

ClickBase Enables Precise Visibility at Carolina Eastern



Carolina Eastern, Inc.

Industry

Fertilizer wholesaler and distributor

Software

Sage MAS 200, ClickBase

Benefits of ClickBase

- Intuitive database structure
- Easy way to extract data
- Streamlined check processing across multiple locations including reduction of check fraud
- Integrates seamlessly with Crystal Reports and Excel
- Quicker access to information for better, timelier decisions

Carolina Eastern is a company built on fulfilling precise customer needs, and their customers depend on it. Operating as a wholesaler, distributor, retailer and service provider, Carolina Eastern delivers fertilizer individually tailored to each farm customer from its 60 locations primarily in the Southeast. “The fertilizer industry is constantly changing. Farmers are becoming better businessmen and the farms are getting bigger,” said Carolina Eastern’s President Al Philips. Carolina Eastern has successfully adapted to the changing needs of the farmers to help grow their crops bigger and better every year through detailed soil analysis, superior products and hands-on customer service.

Sophisticated Needs

“Our business has become much more sophisticated over the years,” reflects Tom Hallex, Carolina Eastern’s CFO for nearly 14 years. “Between regulations, technological advancements and our commitment to

adapting to change, we have had to deploy internal systems to help us manage our business more effectively so we can support our customers.” Tom manages the accounting and financial operations of all 60 locations from his office in Charleston, South Carolina.

In 2001 Carolina Eastern selected Sage MAS 200 ERP as the backbone of their operation. “We were referred to Oates & Company at this time to help us with the implementation and on-going system support and customization services,” said Tom. “We have relied on this relationship over the years and think very highly of the people at Oates & Company.”

Business Intelligence Solution

Carolina Eastern is a multi-faceted business. Each of its 60 locations is maintained as a separate company in Sage MAS 200. Often it is necessary to pull information from



Oates & Company

An Oates & Company Client Case Study

“Whether we are consolidating or extrapolating information, ClickBase gives us clear visibility into our organization.”

**— Tom Hallex
CFO
Carolina Eastern, Inc.**

these individual companies into one view or report. To handle this, a business intelligence tool was implemented at Carolina Eastern. “It was a decent solution, but there were issues that were never resolved,” said Tom.

Superior BI with ClickBase

Carolina Eastern made do with what they had until they learned about ClickBase. “We were thrilled that one report we could not get out of our current solution was created in ClickBase in 30 minutes,” said Tom. “The report allows me to do prior-year and current-year inventory and accounts receivable comparisons. The difficulty is that our various locations operate on five different year ends. ClickBase handled this with ease.” Having this report saves Tom two hours every time he needs access to this information. Prior to ClickBase, there was a lot of manual gathering and rekeying of data, which at times resulted in keystroke errors and consequently wrong reports.

ClickBase’s entire database structure mirrors Sage MAS 200. “It is very easy for us to write our own reports,” said Tom. “We don’t have to be programmers or waste time searching for file names to pull the right data.” ClickBase delivers meaningful information that help improve Carolina Eastern’s operating efficiencies.

ClickBase Maximizes Cash Flow

ClickBase also helps move data between Sage MAS 200, Crystal Reports and Excel. Carolina Eastern’s accounts payable processing has been significantly streamlined. “We write all of our checks out of one checking account and could possibly owe the same vendor from multiple locations,” said Tom. “ClickBase helps us pull the open invoices due to one vendor out of Sage MAS 200. We are able to pull both open invoices and possible account credits, which allows us to

issue the vendor one check. Correct data is pushed back into Sage MAS 200 with appropriate allocations. This helps maximize our cash flow. Additionally, we use Positive Pay to protect ourselves from fraud. The Positive Pay file is generated during processing. The combination of ClickBase, Crystal Reports and Excel saves us four hours during accounts payable processing. Since we cut checks almost daily, the time savings adds up.”

Having a powerful business intelligence tool is a necessity at Carolina Eastern. “Without ClickBase, we would need additional personnel in each of our locations to help manage the data. ClickBase allows us to operate with a very small staff,” said Tom. “Since ClickBase is easy to use and works well with Crystal Reports, our people in the field can create and run their own reports. They don’t have to wait for someone in the home office to do it for them. They have fast access to the information they need to make better, timelier decisions.”

Carolina Eastern receives rebates from chemical and seed manufacturers based on sales threshold requirements. “We use ClickBase to track vendor purchases and manage how much we are due back in rebates,” said Tom. “It is a great way to validate this data and manage product margins.”

Relationship with Oates & Company

“ClickBase and Oates & Company work so well together to get us what we need. If we have questions or any issues that come up, we know we can rely on them both to help us out,” said Tom. “Oates & Company knows our business. We trust them and appreciate their honesty.”



Authorized Partner

Select 2009



Oates & Company

**2309 West Cone Blvd. Suite 220 Greensboro, NC 27408
(800) 320-0210 • (336) 230-0200
www.OatesCo.com**

©2010. Oates & Co. LLC. Sage, Sage Software, Sage logos and the Sage product and service names mentioned herein are registered trademarks or trademarks of Sage Software, Inc. or its affiliated entities. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.