

STOUGHTON TRAILERS

Ultra Delivers ROI Far Beyond Expectations

An Ultra Consultants Client Satisfaction Story

September 2015

An Intermodal Manufacturing Industry Leader

Located in Stoughton, Wisconsin, Stoughton Trailers started as a small family-owned business and is now one of the industry's leaders in conventional and intermodal transportation equipment manufacturing.

Stoughton Trailers has come a long way since its founding in 1961 and today Stoughton Trailers can claim to be one of the largest trailer manufacturers in North America. With facilities spanning over one million square feet of manufacturing space spread out over 80 acres of property in three southern Wisconsin communities, it's estimated that over 150,000 Stoughton trailers produced at these plants travel the highways of the United States and Canada every day.

In addition to manufacturing operations, Stoughton Trailers, LLC. also operates a service parts distribution network and an independent over the road trucking company. All of Stoughton's facilities have incorporated vertical integration wherever possible to enhance the entire manufacturing operation, providing us with the opportunity to optimize our quality assurance procedures and improve component inventory control. They also incorporate the latest process equipment for premier, long-life painting of steel components.

The 680,000 sq. ft. Stoughton plant houses all of the component manufacturing operations for rear door frames, ladder assemblies and upper coupler assemblies.

From fabrication of subassemblies to final assembly of all Stoughton dry vans, this facility has the capacity to produce in excess of 20,000 finished units per year. The 45,000 sq. ft. Stoughton Parts facility is dedicated to supporting our network of Stoughton Trailers dealers, independent repair shops and fleet customers throughout North America.

At a production rate exceeding one container every 40 minutes, the 300,000 sq. ft. Stoughton Trailers container facility is one of the most modern and automated facilities in North America for the manufacturing of containers and container chassis. This state-of-the-art facility incorporates Stoughton's latest production technology and is capable of handling all fabrications using the latest equipment and techniques.



"Ultra understands the challenges of running a manufacturing business. Their persistent focus on our business value remains a cornerstone to our long standing partnership."

- Bob Wahlen, President & CEO

Further on...

- Business Process Improvement Opportunities
- Focused on Stoughton's Business Value
- A Business Case with Solid ROI and Payback
- Negotiation of Price and Vendor Services
- Ultra: Industry and ERP Expertise Combined



Stoughton Trailers

Enter Ultra Consultants

To exceed increasing customer demands, the Stoughton Executive Team realized a new integrated ERP solution was necessary. The current “green screen” AS400 system had been highly customized over many years and was unable to integrate with modern eCommerce capabilities. Hundreds of spreadsheets were being used to slice-and-dice data which slowed decision making due to data integrity concerns and multiple versions of the truth.

Business Process Improvement Opportunities

Ultra Consultants are experts in identifying opportunities for competitive advantage, operational efficiency and cost savings across your business. At the culmination of the Business Process Improvement phase of the project (typically 3 months), Ultra’s team of experts will discuss and review the details of the business case for change which includes quantified and categorized business opportunities such that the executive team can effectively establish the near-term and long-term priorities for the business.

Focused on Stoughton’s Business Value

Bob Wahlen, President of Stoughton Trailers is a prominent business leader in the community and is a 2nd generation family owner of the company. “Ultra understands the challenges of running a manufacturing business. Their persistent focus on our business value remains a cornerstone to our long standing partnership.” Reflecting on the earlier activities of the project, Bob recalls, “Once the technology selection was complete, we felt the internal team could manage the implementation. After several months of cost overruns and a significant delay to the project, we knew we needed Ultra’s help again. Ultra’s experience with ERP and their ability to drive resolution of issues, identify and mitigate the risks, and most importantly leverage their relationship with our chosen ERP vendor was key to getting our project back on the road to success.”

A Business Case with Solid ROI and Payback

Bob Bascom is VP of Corporate Finance for Stoughton Trailers.

“Making a multi-million dollar investment in a software project is a difficult pill to swallow. Ultra worked with our team and analyzed our business to quantify the future state opportunities that quickly and confidently presented a compelling business case. With Ultra’s guidance and experience, we came to understand that this project had very little to do with IT and had EVERYTHING to do with our business success. We were able to justify the expenditure by accumulating over \$15,681,000 in tangible benefits over 5 years that drove a solid ROI and payback far beyond our expectations. Ultra transformed our thinking and shifted our focus to investing in our business with a solid business case that easily justified the project investment.”

Negotiation of Price and Vendor Services

Mike Johnstone is Vice President, Purchasing & Business Integration at Stoughton Trailers.

I negotiate supplier contracts every day. One of the key factors for selecting Ultra was their experience and reputation for ERP solution negotiations. Ultra did a masterful job to create a negotiation strategy and kept us all on track to get the best value of software and services from the vendor. Ultra's negotiation strength saved us over \$500,000 on the initial purchase above and beyond what I could have ever expected to negotiate with the vendor on my own. Ultra ensured that our 'total cost of ownership' included getting the best level of vendor services, the right software modules and licenses, and negotiated maintenance costs. Ultra also worked with our legal team on securing the terms and conditions to our best interests."



Stoughton Trailers

Ultra: Industry and ERP Expertise Combined

Ultra's professionals have pursued progressive careers in industry. We hire top-tier professionals who have experience in manufacturing and distribution industries. Prior to joining Ultra, many of our people have actually hired Ultra to guide them in their Business Transformation Initiatives.

Ultra's unbiased and independent relationship with the multitude of ERP technology vendors coupled with the experience in negotiating technology and service contracts with several hundred clients is unprecedented. Ultra knows where to push and not to push such that the client's best interest are satisfied. All too often, vendors are squeezed so tight in negotiation activities that compromises the project with junior level resources or too narrow a scope of services. With Ultra, clients are assured that the vendor is accountable to the project success and that resources are vetted ahead of time to ensure the right competencies and capabilities are brought to the table every step of the way.

About Ultra Consultants

Ultra Consultants is a vendor independent research and ERP consulting firm serving the manufacturing and distribution industries throughout North America, as well as companies with global operations. Since 1994, Ultra has delivered ERP technology expertise and business process management to drive business performance improvement for our clients.

Our services include business process improvement, ERP selection and ERP implementation, and organizational change management.

Ultra Consultants have a minimum of 20 years experience and are certified in APICS, Lean practices, Six Sigma Green and Black Belt, and project management.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services.

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