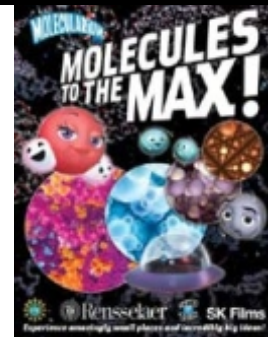




There 's Much More To Movie-Biz Software Than JusT Animation



SP Corporation, a Mumbai-based entertainment group, has relied heavily on technology to manage its cinema, Sterling Cineplex, and drive profitability.

'Movies, Masti and Magic! That pretty much defines the complete cinematic experience that Mumbai-based SP Corporation offers movie buffs. Starting with a single-screen cinema hall in 1965, SP Corporation now runs a multiplex, Sterling Cineplex, and dual food courts. At the same time, this entertainment group emerged as a stalwart in cinema branding and promotions, conducting advertising and promotional activities in over 300 cinema halls/multiplexes and 50 shopping malls across India. This firm ascribes some of its success to technology.

"With every passing day, the world is getting more techno savvy. We realised in the early 90s that we had to open our arms to technology to

stay in business. Technology-driven automation was essential to embed accuracy into our business. So what started out as a change forced on it to remain in business, technology today has become the life force that manages the business," says Radhesh Ramanna, manager (accounts and taxation), SP Corporation.

Technology

SP Corporation's initial brush with technology began in 1991 when it opted for sophisticated typewriting functions. But the true union happened in 1993 when the firm adopted Tally 4.5, the accounting software. "We realised the need for automating our accounts and chose Tally software for its affordability and user friendliness. Back then, we analysed options like TCS and other

business solutions but most were either beyond our budget or too complex for our not-so-tech-savvy users," says Ramanna. The user friendliness of Tally's accounting software won over SP Corporation.

Thereafter, SP Corporation has constantly banked on Tally for its automation needs. The firm recently adopted Tally ERP 9.0 to overcome challenges in managing its diversifying and growing business. "SP Corporation is a professionally managed business where the owners are not involved in the day-to-day operations. Thus, a solution to keep the owners informed about the profitability of each order, provide a business overview, etc, was required" says Rajendra Pankhania, director, AimTech Business Solution, an authorised partner of Tally Solutions.

Ramanna adds: "As we are entering fresh lines of business like branding, etc, we needed a complete business solution to meet the complex needs of our growing business. The solution had to be able to enable quicker decisions and speed up business processes. ERP software was a perfect match for us."

An extra edge with ERP

The ERP solution helped SP Corporation achieve better finance,



Radhesh Ramanna,
manager (accounts and
taxation), SP Corporation

"ERP software allowed us to spot abnormalities like our escalating electricity costs."

business management and inventory management through options like stock ageing (identifying stock based on the age helping one discard old stocks), management reports and comprehensive recording of stock movement.

Profitability: Considering that the management isn't present 24X7 to oversee operations, a profitability overview is crucial for them to keep the business going and plan future investments. The ERP system helped dig out the most minute details regarding the profitability per contract/order/job. "We had multiple revenue streams from the theatre, investments and food courts. This makes it difficult to gauge the profitability of each contract or department. We needed the overall profitability to be broken down department-wise, order-wise, based on individual sales persons, etc, to track any mismatch between the cost of production and sales. ERP helped us achieve this," says Ramanna. By tracking each sale against the goods purchased through the common element of the contract number,

AimTech was able to generate the profitability per contract.

Reducing costs:The detailed profitability analysis helped spot abnormalities, resulting in a reduction in operational costs. For instance, the profitability analysis was able to reduce electricity bills for SP Corporation. "ERP software allowed us to spot abnormalities like our escalating electricity costs. On inspection, we found that our AC plant had worn out and we replaced it. Thereafter, we have seen a 20-30 per cent saving in our energy costs," says Ramanna.

Smart reports: The ERP software generated smart reports that helped SP Corporation get an overview of the business, in a snapshot. "The reports are comprehensive and user friendly, saving a lot of time. Earlier I would take a lot of time to find the payments due or receivables for a client but now, in hardly 2-3 minutes, I get the figure. Simultaneously, I could also get details about outstanding bills in 30 seconds," says Ramanna. The bills realisation report, the coordinator-wise sales report, sales achieved and profit earned reports for individual sales personnel; these are some smart reports that have become indispensable for SP Corporation.

Quicker decisions: The ERP software also helped in fast decision making because of its prompt alerts and smart reports "Automatic alerts are generated about debtors or payments that are due. This helps us take timely decisions with respect to payments and follow up with debtors," says Ramanna. Smart reports helped the firm get a quick insight into sales, costs and customer behaviour patterns that have helped the firm react with agility in matters of prices of offerings, etc.

Customisation at low price: Further, SP Corporation also benefited by the low customisation costs through AimTech Business Solutions. AimTech helped them maximum worth of investment with economical add-on services that increased productivity, efficiency,

saving time and money. They provided SP Corporation multiple customisations like stock system customisation, sales bill formatting; MIS report customisation, etc at affordable prices. "We were able to modify the ERP software to meet

"The owners [of SP Corporation] are not involved in the day-to-day operations. Thus, a solution to keep the owners informed was required."

Rajendra Pankhania,
director, AimTech Business
Solution

the very specific needs we had. The low price for the customisation, starting from Rs 2,000 to Rs 10,000 for complex customisations like MIS, was the icing on the cake. Some customisation even came free. For instance, when the service tax changed, we got an automatic update of the TDS from the system, for free," says Ramanna.

Looking ahead

Apart from ERP, SP Corporation has gone in for multiple technologies. It uses a biometric solution from ESS and has installed a security solution that involves 9 closed-circuit cameras monitoring two floors. Today, SP Corporation's annual IT expenditure stands at Rs 4 lakh, inclusive of hardware, maintenance costs, etc.

Looking ahead, the firm hopes to use technology as a catalyst for growth. "In the future, we hope to use technology to reduce the human interface and increase the accuracy of our business operations. Remote management of the ERP software is one key technology we wish to deploy within the next year. It would allow the management to handle the business, while on the move," says Ramanna.

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