

CASE STUDY



INDUSTRY:

Manufacturing of Organic Personal Care Products

BENEFITS:

Nodus' eStore Solution Stack automates business processes, reduces labor costs, simplifies PCI Compliance, and provides unsurpassed peace of mind by managing more than 200 product SKUs that Aubrey sells through 4,500 retail locations, numerous distributors, and its own online storefront.

SOFTWARE USED:

Nodus eStore Solution Stack, a fully integrated e-Commerce web store for Microsoft Dynamics GP, providing automated order intake, secure payment processing, and real-time inventory, tax, shipping, and customer management.

ABOUT AUBREY®

Aubrey® is a leader in natural hair, skin, and body care, with over 200 products sold in more than 4,500 retailers throughout the world. In 1994 Aubrey became the first personal care manufacturer to be certified as an organic processor by Quality Assurance International of San Diego. Its factory - where the products are created - is regularly inspected and certified as a manufacturing facility where organic ingredients are handled according to standards set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program.

For more information please visit:
www.aubrey-organics.com

ONE OF THE WORLD'S FIRST PRODUCERS OF ORGANIC PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS LEVERAGES NODUS' eSTORE SOLUTION STACK TO INTEGRATE ITS ECOMMERCE AND ACCOUNTING UNDER A SINGLE, EFFICIENT UMBRELLA.

"Nodus' eStore Solution Stack provides leading international manufacturers, such as Aubrey Organics, with a secure, reliable and easy to maintain online storefront that automates orders and payment processing, while accurately keeping inventory, shipping and customer records integrated with Microsoft Dynamics GP."

– InterDyn BMI

When Aubrey Hampton first mixed ground ginger, peppermint, and eucalyptus leaf into a base of coconut oil in 1967, he never imagined that the batch of bath liquid he created to help combat those harsh New York City winters would change the personal care industry forever. Nearly five decades and more than 200 products later, Aubrey Organics®, the company he founded, remains the leader in natural hair, skin, and body care, with products sold in more than 4,500 retailers throughout the world.

Known as a "legacy brand" (i.e., one of the first in its industry), Aubrey has carved a niche in a market segment that's grown wildly over the years as more consumers strive to use products that are healthy, organic, and natural. "Early on, our founder was looked upon as somewhat of a celebrity," said Priscilla DeFrancesco, President of Aubrey Organics. "There wasn't much information on natural personal care products at the time, so he fielded calls and requests from a wide range of people."

As the number of requests grew, and as the word spread about Aubrey's innovative products, the company grew exponentially. And as order volumes increased, Aubrey turned to InterDyn BMI (formerly Business Microvar), a leading global partner for Microsoft Dynamics ERP and CRM solutions, to help recommend the best solution to efficiently manage those orders – and the associated payments, inventory, shipping, and other customer functions. "Before InterDyn recommended Nodus, we were taking orders by hand," said DeFrancesco. "We used a desk order pad with carbon paper in between; it was horrible."

LEADING THE PACK IN FRESHNESS

As a leader in natural hair, skin, and body care, Aubrey makes and sells everything from age-defying therapies made from Rosa Mosqueta Oil, to honeysuckle rose shampoos and conditioners, to body lotions made from collagen and almond. The company's distinct products are sold by popular health stores like Whole Foods and Sprouts, via a group of worldwide distributors, and through the firm's website. Making Aubrey especially unique is the fact that all of its products are still manufactured by hand in the U.S. in small, 50-gallon batches. "We stir them up by hand and make them fresh to ensure quality," said DeFrancesco. "Everything that's on our shelves ships out fresh right to the consumer."

A certified organic processor, Aubrey decided several years ago that in order to scale effectively it would need to automate its business processes. "We wanted to become more efficient and spend more time educating our customers," said DeFrancesco, "instead of wasting a lot of time calculating, tracking orders, and recording payments in our accounting system."



Aubrey's new system would need to run on autopilot and integrate directly with its existing Microsoft Dynamics ERP software to provide a seamless, web-based transaction platform. After reviewing three different ecommerce solutions recommended by InterDyn, DeFrancesco and her team selected Nodus eStore Solution Stack, a fully integrated ecommerce web store for Microsoft Dynamics GP, providing automated order intake, secure payment processing, and real-time inventory, tax, shipping, and customer management.

During the software selection process, Aubrey utilized InterDyn's expertise to seek out a platform that was user-friendly, that integrated its online shopping cart and ERP, and that was designed for easy setup and maintenance. "We didn't need a team of internal programmers. We just needed some support from Nodus' professional service department and we were up and running quickly," said DeFrancesco, whose team called on Nodus' developers to handle customizations which enhanced its shopping cart to match Aubrey's unique vision. "Nodus has top-notch developers. In the rare event that we need support, we're always taken care of immediately. It just works well for us."

"NODUS GIVES US PEACE OF MIND"

As it overcomes industry hurdles like helping consumers discern between truly organic products, and those that claim to be organic and made from all-natural ingredients, Aubrey can rest easy knowing that the millions of customers and hundreds of retailers are supported by a robust web store and secure payment engine.

"We have weekly meetings where Nodus organizes all players and manages the entire process very professionally. As a result, when we roll out the solutions live, there are never any issues," said DeFrancesco. "That's huge for us because all of our IT is outsourced, so we don't have the time or resources to be able to deal with technology issues. Having a program that works well, with no down time, provides us great peace of mind."

And because Nodus eStore Solution Stack integrates bi-directionally with Microsoft Dynamics GP, Aubrey's orders can flow smoothly from its web store, into its accounting software (and vice versa) with no additional human interaction. Inventory is always up to date, while payments, taxes, and shipping are always precise and calculated instantly with the solution's third-party integrations. "I can't even remember the last time we had an issue with the program," said DeFrancesco. "It's literally been years."

ADDING MERCHANT ACCOUNT SERVICES

In 2014, Aubrey widened its relationship with Nodus by adding the vendor's Merchant Account Services to its portfolio. This service provides Aubrey with the convenience of having one point of contact at Nodus for all of its web store, payment processing, and gateway support needs. Nodus' dedicated resources constantly monitor and analyze pricing from many different providers so that customers like Aubrey always receive the lowest pricing for credit card processing. "We've seen some definite cost and time savings as a result of using Nodus Merchant Account Services," said DeFrancesco. "That's why we switched over to it."

Going forward, DeFrancesco said Aubrey plans to continue building upon its founder's legacy (Aubrey Hampton passed away three years ago) of researching and sourcing high-quality, natural ingredients to use in the firm's ever-expanding product line. "Our main focus continues to be on helping people, helping to preserve the environment, and creating clean, safe products," said DeFrancesco. "We're always looking to create the next wonderful alternative to the synthetic products that are being mass produced in today's market."



"Nodus is great at project management and always handles our needs and requests very professionally and quickly."

ABOUT InterDyn BMI (formerly Business Microvar)

Aubrey Organics' partner, InterDyn BMI, suggested Nodus' solutions to Aubrey back in 2006. InterDyn BMI is a leading global partner for Microsoft Dynamics ERP and CRM business solutions with over 500 certified professionals in locations around the world. InterDyn BMI is dedicated to the sales, consulting, service and support of all Microsoft Dynamics business solutions including Microsoft Dynamics GP (Great Plains), Dynamics AX (Axapta), Dynamics SL (Solomon), Dynamics NAV (Navision) and Dynamics CRM (MS CRM). InterDyn BMI supports over 3,500 customers, ranking as one of the largest, most comprehensive, and most experienced Microsoft Dynamics Business Solution partners worldwide.



ABOUT NODUS:

Nodus® Technologies, Inc. is a leading provider of electronic payment automation software for small and mid-size companies. Nodus leverages Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) and web services technologies to provide cost effective, comprehensive e-commerce, electronic payments, and retail management solutions for Microsoft Dynamics® ERP and CRM. Nodus® business solutions include eStore Solution Stack, ePay Advantage, Credit Card Advantage, PayFabric®, and other products and services.

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