



**Customer Success Story
SAP Business One at HeatStore**

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Wendy Dunn, General Manager, HeatStore.

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SAP® Business One fuels core of new Christchurch pellet-fire business

Smog. Wander around a Christchurch suburb after dark in winter and you will see it lingering in the streets - a layer of choking brown haze. Research indicates that each year in Christchurch this pollution is responsible for the premature deaths of 150 people. Not to mention the respiratory and cardiac illnesses that burden the economy and place heavier demand on the health system. It is little wonder this silent killer is cause for concern.

Surprisingly, only 20% of the city’s winter air pollution comes from vehicles and industry, while the other 80% is belched from wood or coal burners and open fires.

To combat Christchurch’s smog problem, Environment Canterbury (ECan) initiated the Clean Heat Project, offering subsidies and interest-free loans on approved products as incentives towards healthier heating. The products must meet stringent heat-efficiency guidelines to be eligible for assistance, and approved retailers are registered through ECan.

AT A GLANCE

Name

- HeatStore NZ Limited
- HeatStore Solar & Energy Specialists Limited

Location

- Christchurch, New Zealand

Industry

- Energy Efficiency—Residential

Employees

- 12

Web Site

- www.HeatStore.co.nz

Solution and Services

- SAP Business One on Microsoft SQL Server
- Business One Usability Package—Boyum IT
- Crystal Reports from Business Objects for SAP
- Multi-Company

Implementation Time

- 3 days

Implementation Partner

- Business Evolution Group Limited

Christchurch-based company HeatStore is one such approved retailer providing Canterbury homeowners with a unique, hassle-free way to switch to one of the most effective forms of home heating on the market - pellet fires.

HeatStore General Manager Wendy Dunn helped lead the pellet-fire revolution in Canterbury more than a decade ago, moving on to become a key figure in the uptake of pellet fires around New Zealand for Solid Energy Renewable Fuels. HeatStore bought the Solid Energy Renewable Fuels retail and installation service business in 2008, and, from their inner-city location with a staff of 14, they provide a comprehensive range of clean-burning pellet-fire options for the Canterbury commercial and residential markets.

Ms Dunn says the company required a flexible business management solution that would accommodate their specific needs without blowing the budget before launch day.

“As a start-up company, we were not in a cash-rich position, but we didn’t want to compromise on the quality and integrity of the software at the core of our operation,” she says.

“I had used QuickBooks in the past, but I wasn’t confident it could provide the flexibility and robust multi-user access the new business required. The company doesn’t operate in a box-standard way, so we needed to tailor a software system to suit.”



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Ms Dunn, who had previous experience with the SAP Business One software, was aware of its capabilities. This, combined with her employees' familiarity with the software and the option of a flexible finance plan, led her purchase the latest version of SAP's Business One suite.

"Because we were familiar with SAP software and knew the value of it, it was a straight-forward decision, really," she says. "Having to re-train staff to operate a different software solution would have ultimately cost us a lot of time and money."

After receiving the go-ahead, SAP partner Business Evolution Group worked quickly throughout the install to ensure HeatStore was up and running in just three days.

"Business One's customer relations management tool is very powerful. At the point of sale, the system will automatically generate an 'equipment card' entry, which includes information such as product serial numbers, warranties and service contracts for the customer. This saves us a lot of time because we don't have to input the entries manually and separately."

Andrew Wilson, Commercial Manager, HeatStore

"We had a tight timeframe in which to complete the build, convert pre-existing data, train the team and get the system live, but we completed the project on time and on budget," says Project Manager Brodie Archer.

"To keep costs down, we recommended a finance option for implementing Business One and a new IBM server at HeatStore, and worked closely with the team to validate their needs and ensure any processes suggested were suitable for the company," she says.

"We also organised a service-level agreement to reduce the total cost of owning SAP. These typically include upgrades, support hours and other value-add services, allowing companies like HeatStore to cost-effectively keep pace with the latest versions and receive the support and training they need, whenever they need it. They have the freedom to access those benefits based on business decisions, rather than worrying about whether they can justify the extra expense at a particular time."



Now, with Business One in place, HeatStore Commercial Manager Andrew Wilson says HeatStore can synchronise their multi-user data requirements and provide relevant information to all four departments automatically.

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"Because we are affiliated with ECan through the Clean Heat Project, we often need to provide specific invoices for subsidised products. Business One gives us the flexibility to access data via user-defined fields and create customised invoice templates to be used every time."



Ms Dunn says, "From an after-sales perspective, the service module has been valuable for creating detailed records related to support and service. We develop an ongoing relationship with our customers, and, in some cases, the timeframe between an initial deposit on a sale and the installation can be lengthy, so maintaining those records is vital."

Ms Dunn says having the backing of a locally based SAP partner is a huge advantage for HeatStore.

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ing options. Setting up a new business is tricky enough without having to worry about where help will come from if things go wrong," she says. "I feel secure knowing Business Evolution Group's professional SAP support isn't far away."

Ms Archer says Business One has provided the perfect solution for HeatStore's specific requirements.

"For HeatStore's appliance-based business, SAP is a perfect fit. It manages their pre-sales, sales, after-sales support and service all natively within the solution. The software is easily scalable and offers them a huge degree of flexibility for growth," she says.

Future plans for the company include equipping sales representatives with mobile technology to upload data while on site, as well as utilising Business One's Microsoft Office integration.

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Ms Dunn says, "There is potential within Business One that we haven't even tapped yet, and I feel confident knowing the system will continue to grow with the company and accommodate our needs".