The Jay Group Gains Global Distribution Advantages in the Cloud with Vision33

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Re-commerce Leader Adopts Multi-Tenant SAP Business One and Streamlined Saltbox Integrations

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ABOUT

The Jay Group Ltd. was founded nearly 75 years ago to satisfy the growing demand of companies requiring footwear inventory solutions. Today, The Jay Group Ltd. enjoys strong relationships with both US-based and international footwear manufacturers, mass retailers, and brands by providing competitively priced footwear in emerging markets. The company is aggressively expanding its core product lines to include apparel, household goods, cosmetics, and various consumer goods requested by its customers.

With over 400 strategic supplier partners, 250 empowered associates, and a distribution network that handles over 10 million pairs of shoes annually, The Jay Group continuously incorporates new, cutting-edge technology solutions and innovative ways to effectively distribute footwear into select markets.

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The Need to Integrate Operational Systems in the Cloud

For their latest industry innovation, The Jay Group developed a technology-enabled re-commerce business that serves as an end-to-end solution for brands and retailers, handling their most complicated omnichannel inventory and logistics problems. The company runs both its re-commerce business and traditional product distribution business on SAP Business One (SAP B1), which they implemented in 2009 with Vision33's help.

With the re-commerce business accelerating among customers worldwide, the company added several overseas warehouses and more international staff. However, its main operations system was a single-location, on-premises deployment at The Jay Group's North Carolina headquarters. "We needed to support our global business with truly global technology infrastructure," said Kevin Styers, Vice President of Technology at The Jay Group. "To do that, we wanted to run all core systems in the cloud – ERP with financials, our operations system, some cloud-based ops – you name it."

Cost-efficiency goals also motivated The Jay Group's move to the cloud. The company sought to save money by retiring its existing on-premises hardware and SAP system and deploying everything in the cloud.

With 12 years of business data and well-established processes and workflows running on SAP Business One, Styers' team decided a cloud solution based on SAP would speed their cloud journey and prevent data transfer issues. They also knew a critical success factor would be the ability to move their on-premises operations system to the cloud and integrate seamlessly with cloud ERP and other cloud-based systems. "Integrations would be the key to success," added Styers. Styers' team would need to integrate the local KPI and reporting tools they used daily to run their operations. Specifically, they wanted to ensure that real-time warehouse inventory data reflected the most up-to-date purchase orders (POs) and the inventory receipts resulting from those POs.

Selecting Vision33 for Cloud and Integrations Expertise

As a 12-year Vision33 customer for SAP Business One, Styers knew Vision33 understood SAP solutions and his company so well that they could advise him regarding the ideal SAP cloud ERP solution for his circumstances. Vision33 proposed a multi-tenant deployment of SAP Business One on HANA powered by Amazon Web Services (AWS), called SAP Business One HANA MTE. "We were somewhat surprised. We thought they'd recommend the standard SAP Cloud. But Vision33's multi-tenant setup of Business One with HANA streamlines everything," explained Styers.

The Jay Group also signed up to use Vision33's integration platform, Saltbox. It provides multiple integrations and connectors to SAP Business One – something Styers' team would need later to integrate their operations systems with B1 in the cloud.

A Cloud-Based Business Positioned for Hypergrowth

Once Vision33 laid out the implementation methodology, Styers' team jumped right in, hoping to complete the migration in three months. Success came quickly. In fact, they faced only a minimal challenge in the SQL-to-HANA migration. "That's where having Vision33 on hand made a real difference," said Styers. "Their knowledge of both databases and how they interact during migration really kept the project on track." True to their goal, Styers' team painlessly transitioned to SAP B1 on the Vision33 MTE HANA environment (on AWS) in just three months.

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Saltbox Integrations Rapidly Bring Value to Cloud ERP

Styers' team integrated PO and inventory receipts management as soon as the cloud ERP was functioning. Leveraging the pre-built and easily customizable integrations of the Saltbox platform, POs are managed in real-time, worldwide. When a new PO is added or updated, Saltbox automatically recognizes the changes and updates the relevant internal systems. By using Saltbox to treat 'good receipt' POs (the actual receipt of the PO) the same way, The Jay Group has real-time and complete knowledge of every item entering their warehouses, including the specific warehouse, the date and time of arrival, and which goods have already been received.

Saltbox enabled Styers' team to manage and perform the integration of their homegrown operations system to SAP B1 in the cloud – almost unassisted. Saltbox is so intuitive that Styers has never even logged into the platform. Instead, his team members "jumped right in and got the integration done." His concerns about the integration were quickly alleviated, he said, and "Saltbox keeps our operations and financial systems up to date, making regular updates every five minutes." When updates are required,

Styers' team manages them by updating the B1 queries, a very simple step.

Better Security and Performance with Integration Flexibility

As a fully cloud-enabled business, The Jay Group's associates worldwide share the same real-time views and data regarding their purchases and inventory status. For a company that already achieved success by outmaneuvering slower competitors, having critical operations and business data available at a click has further improved its competitive advantage.

From IT's perspective, the Vision33 MTE environment hosted on AWS ensures that The Jay Group will never have to compromise on the system security or performance of their SAP Business One deployment. Saltbox enables IT to seamlessly integrate anything the business may require as it evolves. "Not only did we improve our systems overall, we have a pay-as-we-go model that is far more cost-effective," explained Styers.

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Plans to Expand Their Advantage via Saltbox

"What we implemented here only scratches the surface of what we can do with Saltbox," said Styers. Given the company's expansion of warehousing in different regions, The Jay Group plans to design its own warehouse management system (WMS) and integrate it with SAP Business One via Saltbox. According to Styers, his team's experience with Saltbox has just begun, and they have many ideas for leveraging this new technology to adopt best-of-breed solutions and keep innovating.

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Vision33 (www.vision33.com) helps growing companies deliver on the promise of technology through enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions, including SAP Business One and Sage Intacct, automation, and integration solutions. Vision33 has the people, processes, and technology to help businesses solve everyday challenges and seize new opportunities for growth and transformation. With proprietary solutions such as iDocuments and Saltbox, Vision33 helps businesses leverage the right transformative technology for their digital transformation journeys.

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