

## Taming Oracle to Conduct Business without Borders

### With help from Motion International, Uponor crosses the Atlantic and conquers the North American construction market

The U.S housing market has cooled off recently, but when it boomed, few companies thrived as much as Uponor, formerly Wirsbo. Uponor makes plumbing and heating products for the construction industry. Based in Finland, Uponor has over 4,500 employees worldwide and operations in 25 countries. Its most recently reported revenues were \$1.3 billion (USD). Much of that business in recent years has been conducted in the U.S. and Canada, where the company has had a significant presence for decades. In recognition of the growing importance of the North America market, the company significantly expanded North American manufacturing, sales and distribution operations.

Like many international companies, **Uponor wants to treat North America as one big market and minimize cross-border accounting and inventory management issues.** That's especially important to Uponor because the company has manufacturing and distribution facilities on both sides of the border. **Uponor needs to be able to flexibly ship products between these facilities to accommodate fluctuating regional market demands: when construction is leveling off in some markets, it's picking up in others.**

Getting such flexibility from ERP systems such as Oracle can impose some heavy customization requirements. Compounding Uponor's challenge was the fact the company was decommissioning non-supported inventory and financial management applications in its Canadian distribution facilities in order to standardize it's entire North American operations on Oracle. Uponor also wanted to implement HighJump Software's warehouse management system at facilities in the U.S. and Canada and integrate it with Oracle. This would require even more customization.

All in all, it was a pretty tall order. In the meantime, **the company was struggling to keep up with double-digit increases in demand and naturally couldn't afford any disruptions in its operations.** Luckily, Uponor knew where to turn for fast, efficient, and trouble-free Oracle customization, implementation and customization – Motion International. **Motion had been helping Uponor manage its Oracle system for nearly five years by this point. Uponor knew that when it comes to solving international Oracle challenges, no one was better than Motion.**

#### The Motion International difference

*"Motion is a partner in our success; they aren't just an ordinary vendor," says Chris Moore, Uponor's Vice President for Information Technology "They have enabled us to achieve many of our business strategic goals and more effectively leverage our investment in Oracle technologies. They use their knowledge of Oracle and experience in many different businesses and industries to provide unique solutions to our tough international business challenges."*

#### > Company

*Uponor North America*

#### > Challenge

*Adapting Oracle to seamlessly support cross-border accounting, inventory management and other operations, and implementing one common Oracle system to support all U.S. and Canadian facilities.*

#### > Solution

*Motion International Oracle consulting leveraged proprietary Oracle methodologies and tools to customize Uponor's existing Oracle application.*



In Uponor's case, Motion used its **Rapid Motion Methodology™** and other proven, cost-effective tools to:

- > **Fill in the gaps in Oracle modules to eliminate problems with cross-border inter-company transfers.** Now it is no longer an accounting and financial reporting nightmare to transfer inventory across borders to meet regional shortages and seasonal variations. Uponor in effect has one planning and supply chain management system for its entire North American operation. That makes it easy for Uponor to systematically consolidate financials for both its U.S. and Canadian operations and shorten financial reporting cycles.
- > **Re-implement several Oracle modules to give the company a standard methodology** for better controls over costs that were threatening to spiral out of control as the company scaled up its production and distribution.
- > **Bring the Canadian operations up on Oracle in a just four months.** This was a full life cycle implementation. From requirement analysis to user testing to converting the main-frame data Uponor had been using Oracle to run during a narrow three-day window to finally going live. Thanks to Motion's Accelerators and other proprietary tools, no programming was needed and the conversion had no impact on normal product shipments.
- > **Integrated HighJump warehouse management applications with Oracle, allowing Uponor to enjoy all the benefits of these best-of-breed applications.** This isn't a particularly an easy challenge when it comes to Oracle, but Motion had the Oracle expertise to complete a seamless integration.

### Bottom line

Motion International helped Uponor get over Oracle hiccups as well as potentially painful business disruptions as it expanded its presence in the North American construction markets. The result was that the company was able to scale up more easily to meet booming demand and implement a significant number of Oracle modules, applications, adaptations and customization without expensive programming and with no impact on normal operations or customer service.

*"Motion's resources were key to Uponor's success in deploying Oracle to our Canadian business units in 2006," says **Chris Moore**. "Their resources understood the complexities in Oracle for cross-border operations. They enabled us to leverage one technology platform in North America for the first time in our history. And Motion always brings quality resources to the table at the best rates. In fact, all of their resources that have been deployed at Uponor have had the right experience and skill levels and were able to suggest creative ways to utilize Oracle technology to solve business problems."*



*Motion International (www.motion-international.com) is an experienced, exclusively Oracle professional services company. One of very few firms that offers high-caliber multinational Oracle expertise worldwide, it has developed several proprietary best practices, tools and methodologies to ensure successful delivery. Headquartered in Minneapolis, Motion has offices in five countries and has delivered Oracle projects on five continents. Its clients include some of the world's largest global companies.*