



Napoleon Products

Benefits from Automating Procurement Processes with SourceDay

“We liked that SourceDay could automate our purchasing processes and free up our buyers to do more proactive work,” recalled Louise. “We want our buyers to spend more time on problem solving or addressing process issues. We also want to grow our vendor base and improve our vendor relationships.” LOUISE MAYER, ERP IMPROVEMENT MANAGER

About the Company

Napoleon Products is North America’s largest privately-owned manufacturer of quality wood and gas fireplaces (inserts and stoves), gas and charcoal grills, outdoor living products and heating & cooling products. Innovative engineering and design, advanced manufacturing techniques, dedicated customer service, outstanding product quality, and superior warranties distinguish Napoleon from its competitors.

Company: **Napoleon Products**

Address: **24 Napoleon Road, Barrie, Ontario, Canada**

Website: www.napoleonproducts.com

Number of Employees: **1,000+**

Products & Services: **Fireplaces, Grills and HVAC Products**

Challenges

Louise Mayer is the ERP Improvement Manager at Napoleon. In 2017, Louise was tasked with finding a solution to help improve Napoleon’s purchase order (PO) processes. *“For us, the critical issue was to streamline and error-proof the communications and acknowledgement process between our buyers and vendors,”* said Louise.

At the time, Napoleon’s purchasing process was laden with manual procedures. *“Our buyers would create their POs in Infor VISUAL and send out PDFs,” she explained. “Our vendors would typically print those PDFs out, mark them up, scan and send them back to us. Then our buyers would have to go through each PO, line by line, to see what might have been changed; and then go into VISUAL to make the appropriate changes in our ERP. As you can imagine, there’s a lot of risk inherent in this process. It wasn’t unusual for errors to occur.”*

The constant back and forth between Napoleon’s buyers and vendors slowed down the buying process. Changes to quantities, dates or prices on the PO might require clarification, taking several emails and phone calls to resolve. Louise added that

unstandardized processes further complicated matters. *“What if the buyer who’s working on that PO is out for the day?”* asked Louise. *“The person who jumps in might not know where things have been left off or what to do about it.”*

Louise consulted with Synergy Resources for an automated purchasing solution that might be compatible with Infor VISUAL. Following a professional consultation with Napoleon, Synergy Resources recommended SourceDay, the leading technology solution for procurement and supplier collaboration. SourceDay makes the job of a buyer easier, simpler and a whole lot more enjoyable.

Results

Napoleon went live with SourceDay in April, 2018. Although the number of buyers has remained constant at nine, the difference is that Napoleon’s buyers are now empowered to work more efficiently. Louise has estimated the time savings at one to two hours per day; or eight to nine weeks per year per buyer. In fact, Napoleon’s return on investment (ROI) with SourceDay was achieved in less than eight months.

“We’re seeing nothing but benefits coming from SourceDay,” marveled Louise. *“If nothing else, the internal efficiencies that we’re seeing from having a clear, reliable information channel with our vendors in SourceDay is a benefit. There’s no debating anymore: ‘I didn’t get this’, ‘I didn’t get that’. SourceDay streamlines everything very nicely,”* she said.

Napoleon’s buyers are banking their SourceDay time savings on more high-value planning tasks. Consider how seasonality presents unique challenges to Napoleon as, for example, new outdoor grills get added to production and older models are phased out. For this reason, it’s important that Napoleon’s human planners have ample time to review Infor VISUAL’s suggested POs and make appropriate changes, as necessary.

“We’re focused on being more proactive,” affirmed Louise. *“OK, we know these units are going out this year. What is the minimum we need to order to keep supporting production while*

minimizing obsolescence?’ By having extra time to review planning information on a regular basis, our buyers can make better decisions when suggested POs come up for review,” she said.

Napoleon’s Vendors Benefit from Closer Collaboration Online collaboration requires participation from both buyers and vendors to succeed. Fortunately, SourceDay provides support resources to help Napoleon communicate the benefits of using the portal with its vendors. Upon request, SourceDay can also configure the portal to interface directly with the vendor’s ERP system. “Once the vendor gets in there and sees what’s going on, they understand that SourceDay can save them a lot of time,” said Louise.

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At the time of writing, over half of Napoleon’s vendors are using SourceDay. The goal is to have all active vendors participate in SourceDay so that Napoleon can harvest even more savings. For their part, vendors have benefited from using SourceDay to improve their internal efficiencies while building closer working relationships with Napoleon.

“The benefit is the traceability and confidence that comes with knowing that everyone’s on the same page,” said Louise. “You know exactly where you stand with that PO: pricing, quantities, and when we’re expecting it to be delivered. There’s no debating it. You know the information is there and it’s reliable.”

Greater collaboration with vendors has resulted in real benefits for Napoleon, too. Napoleon has seen its late POs shrink from an average of 19 days late to just 8 days late. Napoleon has also improved vendor reliability including a 17 percent decrease in late POs from certain vendors

SourceDay Makes it Easy to Train End Users

Louise likes that SourceDay takes away the time-consuming task of training new end users. “SourceDay trained our buyers and participating vendors,” said Louise. “SourceDay will also train any new buyers and vendors that we bring in. It takes that load off us.”

Typically, training to use SourceDay takes only a half hour to an hour session. “You might think, ‘That can’t be enough’ but it is,” said Louise. “It’s that easy to use! Anyone can just jump in and start using it.”

SourceDay Helps to Further Differentiate Napoleon from the Competition Improved supply chain relationships have helped Napoleon to further differentiate itself from the competition.

“It’s definitely helped us progress towards our customer service goals,” said Louise. “We want our customers to have a world class experience when they deal with us. Having our vendors be more accountable and more reliable certainly helps.”

More reliable information has facilitated better purchasing decisions that benefits both Napoleon and its customers. “We know that when something says it’s going to be here, it’s going to be here. It helps our customers get what they want, when they want it,” said Louise.

Napoleon’s SourceDay solution has created a positive ripple effect both within and outside the company. “By helping our buyers become more efficient, the production and distribution-side of our company can be more efficient, as well. That means Napoleon can be more reliable for our customers, too,” concluded Louise.

Napoleon Recommends Synergy Resources and SourceDay

“Synergy Resources has consistently guided us to the critical solutions we need,” said Louise. “It’s not just our ERP and SourceDay. If Synergy Resources doesn’t have a solution in-house they’ll know where to find it. Synergy Resources is there when we need that support. They are fantastic!”

Louise recommends SourceDay to others interested in an outstanding supplier collaboration platform. “It’s been a really great experience to work with SourceDay,” she said. “SourceDay is very willing to look at what we need the system to do and accommodate as many of those needs as they can. It’s a solution that can be implemented fairly quickly and is very intuitive to use.”

About SourceDay

SourceDay is the leading direct spend procurement automation solution. SourceDay connects your ERP with buyers and suppliers to transform your supply chain for the better.

About Infor VISUAL

Infor VISUAL offers an incredible breadth and depth of functionality at a highly competitive price. For small and mid-sized companies, Infor VISUAL is a standout ERP for end-to-end work order-driven manufacturing.

About Synergy Resources

Synergy Resources provides the expertise, guidance, training and software required to empower customers to improve their core competencies and exceed their business goals. Synergy Resources represents world-class ERP solutions including Infor VISUAL and Infor CloudSuite Industrial by Infor; Manufacturing ERP, Protected Flow Manufacturing and DDMRP by LillyWorks; and its own specialized applications including SmartViews for data analytics and reporting.