

J. H. LEVER & ASSOCIATES CASE STUDY



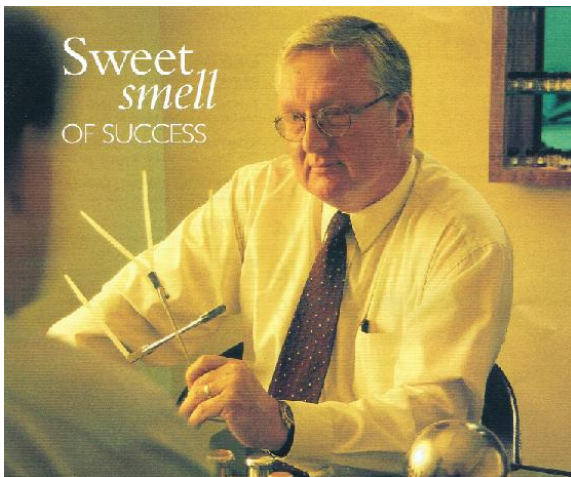
COMPANY OVERVIEW

[J.H. Lever & Associates](#) is an Adelaide based supplier of quality fragrances, flavours, essential oils, plant extracts and cosmetic actives to local and Australian food, cosmetic and toiletries manufacturers. The Richmond (S.A.) based company, offering a 55 year tradition, provides world-class technical and creative competence, particularly in the specialty realm of fragrance and flavour concentrates. JH Lever represents Mane International the sixth largest fragrance and flavour house in the world.

J. H. Lever is an ISO9001, HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) and GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) certified organisation - pointing to J.H.Lever's commitment to quality assurance and best practice in manufacturing.

BACKGROUND

Up until recently, JH Lever had used several legacy systems to support their business processes. With his technical and scientific back-ground, Managing Director Roland Lever took an early interest in the use of computerisation to automate more of the business. Mr. Lever was soon **proficient** in the development of in-house process specific applications and reports that provided the early impetus for J.H. Lever's expansion.



Picture 1 Courtesy Business Life

As the organisation grew, and with business computing moving to modern database technologies such as SQL, the arising of the Internet and the ability to communicate with suppliers and customers electronically, it was clear legacy systems could no longer match the demanding needs for improved productivity and efficiency.

To improve invoicing and financial reporting, J. H. Lever upgraded their accounting systems. Finding limitations to distribution and manufacturing control, J. H. Lever developed some 25 Excel spread sheets to manage quoting, pricing, manufacturing. They soon

realised they had become inefficient with the management and synchronisation of business systems, were duplicating information and struggling to find or verify information easily.

At a time when manufacturing in Australia had become challenging, with increasing regulatory demands and more competitive market conditions, Mr Lever found overall productivity of employees of the J.H. Lever organisation was static, primarily due to the time-consuming and disparate systems they were using.

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J.H. Lever's growth and expanded role as both product developer and manufacturing distributor saw the compelling need for improved professionalism and the establishment of better business process control and productivity.

J.H. Lever realised it was time to review holistically their Information Technology systems. Whilst their accounting software was providing good financials, it did not handle the complex requirements of manufacturing, regulatory and distribution processes.

PARTNERING WITH EPITOME & OSTENDO

In 2009 JH Lever researched enterprise resource planning (ERP) software solutions, with an understanding that ERP packages provide superior features for the integration of manufacturing, inventory, purchasing & distribution processes. The ability to integrate ERP to MYOB financials was a key factor in the selection process.

JH Lever investigated cloud and overseas based ERP solutions, but with budget a key factor in decision making, along with strong Australian representation for development and application support, it became clear that the Ostendo ERP solution offered by Epitome Software **"ticked all the boxes"** especially when it came to features, affordability and local support.

Given Mr Lever's technical contribution to the evolution of their legacy systems, a key factor in the decision to purchase Ostendo through Epitome Software was their demonstrated ability to both understand the existing systems and how Ostendo could run in parallel mode whilst migrating the distribution & manufacturing processes.



The quality and depth of Epitome's experience with manufacturing & distribution implementations provided J H Lever with the confidence that Epitome not only had the ability to support their immediate business process requirements, but could remain a long term partner - ensuring J H Lever could further grow the productivity gains from its investment in the Ostendo ERP solution.

During the selection process, J.H. Lever recognised that by way of commitment to its customers with a National Help Desk and Development Team, Epitome Software provided the necessary resources that



would ensure J.H. Lever's investment in the Ostendo ERP software was placed with an Ostendo partner that could help J.H. Lever realise a Return on Investment (ROI) over the short to medium term.

Mr Lever said that Ostendo as a product is **"profound, and that a lot of thinking had gone into it"** and he was keen to exploit every opportunity with the software and Epitome Software's expertise in Ostendo to make J.H. Lever an even more productive, competitive and profitable local manufacturer.

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IMPLEMENTATION

JH Lever elected to place the organisation in an administrative holding pattern for 2 weeks, as operations were switched from the legacy systems to the new Ostendo/MYOB platform. Tasks included migration of Accounts Receivable, Inventory, Purchasing, Sales, Customer Special Pricing and their manufacturing Bills of Materials, in addition to the establishment of the Ostendo Cost Centres and Financial Mapping to MYOB.

Subsequent to their disciplined switchover from the legacy systems, J.H. lever took the complete Ostendo implementation live in just under 2 months. ***“Brilliant, love it”*** said Mr Lever.

Mr Lever said J.H. Lever had received ***“excellent support from Epitome”*** as they implemented the Ostendo ERP platform. Mr Lever said that in relation to Ostendo removing bottlenecks within the organisation ***“Ostendo has certainly done that”***.

Factory staff previously unable to quickly find paper invoices, were able to do so easily now. Comments such as ***“brilliant, love it”*** are common amongst the Ostendo users at J.H. Lever. Change management was particularly successful in the factory, ***“thanks to the assistance from Epitome support staff”*** said Mr Lever.

Mr Lever said that Epitome and Ostendo had ***“exceeded expectations”***, and that Epitome ***“always dropped everything to help”***, and J.H. Lever ***“appreciated the availability of Epitome staff to assist at all times”***. Mr Lever said that when J.H. Lever called Epitome for support it was ***“great to get a person on the phone, not a system”*** and that ***“you always spoke to someone who knew what they were talking about, it is clear that the customer is genuinely important”***.

Recently, J.H. Lever replaced their paper based batch tracking systems for manufactured goods. The factory staff were not always certain the correct batch codes were being used, so Mr Lever took up Epitome’s suggestion to use bar-code scanners and have the Ostendo batch reports printed as bar-



codes. Within hours of purchasing stock scanners from a nearby store, Epitome and J.H. Lever had implemented a scanning solution that significantly sped up cycle times. The factory manager said he had never seen a system improvement implemented so fast, and he ***was “highly impressed”***.

With his interest in developing software “apps” to automate business process, Roland went to work customising his own reports using the Ostendo Report & Developer module. He quickly realised with the extensive and rich data relationships within Ostendo, it was often more cost-effective and productive to use the skills of the Epitome support team. Mr Lever greatly appreciated not only the speed at which reports were developed, but the level of consulting to determine the exact requirements and outcomes of the report improvements being sought.



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Mr Lever said that J H Lever now has ***“more control over shortages”*** and ***that “running stock checks now with Bill of Materials allows for better production planning.”*** Mr Lever said that the “cycle time” from first order to dispatch ***“has been reduced substantially”***.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Now that J.H. Lever are more confident with the Epitome Ostendo ERP solution, they will put more research and development time into Ostendo to drive even further productivity gains.

Some of the forward goals are the implementation of the Customer Relationship Module (CRM) and the use of Epitome’s web services technology to allow the customers and suppliers of J.H.Lever to log-in for rapid technical support of J.H. Levers’ products.

OUTCOMES

- Cycle Time from Order to Delivery Reduced Substantially
- Quicker Access to Information & Documents
- Improved Purchasing & Inventory Management
- Rapid Deployment of Scanning of Batch Tracking Solution
- Happier Production Staff, Improved Morale
- Confidence in Epitome Software to Deliver Service
- Administration More Efficient with Quoting & Invoicing

POSTSCRIPT

Mr Lever said ***“rolling out Epitome Ostendo has been a great experience”*** and that J H Lever certainly ***“has a taste for more”*** given the substantial improvements in productivity to date. He added that ***“an unexpected side benefit has been a refreshed understanding of the way we work, and where we are heading.”***

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