

**CUSTOMER**

Trans-Ocean Products, Inc.

INDUSTRY

Food manufacturing

LOCATION

Bellingham, Washington

Number of Locations

Two

Number of Employees

300

SYSTEM

Sage PFW

Modules in Operation

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Bank Book
- Costing
- Formulas
- General Ledger
- Inventory Pro
- Material Requirements Planning
- Multi-Currency Manager
- Order Entry Pro
- Production
- Purchasing Pro

Trans-Ocean Products: “We Seafood Your Way” With Sage PFW

Something fishy is going on in Bellingham, Washington—and it’s a whopper of a business story.

Bellingham is home to Trans-Ocean Products, one of the country’s largest processors of surimi seafood (also known as imitation crab). Trans-Ocean’s Crab Classic products are sold throughout North America in grocery stores and to commercial customers such as restaurants and salad makers.

The company sells products under its own brand name, and also produces private-label products for customers. Its latest innovations include frozen sushi and Jaiba Supremo, a surimi product developed for America’s growing Latino population.

From Three to 300 Customers Overnight

Under its original business model, Trans-Ocean relied on a broker for distributing its products. Life was simpler back then, with straightforward transactions and a short customer list. A proprietary production accounting system handled everything with ease.



Then, in 1997, Trans-Ocean purchased the customer list from its broker and created its own sales force. Sales volume exploded overnight and revenues doubled in just five years.

“The complexity of transactions we needed to handle was suddenly staggering,” says Allen Leaf, Trans-Ocean’s controller. “Instead of one order from a broker that distributed to 20 customers, we now had 20 customers coming directly to us, each with specific requirements. We needed a sophisticated system, coordinating everything from recipe formulation and order processing to detailed business reports.”

CHALLENGE

Find an end-to-end system to handle all aspects of food processing and business management tools, given sudden increase in customer base and need to enhance efficiencies.

SOLUTION

Sage PFW with Order Entry Pro, Production, Formulas, and Inventory Pro modules, providing company-wide access to all system information.

RESULTS

A sophisticated, seamless system managing everything from recipe formulation to Web-based sales reports, contributing to tighter production controls, streamlined order entry processes, and enhanced profitability.

"Sage PFW was the one package we found that let us integrate subrecipes into one master formula, do costing and planning, track inventory, and prepare management reports—all in one seamless application."

—Allen Leaf
Controller
Trans-Ocean Products, Inc.

ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software has been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and mid-sized businesses for over 25 years. With a complete range of business management solutions and services, Sage Software helps companies improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and automate and integrate a variety of operational activities. Its solutions support the specialty needs of a broad scope of industry segments, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, real estate, nonprofit, and professional services.



Sage PFW to the Rescue

For a while, Trans-Ocean limped along with separate databases for inventory, sales, and orders. Then Leaf discovered the Sage PFW ERP system, a comprehensive process manufacturing and business management solution. "Most of the software we looked at was designed for discrete production, like making an airplane wing," he says.

"But food processors like us often have complicated blended formulas with layers of subformulas. A discrete model just doesn't work. Sage PFW was the one package that let us integrate subrecipes into one master formula, perform costing and planning, track inventory, and prepare management reports—all in one seamless application."

Prior to implementing Sage PFW, Leaf's team had to enter orders as many as three times into different databases. Now data is automatically transmitted between the system's modules, saving time and cutting down on errors.

"One of the best things about Sage PFW is the way everybody in the company has access to the same information," Leaf explains. "From production to finance, it has taken away the disparities we had before and puts us all on the same page. Not only does this improve process flow, but it also helps us in accounting to identify discrepancies and streamline month-end closing procedures."

Trans-Ocean was so pleased with Sage PFW that it switched the accounting and business management modules to provide an enterprise-wide exchange of information. "You can't beat Sage PFW for convenience, accuracy and user-friendliness," Leaf notes. "And if I ever need technical support, I can call one place now and get an answer fast."

Because Sage PFW is designed with open database architecture, Trans-Ocean can use third-party products or create ad-hoc reports with Crystal Reports® and Microsoft Access. Leaf says, "This key feature enabled us to design a system of Web-based reports for our sales people. They can look up a customer's order history, create a summary of sales for a broker, and even conduct profitability analysis, all in real-time fashion.

"Sage PFW has been a key component in managing our growth," Leaf says. "Our expansion would have been extremely painful, if not impossible, without such a comprehensive process manufacturing and business solution."