

case study

DISTRIBUTION

Flexible approach drives cost reductions and service innovation

Lawson Products is a distributor of maintenance and repair supplies.

Celebrating its 65th anniversary in 2017, Lawson Products (NASDAQ: LAWS) is an industrial distributor of maintenance and repair products. Lawson carries a comprehensive line of products and provides inventory management services to the industrial, commercial, institutional and government maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) market. With several strategically located distribution centers in North America, Lawson ships to customers in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. Under its Kent Automotive brand, the Company supplies products to collision and mechanical repair shops as well as automotive OEMs. For additional information, please visit lawsonproducts.com or kent-automotive.com.

The branded Lawson Managed Inventory helps customers lower their total cost of operation by increasing productivity and efficiency. Lawson works with customers to design an organized storage system and establish a re-stocking schedule based on individual usage.

To remain competitive, the business needed to focus on cost and innovation so Lawson embarked on a program of consolidation and a drive to deliver new services to market faster.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the IT function is key to Lawson's success, not least the supply of accurate data. "We built a robust sales and supply-chain data warehouse that we use for a great deal of our decisions," says Kevin Hoople, information technology vice president. "This means we're really operating with facts and not just with conjecture."

Despite this, cost cutting and service innovation do not always sit well together. Lawson must juggle the best use of its resources; the business needs to constantly assess which tasks it can manage inhouse and which can be outsourced to specialists.



Highlights

CLIENT

North American distributor of maintenance and repair supplies.

CHALLENGE

Drive cost savings, while building business agility.

ENSONO SOLUTION

Managed database; disaster recovery and hosting; utility data storage and protection; middleware support services.

RESULTS

Our client:

- ✓ Reduced IT procurement costs by 15%
- ✓ Implemented a robust Disaster Recovery platform
- ✓ Improved scalability, flexibility, responsiveness, and cost predictability

CREATING A FLEXIBLE, SCALABLE, AND INTEGRATED IT ENVIRONMENT

Ensono has worked with Lawson Products since 2007. We helped migrate Lawson's mainframe and open systems environment to an Ensono data center, including initial assessment, project planning and implementation.

This was quickly followed by an SAP migration. Both projects delivered the necessary costs savings and created a more integrated, scalable, and flexible IT environment.

The partnership has continued to remain relevant and productive.

The Ensono contract was renewed in 2015 as part of a major IT procurement project. It has since seen the creation of a stable Disaster Recovery environment, an upgrade to storage, and a continued shift towards more shared environments. The next challenge is to help Lawson explore cloud.

PROVIDING MOMENTUM TO NEW PROJECTS

The procurement project alone ensured a 15% reduction in IT spend.

Through our direct relationships with suppliers we were able to drive down costs, while moving Lawson into shared environments. This switched the focus from Lawson owning specific models to finding appropriate storage and compute power. Today, we provide 84TB of storage and protect 26TB of front-end data.

The Disaster Recovery (DR) project leaves Lawson better protected, with clear assurance regarding business continuity. The DR environment also allows Lawson to test various scenarios before going into full production. This improves Lawson's ability to get new services to market faster.

Together, the switch to shared rather than inhouse environments means Lawson has fewer IT resources standing idle. With resources easy to spin-up on demand, there is now more momentum behind new projects.

Our relationship with Lawson revolves around continuous service improvement, always with a focus on cost reduction. This means we need to demonstrate constant evolution. As an IT partner, one of our roles is to promote innovation, even where it has not been requested. This also means reinforcing the business case for outsourcing.

"We are aware that we don't always have the resources or expertise to take on every IT project," says Hoople. "We recognize that Ensono brings a level of ITIL quality, it has the expertise, the connections, the vision, and a record of delivering successful projects. Ensono has proved to be flexible, stable, and consistent."

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Kevin Hoople
Information Technology
Vice President
Lawson Products

15% reduction in
IT hardware spend.

Ensono delivers complete hybrid IT services and governance from cloud to mainframe. Let us help you operate for today and optimize for tomorrow.

To learn more, visit www.ensono.com.

