

Outsourcing SAP Application Management Powers Growth Initiatives

Case Study: Ball Horticultural Company



Ball Horticultural Company: We color the world.

Originally founded in 1905 as a wholesale cut flower business outside of Chicago, IL, Ball Horticultural has grown into a major international corporation spanning 18 countries on six continents, ranging from R&D laboratories to regional production facilities and distribution networks.

The company's mission is to be the world leader in the research, breeding, production, distribution and marketing of ornamental crops. Focused on ensuring its customers have the products and services they need to succeed in the long term, Ball Horticultural is investing in key areas of product development, quality management, analytics and other areas.

SAP® Landscape Background

Ball Horticultural currently runs SAP® Enterprise Central Component (ECC) version 6.0. The company's IT Platforms team is responsible for the enterprise deployment of SAP, along with Microsoft SharePoint, analytics, business intelligence and other important technologies relied on for business operations.

Ball Horticultural relies on SAP to ensure that the business is running efficiently and maximizing its use of information – from back office operations to managing the global supply chain. "Our SAP environment is a critical piece of the company's technology foundation. This is even more important when you consider our technology systems connect our researchers, growers, distributors and other groups across locations and continents to bring flowers, plants and other perishable crops to our customers in a timely fashion," said Mark Morris, Director of IT, CIO at Ball Horticultural.

The Evolution of SAP® Support

As Ball Horticultural evolved from having an internal SAP technical support (Basis) team to the broader Platforms approach, it was faced with the challenge of how to best utilize its internal resources to support their IT infrastructure; while continuing to innovate and pursue new initiatives like analytics and business intelligence. In addition, the company recognized the need to have access to SAP application management expertise beyond the one or two users in the company, and that there was the risk of losing internal SAP tribal knowledge if those resources were to move on.

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Ball Horticultural's strategy was validated by a recent survey by The Hackett Group of medium to large enterprises about maintaining and migrating their SAP environments – especially as enterprises begin to plan for migrations to SAP HANA and S/4HANA in the cloud. **Nearly 90% of respondents have outsourced at least a portion of their SAP support with the trend toward having strategic users in the business and outsourcing daily application management and technical support.**

After completing a successful SAP upgrade and migration project with Symmetry in the past, Ball Horticultural turned to the company again as it shifted to a new SAP technical managed service model. Working as an extension of the Ball Horticultural's Platforms team, Symmetry's SAP technical consultants now provide 24x7x365 proactive monitoring and management to ensure Ball Horticultural's SAP deployment is updated, healthy and optimized for peak performance.

Leveraging Expert Support Drives Efficiency

With SAP at the core of enterprise business operations, Ball Horticultural is a great example of organizations that have recognized there is tremendous value in focusing their internal IT resources on strategic technology initiatives that support the future growth of the business; while leveraging SAP technical expertise through managed services as an extension of their team.

The benefits of partnering with Symmetry have extended beyond what Ball Horticultural initially anticipated. Morris added, "Symmetry not only brings decades of SAP expertise to our team to ensure our systems are up and running, but they also provide valuable insight from their work on other SAP environments that benefit our current operations as well as our SAP migration strategy."

Does Outsourcing SAP® Make Sense For You?

SAP is an incredibly powerful tool that can transform all aspects of your business operations. With that transformative power comes additional complexity as SAP evolves, and operating systems, infrastructure—not to

“ Our relationship with Symmetry means I sleep much better knowing that we are not dependent on a single internal person to manage such an important application to our business as SAP. ”

—Mark Morris - Director of IT, CIO

mention business expectations—change. Today's SAP expert must know the entire stack, and ensure they're keeping a finger on the pulse of your IT environment.

Symmetry's team is ready to do the heavy lifting for you with our SAP support. With certified SAP Basis Services consultants, state-of-the-art, proactive monitoring and 24x7x365 support—we deliver reliable, fast, affordable service when you need it most. Simply put, you can rely on our team to help execute and support your IT strategy, while you focus on driving your business forward. Reach out to our experts today to learn more and see how we can help drive greater efficiency in your organization.

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To learn more about **SAP Basis Support**, contact our Business Development Department or visit our website at:

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