

CASE STUDY

CLIENT:	Buckley and Phillips
INDUSTRY:	Manufacturing, Wholesale and Distribution
LOCATION:	Australia
PRODUCT SUITE:	EXO Business
MYOB ENTERPRISE PARTNER:	Oxygen Express

Victoria-based fragrance and aromatherapy company finds a way to account for a stock list of thousands – and cut costs.

Overview

Set up in 1972, Buckley and Phillips is one of Australia's leading manufacturers of fragrance and aromatherapy products.

Starting from a backyard shed in Port Melbourne, the company now operates a large, modern facility in Lilydale, selling across Australia through premium retailers and online.

In the early days, Buckley and Phillips made candles. Today, their product range incorporates soaps, incense, essential oils, home fragrances, fragrant oils, massage oils and aromatherapy products.

Knowing when it's time for a change

Until recently, Buckley and Phillips were using the DOS-based accounting package Exogen.

According to Maureen Phillips, the company's MD, it was a good starting point for a small company – inexpensive and reasonably easy to use.

"But after 15 years, we'd outgrown it," she says.

"There are plenty of decent systems out there that will give you general ledger-type functionality and Exogen was one of them. But we'd gone from manufacturing a handful of products to a stock list of thousands.

"We needed something that could handle bill of materials and stock control."

So that's what she set about looking for.

Finding the needle in the haystack

Phillips says she looked at a seemingly endless list of possible products. But it wasn't until she had all but abandoned the search that she heard about MYOB EXO Business (EXO).

Phillips was no stranger to MYOB. She had contacted the company six or seven years before to ask if they had a system that could handle bill of materials. At the time, they didn't.

But EXO Business has since plugged that gap. Not only does it handle bill of materials. It handles stock control too.

"Suddenly," says Phillips, "here was a product from a well-known brand with all the functionality we were looking for. It seemed the right one to go for".

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Working with the right partner

At MYOB's suggestion, Phillips invited two MYOB Enterprise Solutions Partners to their offices in Lilydale to explain a little more about the product and the installation process.

According to Phillips, the choice was obvious.

"Oxygen Express just made it sound so easy", she says.

"They explained everything to us clearly and seemed willing to help wherever they could.

"The other company told us we would have to re-enter all 5,000 of our products into EXO manually. Oxygen Express took one look at it and said it could be done automatically."

According to Phillips, that sense of optimism hasn't faded.

"We're not so dependent on Oxygen as we were in the beginning. But every so often we'll ask them to develop a new report, or tweak something for us – and we're very comfortable doing so, because we've got such a good relationship."

Setting up the system

Although EXO is designed to be flexible, Buckley and Phillips didn't need much in the way of customisation.

"We had to have a few reports built in," says Phillips – "but they weren't particularly complicated".

The only thing that took any time to get right was the design of works orders.

"Because we manufacture products made of raw materials which themselves are made from raw materials, we have a lot of tiers," she says.

"We needed works orders to reflect that."

Learning to use the system

Staff at Buckley and Phillips had about three weeks of training before going live with EXO.

"It was pretty intense," according to Phillips, "and we really had to concentrate.

"But Oxygen Express couldn't have provided us with a better trainer. She took it in stages and never tried to teach us too much at once."

Keeping your finger on the pulse

A few months down the line, Phillips has had time to properly evaluate EXO. The most striking difference between the new system and Exogen, she says, is the reporting.

"With the reports we have now, we know exactly what's going on in the business at any time. We can see sales for the day and know what our margins are too – as well doing all the usual debtors/creditors and general ledger stuff.

"The great thing about EXO," Phillips adds, "is that the detail is all there if you want it, but when you haven't got time to analyse the figures, you can grab a snapshot."

Cutting costs

As for improved efficiencies, there's little doubt in Phillips' mind that EXO delivers.

"From emailing out invoices to producing purchase orders, the system just gets the job done quicker," she says.

It's not just time EXO saves either.

"When somebody left 12 months ago, we didn't have to replace them – so I guess you could say EXO has saved us the cost of a member of staff."

Each for themselves

Despite such marked savings, it's neither time nor money that really clinches it for EXO in Phillips' eyes. It's the fact that people can use the system for themselves.

On a daily basis, Phillips says she can be doing any number of different tasks in EXO, from end of month statements and invoicing to purchasing and creating works orders.

But since installing EXO, these tasks no longer fall to the girls in the office by default.

"We've got six people using the system on a regular basis," says Phillips, "each for a different reason".

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One person uses it to print out details when he's doing a sales run. Another uses the bill of materials when he's producing quotes for contract jobs – because he knows he can rely on the costings to be 100 per cent accurate.

"Everyone is happy using EXO," says Phillips – "even people on the manufacturing side of the business who don't use the computer every day".

A safe bet for the future

Looking to the future, Phillips says there's a real comfort in knowing that EXO is still going to be supported ten years from now.

"We knew when we chose EXO that MYOB, with its established brand name and network of implementation partners, would be a safe bet.

"So far, it has been."

Client and Enterprise partner details

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