposition errors were eliminated.

Foreign currency invoicing time plummets

The big time savings were realised in the processing of invoices to customers who required them in foreign currency. In the old system, Phil describes a laborious process which required staff to create an invoice in the DOS system, then re-create a foreign currency version in Word which was sent to the customer for payment.

Again, things became chaotic if a customer wanted a replacement invoice or was inadvertently sent the local currency version and attempted to convert this into foreign currency themselves. If figures were transposed from one version to another, it was a time-consuming process to track backwards to find the error.

Phil added “you can imagine the impact this had on the accuracy of GST reporting requiring manually amended monthly GST reports”. All that has changed, since Greentree's Foreign Currency module enables

invoicing in overseas currencies, hence the dramatic drop in processing time from 45 minutes to just two minutes.

Greentree's knowledge-sharing spin-offs

This was an interesting point made by Phil when he explained how the old system created an environment for proprietary knowledge among users.

Because a lot of information was contained in paper files, users became experts in a particular process, and anyone needing to view paper-based information needed to listen to the expert's explanation or spend lots of time studying and trying to make sense of someone else's filing system.

Greentree enables all relevant documents to be scanned into and attached to a customer's file, so anyone viewing it can see the full picture. Effectively, Greentree facilitates the knowledge-sharing process.

From Post-it notes to a structured workflow process

The manufacturing process Phil describes was somewhat convoluted at best, relying heavily on post-it notes in ‘stand-out’ yellow. With Greentree's single data entry point, a job starts with a requisition which effectively flows through the various inventory, job costing and financial systems. This has enforced adherence to a structured manufacturing process with not a post-it note in sight.

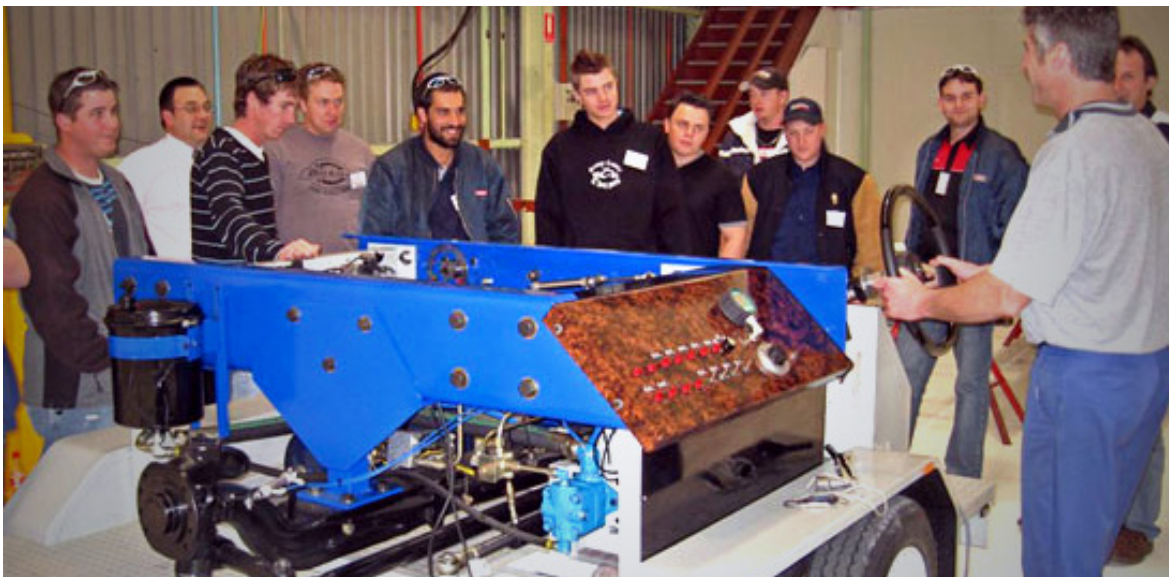
Timely reporting improves communication and increases sales

Preparing a report in Greentree and being able to email this to the branches has been a significant improvement in communication, which Phil says has improved sales. He explains that “when branches don't get the right information, or get awkward information requiring interpretation, there's a lot of misunderstanding and frustration”.



“We would estimate that the automation of many manual processes like for example something as simple as keying a part number into the system once instead of 7 times during the ordering process, has reduced the time we spend on these tasks by 35-40%.”

Phillip White, General Manager, Hydrosteer



Now, everyone knows what's going on and what the company is trying to achieve, and Greentree's easy reporting format enables Phil to present relevant information for feedback to branches, which means all sales efforts are focused on the same goal.

Job Cost & Inventory 'binoculars' enable detailed view of 4,500 parts

Since Job Costing is an integrated module, there's no need to keep paper files or refer to separate databases, as all the information about jobs from six months ago is a mouse-click away. Jobs often require many parts with sub-parts, and Phil says he finds the 'binoculars' in the Job Costing & Inventory modules tremendous for drilling down to manufacturer's part numbers and other detailed information. Job Costing information is now highly visible in Greentree, so Phil has ditched the obsolete filing cabinets.

Greentree partner delivers 'star' performance

Phil concedes that Hydrosteer had to make a quantum psychological leap in its approach to doing business in a modern environment, but they had lots of help. They can't speak highly enough of the patient and committed role the Greentree business partner played in helping Hydrosteer make the quantum leap in modernising the information architecture of the business, and the stellar support during implementation which continues today.

Both Phil and Darryl agree: Greentree presented them with a plethora of business decisions about how they wanted to run Hydrosteer which Phil says they had never had to think about before. He says this has resulted in an overall improvement in the quality of the business rules and processes put in place. This has enabled them to slash huge amounts of time and cost off every aspect of the business.

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Hydrosteer
Technically Superior

Hydrosteer Pty Ltd was established in June 1981 and has become a vital link between Australia's heavy vehicle manufacturing and maintenance industries. Hydrosteer carries Australia's largest range of heavy vehicle power steering products. The company operates from 3 networked locations; two in Victoria and one in Perth.
www.hydrosteer.com.au

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