

Al Zain Jewellery selects Crown24K as partner for customer service management

Al Zain Jewellery has selected Crown24k to implement Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software by Microsoft Dynamics AX 2009. The Gem & Jewellery Vertical will allow Al Zain to have a closer, more personal relationship with customers by streamlining operations within a single, integrated platform.

Established in 1930, Al Zain Jewellery has grown to become a leading Jewellery House in the Middle East, offering customers an extensive range of high-quality Gold and Diamond Jewellery.

"We were looking for a solution that has the ability to streamline and simplify our daily operations all over the Gulf thus reducing our overall costs," said Sunil Soin, Group Financial Controller for Al Zain. "Crown24k on Microsoft Dynamics AX was the obvious choice for its feature rich functionality and ability to efficiently connect all our departments together economically thereby providing us with an effective framework that enables improved decision-making."

Microsoft Dynamics is an adaptable business management solution that helps

improve efficiency, allows for better visibility into the entire organisation and reduces IT complexity.

"Organizations today are facing complex issues where they need to streamline operations and find ways to use resources more efficiently, without incurring extra costs," added Tamer Elhamy, Business Solutions Manager, Microsoft Gulf. "Crown24k, a Gem & Jewellery Vertical, is especially made for large multi-national companies that need to scale their operations seamlessly," he added.



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EMERGING BUSINESS & IT

Nimbus Systems develops IT package for jewellery cos

Damas, Al Zain, Liali, Shree Ganesh Among Co's Clients

Débjoy Sengupta
KOLKATA

JEWELLERY manufacturing is one business in which the entire value of the inventory fluctuates every second, and its inventory is one of the most high cost ones. All the more if it is a multi-country and a multi-outlet group. A small Kolkata-based IT company, Nimbus Systems Ltd, has created a IT package for large jewellery houses that takes care of the entire value chain as well as the complex process of calculation of inventory. And they claim theirs is the only IT package available for such companies, and

PROGRAM BOOST



The package takes care of the entire value chain as well as the complex process of calculation of inventory

there is no other package even from SAP and Microsoft or the Indian biggies like TCS or Wipro.

"And that is exactly why Damas LLC, the Dubai-based \$1-billion

jewellery group has decided to implement the package at all its outlets in about 18 countries and 450 stores. The package will be implemented in three phases. The first set will be the 250 wholly-owned stores, followed by the JV companies and finally, associate outfits. The total size of the order is estimated at around \$6 million," said Amitava Dutta, president, Nimbus Systems Pvt Ltd.

He added: "The Damas Group's network of retail outlets include subsidiaries predominantly in the Middle East, India and Italy, jointly controlled entities and associates in countries across the Middle East, Europe, North Africa and other regions."

Nimbus has, in fact, already bagged three more large clients. Al Zain Jewellery, headquartered in Bahrain; Liali Jewellery LLC, a Dubai-based jewellery retailer and Shree Ganesh Jewellery House, a ₹2,300-crore, 4-star export house.

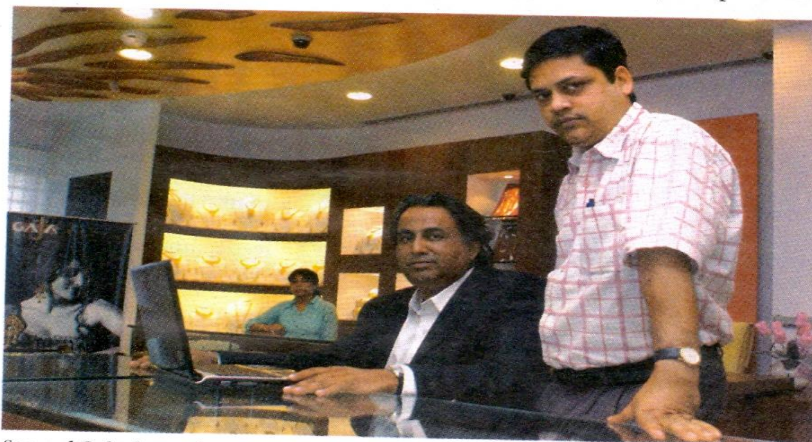
Having made considerable inroads in certain markets, Nimbus is now looking at creating bases in Dubai as part of its plan to focus on the Gulf region. "Our IT package comes in seven languages, including Arabic, and we are also trying to create a presence in European markets as well as the US," said Krishnendu Sen, director, Nimbus Systems.

24-carat solution

A group of engineers offers an ERP solution for jewellers

Jewellery, explains Krishnendu Sen, is a unique business. This makes the creation of an end-to-end software solution for jewellers something of a nightmare. "There are so many variables: first of all, the inventory follows strict parameters, from the raw material to the finished product," explains Sen, director of the Kolkata-based Nimbus Systems. "Also, the prices of precious metals like gold vary according to the purity, and they fluctuate every day."

Topdar, to create DOS-based software using dBase and FoxPro for some aspects of the jewellery business. "We were looking at various functional requirements, making documentation for each customer according to his requirement," he says. "With the development of Windows, we shifted to VisualBasic. In end-2005, Microsoft approached us to make our systems compatible with their products. We tried Oracle and SAP, but they are very strict types of ERP (enterprise-wide



Sen and Guha have a jewel of a solution

resource planning) – but when we explored Microsoft's Exapta, which has now been renamed Dynamics AX, we liked it." By then, the company had grown with two more directors coming on board: Raktim Mitra in 1999 and Sen the following year. After more than a decade of solutions that managed separate parts of the trade, Nimbus launched its new end-to-end solution at the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council's annual India International Jewellery Show in 2006. It ensured additional visibility by taking on the role of 'official software partner' for the show. "We got orders right away!" Mitra says. "Our business dimension

changed, we became confident that we are in the right space at the right time."

Growing customer list

Its customers' secretiveness rubbed off on Nimbus too. "We were very protective about our software, it took us a long time to decide on sharing it even with Microsoft after we started partnering them," says Mitra. "But there was a growing requirement in the market for an umbrella system that takes all the intricacies of the business into account – so we did, finally."

Today, Nimbus boasts a customer list of 200-plus in 14 cities. And while its concentration is on Kolkata, so that it can assure prompt service, it has gone as far afield as Dhaka to the east and Nagpur to the west. "We've also met some Mumbai jewellers, and are talking to branded jewellery manufacturers like Tanishq – some of their vendors are already our customers," Mitra says. "There are already about 50 brands, big and small, in India – and biggies like Wal-Mart are coming in with their own brands."

"Software makes actionable data available at the right time to the right people and allows us to concentrate on the business rather than the daily accounting processing," says Ratan Sen, one of the first jewellers in Kolkata who decided to go in for computerisation in his Senco Jewellery House. "Nimbus has vast domain knowledge and a good solution. The software allows us to decrease cost from inventory holding and manage our multiple branches better." Agrees Vijay Panjiar of Indian Gems & Jewellers Imperial: "What started as a small software for our accounts department got converted into full-fledged computerisation of our entire system. Nimbus has streamlined our entire operation."

Working on a system of pricing according to each customer's requirements and the number of concurrent users, Nimbus' fee works out to under Rs50 lakh for a mid-sized jeweller. And with a market size of Rs4,000 crore, going by Microsoft's valuation, the company is comfortably looking at multiplying its turnover to Rs20 crore in two years.

• SEKHAR SESHAN