

SAP Business One: Customer Success Story



ABOUT

Founded in Southern Ontario, Canada, Eastporters Audio Video is the leading provider of home theater products, including equipment like projectors, seating, and screens. Eastporters also helps customers select, design, and install home theaters for a movie-experience without the movie theater.

A fast-growth company, Eastporters's success is rooted in its superior customer experience. With impeccable care and courtesy, a variety of products, and competitive pricing, Eastporters has responded to the changing market and customer needs. The growth has expanded its services, and now offices, schools, restaurants, and churches use Eastporters products.

Eastporters Audio Video is headquartered in Ontario, Canada

Visit them at www.eastporters.com



Crafting a Brand and Expanding Reach

With headquarters in Ontario, two warehouses, and a fulfillment centre, Eastporters has focused on opening new market distribution channels to meet customers where they are. The company handles the retail operations and wholesale distribution of its products to big-box stores like Costco and has expanded to online retailers like Amazon for new, diverse market channels.

Technology Challenges

Eastporters originally used QuickBooks for invoicing and customer support, Microsoft Excel for orders, and a separate inventory management system. Everything was disconnected and required manual effort.

Partner Yi Hao describes the pains Eastporters was experiencing. “We were growing quickly, but our systems made things difficult. We had to check orders manually, which was hard because most orders have ten or more line items. Even though people worked double shifts to keep up, we still experienced delays and missed shipments”.

In the beginning, with fewer customers, everyone remembered every order, but that was impossible now—a common challenge in fast-growing companies. Owners want to maintain that personal touch, especially when that’s what led to customer growth, but doing so is impractical.

“ *We were growing quickly, but our systems made things difficult. We had to check orders manually, which was hard because most orders have ten or more line items. Even though people worked double shifts to keep up, we still experienced delays and missed shipments”.*

Yi Hao, partner at Eastporters

SAP Business One: A Platform and Foundation for Growth

Eastporters realised the old way was no longer working and moved to an ERP solution: SAP Business One. When sales tripled that year, Eastporters knew it was the right decision.

Less than a year after implementing SAP Business One, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and Eastporters faced new uncertainties. Employees had to work remotely, and overall efficiency was down—but sales were almost doubling. People were locked in their homes, and home theater equipment was in high demand.

The company's processes became complicated. With COVID-19 hitting China first, plus the Chinese New Year holiday, supply chain breaks and significant shipping delays were common. However, sales were still increasing. Reflecting on the early days of the pandemic...

Technology can't solve all your problems—especially during a global pandemic—but SAP Business One's value was obvious when it gave Eastporters critical real-time visibility into the best course of action and how to pivot to meet new customer demands.



If we hadn't implemented SAP Business One last year, we would have been blind to order status and the location of process breaks”.

Yi Hao, partner at Eastporters





Warehouse Management System

Faced with a new reality, Eastporters began a greater transformation, beginning with warehouse operations. Getting a new physical warehouse was a perfect time to start from scratch. The company implemented Produmex, a warehouse management solution (WMS) that integrated with SAP Business One for scanning items, providing deeper visibility into operations.

EDI

But Eastporters didn't stop there. Mr. Hao identified other areas where SAP Business One could help customers and employees. For example, selling via different platforms, like Costco and Amazon, created more manual processes because each platform had different standards. How could Eastporters reduce this manual effort while still selling on multiple platforms?

Mr. Hao brainstormed with Vision33, seeking solutions that would use SAP Business One. With the pandemic in full swing, it was vital to be efficient and reap the most value from the existing system. "I started by asking, 'Could things work better here?' When I explained the problem, Vision33 advised us to connect electronic data interchange (EDI) directly to SAP Business One instead of manually entering information into the stores' platforms".

Eastporters integrated SPS Commerce with SAP Business One through Vision33's The Saltbox Platform, an integration platform as a service (iPaaS) solution. With employees working from home and business booming, Saltbox saves significant administrative time every day.



I started by asking, 'Could things work better here?' When I explained the problem, Vision33 advised us to connect electronic data interchange (EDI) directly to SAP Business One instead of manually entering information into the stores' platforms".

Yi Hao, partner at Eastporters





If we can automate EDI with SAP Business One to work with Amazon and Best Buy, why can't Shopify work the same way?"

Yi Hao, partner at Eastporters

ECommerce

Because orders were coming in at almost four times the forecasted revenue and causing shipping delays, eCommerce was the next improvement. Eastporters used Shopify to sell online, but nothing was integrated.

With the new volume of online orders during COVID-19, Mr. Hao asked, "If we can automate EDI with SAP Business One to work with Amazon and Best Buy, why can't Shopify work the same way"? The answer was that it could—so Mr. Hao integrated Shopify with SAP Business One through The Saltbox Platform, positioning the company even more optimally for the future.



Certainty During Uncertain Times

As each decision led to a new integration, Mr. Hao didn't have a strategic roadmap or long-term digital transformation plan. As a fast-growing business partner wearing many hats, he didn't have that luxury. What he did have was an unwavering commitment to his customers and employees. To get through, he paused at each juncture and asked, "How can we improve"?

In building a partnership with Vision33, Mr. Hao expressed how helpful it was to have 'what if' or 'how can we do this better' conversations with a Vision33 consultant who has been in the trenches with hundreds of other growing businesses. When agility and responsiveness are critical, Vision33 was helpful for finding the best solution. Eastporters always knew what it wanted to accomplish, but not how to accomplish it.

Vision33 acted as a guide, leveraging the platform Eastporters already had.



Advice From One Growing Business to Another

When asked what advice he would give other growing small and mid-sized businesses, Mr. Hao said, "Reaction alone is not enough. We don't always have the time and resources to plan for the next quarter or year. That's OK. It's about looking forward a few steps, learning as you go, having tools to help you uncover bottlenecks, and finding a solution that builds on the platform you already have".

Though Eastporters sees what it's doing as finding bottlenecks and potential roadblocks, what the company has done—without naming it—is embark on a digital transformation journey using technology to overcome obstacles, grow, and better serve its customers.



Reaction alone is not enough. We don't always have the time and resources to plan for the next quarter or year. That's OK. It's about looking forward a few steps, learning as you go, having tools to help you uncover bottlenecks, and finding a solution that builds on the platform you already have".

Yi Hao, partner at Eastporters



Resilience in Action

Managing disruption is no easy task for any business—let alone a fast-growing home theater business during a worldwide disaster. Eastporters is a story of how a company uncovered vulnerabilities and replaced them with a competitive advantage to experience four times their sales forecast during a global pandemic. By building in scalability, flexibility, integration, and collaboration, Eastporters created a robust and adaptive supply chain grounded in SAP Business One.

Eastporters focuses on customer care, craftsmanship, and a quality shopping experience. Leading with this focus during turbulent times, Eastporters is an example of building a flexible organisation that can thrive in today's new reality. Eastporters is the definition of a resilient enterprise.



Vision33 transforms business processes and results for customers by delivering value through the promise of technology and its benefits for growing businesses. For over 30 years, Vision33 has helped companies integrate and automate their business processes and applications to better serve their customers, employees, and stakeholders. The technologies may have changed drastically in 30 years, but Vision33's mission has never wavered.

With over 1,000 customers worldwide, Vision33 helps manufacturers, distributors, service firms, and SaaS businesses outperform their competition and lead their industries with successful technology investments.

With nearly 500 employees, Vision33 offers product expertise, business experience, and innovative technology leadership. Whether a global company with 100 subsidiaries or a small business, Vision33 works alongside every customer to meet their goals.

Vision33 also has formal partnerships to resell, implement, and support leading ERP applications, is a leader in cloud deployment, and has developed exclusive products, including Saltbox (saltbox.io) and iDocuments (idocuments.io).

For more information about Vision33, visit www.vision33.co.uk.

Contact your nearest Vision33 sales office to discuss how we can help transform your business.

Europe

1 Heathgate Place, Agincourt Road
London, NW3 2NU
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7284 8400
contact@vision33.co.uk
www.vision33.co.uk

United States

7545 Irvine Center Drive, Suite 200
Irvine, California 92618
Tel: +1 949 420 3300
contact@vision33.com
www.vision33.com

Canada

210 Water Street, Suite #400
St. John's, NL A1C 1A9
Tel: +1 709 722 7213
contact@vision33.com
www.vision33.ca

