

Gale force

Gale Pacific manages a new world of global forecasting

Gale Pacific is a Melbourne, Australia manufacturer of “Coolaroo Brand” cloth, a knitted shade cloth used in products all over the world in outdoor shades, gazebos and window furnishings. The unique material is exported to China, where consumer products are produced and shipped to Gale Pacific sales and distribution locations worldwide.

This highly seasonal business has a complex demand pattern resulting in lead times of up to 30 weeks. As a result, Gale Pacific requires accurate long-range forecasting capabilities to ensure manufacturing production schedules meet future demand.

Only a couple of years ago Gale Pacific had a very basic forecasting system based on historic sales patterns at a very broad group class level—the system could not forecast sales at the customer level. Since best practices were not supported by such a rudimentary system there was a lack of understanding among staff of the true value of an effective fully integrated forecasting process. With disparate ERP systems in place globally, interoperability issues presented further barriers to success.

The company installed Demand Solutions One software from Demand Management, Inc. of St. Louis. The company also acquired two new businesses and seamlessly incorporated the system into a new, global forecasting system. Today Gale Pacific has unprecedented levels of supply chain visibility and staff has risen to the challenge of a more dynamic, detailed forecasting strategy. Approaching its first peak sales period this year, Gale Pacific management believes the company is in the best shape ever to meet demand.



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objectives is to minimize stock-outs—imperative for a company that does 70 percent of its sales in a three-month period.”

Today Gale Pacific manages a master production schedule for Australia and China based on product requirements accurately forecasted by field collection, realistic expectations and capacity constraints. While supplier expenditures have been reduced, Gale Pacific is actually strengthening relationships with its vendors by more effective, proactive management that has also resulted in a reduction in lead times. 