Bay State Flowers Case Study

Ecommerce Customer Story

Leading Flower Distributor's Online Flower Sales Bloom with Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Bay State Flowers is the largest floral distributor in New England and one of the largest importers and distributors in the U.S. The company has been in business for 70 years, and primarily serves B2B clients in need of cut flowers, plants, and hard goods.

Working with more than 200 family farms and growers from around the globe, Bay State Flowers procures from the widest selection of freshly grown and processed flowers available. This allows Bay State Flowers to source globally to be a one-stop shop and contributes to the company shipping over 24,500,000 flower stems and bunches per year.

INDUSTRY

Wholesale Distribution

LOCATION

United States

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CHALLENGE

Bay State Flowers has established itself as the leading floral distributor in New England. With a range of products including fresh-cut flowers, plants, and hard goods, Bay State Flowers provides all the necessary items a florist needs to create their arrangements. As the company aimed to expand to markets across the U.S., it needed a powerful ecommerce tool capable of handling complex purchase orders and streamlining the shipping process for these perishable goods.

"With Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce, we're able to deliver nationwide," said Deba Behera, Director – IT at Bay State Flowers. "Before that we were limited to shipping within the Northeast Corridor, since flowers are a perishable item. We're now able to work with FedEx to import flowers directly from our producers, and drop-ship them to customers without ever touching a box."

Prior to Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce, Bay State Flowers was using an ecommerce system developed in-house, and it wasn't capable of scaling with business growth or handling complex orders and shipping requirements.

Hitachi Solutions' partnership with Microsoft led Bay State Flowers to choose Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce as its online store management platform. Since Bay State Flowers is a Microsoft shop and was already running Dynamics ERP software, it made sense to choose a solution rooted in deep industry experience and integration with Microsoft ERP systems.

SOLUTION

A typical invoice at Bay State Flowers includes a variety of cut flowers sourced from farm locations around the world, and hard goods such as vases, ribbons, and floral foam. Since Bay State Flowers provides all the items a florist needs to complete an arrangement, there are products that are manufactured or harvested from numerous locations, often as part of the same invoice.

Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce simplifies the process of fulfilling purchase orders that have multiple delivery dates, multiple vendors, and multiple payments. This ensures that purchase orders are fulfilled accurately and on time, no matter how many vendors are involved with a single customer invoice.

"Our challenge was to bring a wide variety of flowers to our clients from a variety of sources," Deba said. "We were able to achieve this with the help of Hitachi Solutions. We are now able to land with our customers faster than our competition can."

Bay State Flowers continues to work on standardizing the ordering process for its clients. In an industry that still has large numbers of consumers preferring to shop in-store, it is important to have a well-designed online store that showcases the features shoppers want to see. Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce provides B2B capabilities that encourage repeat visits from clients. For example, a customer can save a list of items to place orders as they need to restock their supply.

"We are always pleasantly surprised to find that whenever we need a feature or have an idea for added functionality, it already exists in the system and all we must do is simply switch functionalities off or on," said Deba.

From both a technical and functional perspective, Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce provides features that reduce costs, development time, and project management to ensure that Bay State Flowers' ecommerce system is always running industry-leading functionality.

"The journey with Hitachi Solutions has always been a positive experience," Deba said. "I have always been able to reach out to the resources I need, whether it's development work, new projects, or customer support."

WHY HITACHI SOLUTIONS?

Hitachi Solutions is one of the largest, most qualified and highly experienced Microsoft Dynamics consulting firms across the globe, capable of handling complex tier-one displacement projects. Our company's caliber of expertise and commitment to customers is evidenced through our consistent recognition from both Microsoft and industry analysts. Contact a Hitachi Solutions expert to discuss how our Microsoft Dynamics Solutions can help improve your productivity.

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BENEFITS

Powerful Shipping Capabilities

Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce provides a seamless ordering and shipping process that ensures customers get their orders on time, and that their flowers are fresh. The system automatically coordinates drop-shipping options and multiple sources to fulfill orders. If a customer wants different flowers delivered on different dates, that can be easily handled by the system as well.

Cost-Effective Platform

Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce receives consistent upgrades to remain on the cutting edge of technological advancements. There are new features and functionality added with each release, which saves Bay State Flowers cost, development time, and project management. There is never a need to write any code or develop any features in-house.

Microsoft Dynamics GP Integration

Since Bay State Flowers uses Dynamics GP as its ERP system, it was a natural fit to choose Hitachi Solutions Ecommerce to manage the web store. Deep integration between the two systems ensures that no manual intervention is ever needed during the ordering and shipping process, from the time a customer places an order on the web store, to the warehouse shipping the order.