

UK Manufacturer utilises ERP to improve processes, control and overall customer service, making them ready for growth

# Case Study

Colorlites are a UK based manufacturer of high-quality glass bottles, jars, candle glass, diffuser bottles and more. As a family-run business with over 35 years of experience in supplying glass packaging to various markets, they have a huge range of stock lines and competitive prices.

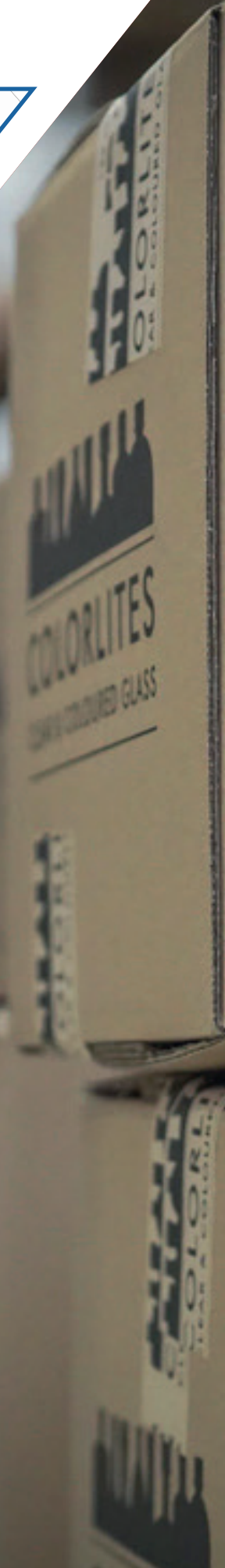
Colorlites also offers a bespoke decoration service of colour coating and printing in different colours and finishes. You can customize your glass products to suit your needs and preferences. Whether you need glass bottles for aromatherapy, cosmetic, food, home fragrance or beverage, Colorlites can provide you with the best glass packaging solutions.

Partner: Dynamics Consultants

[www.d-c.co.uk](http://www.d-c.co.uk)

Customer: Colorlites

[colouredbottles.co.uk](http://colouredbottles.co.uk)



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# INTRODUCTION

Colorlites Ltd is a family-run business that has been supplying glass packaging to various industries for over 35 years. They offer a wide range of glass bottles, jars, candle holders, diffuser bottles and more, in plain or decorated glass. They also provide a bespoke decoration service of colour coating and printing in different colours and finishes.

One of the challenges that a manufacturing and distribution company such as Colorlites faces is managing their inventory, production, sales and distribution processes efficiently and effectively. An ERP system is a software solution that integrates different functions of a business into a single system, allowing for better planning, coordination and control. Colorlites, who have a history of good quality products and service, were looking to invest in their future with an ERP system that would help their business operations.

In this case study we look at how Colorlites engaged with Dynamics Consultants to implement an ERP system, helping them to streamline their workflows, reduce errors and costs, improve customer service and satisfaction, and gain insights into their performance and opportunities.



## A MODERN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

The key factor of a modern ERP software is that it integrates all of your business functions and processes, such as accounting, inventory, production, sales and purchasing, as well as your e-Commerce web store.

With an integrated system, you can improve the customer experience, plan better and sell more.

*"We needed a new system to give us more detail and data, as well as helping to build the consistency and quality of our processes"*



# ABOUT COLORLITES

If you are looking for glass bottles, jars, candle glass, diffuser bottles or cosmetic glass, Colorlites is the go-to supplier in the market. Colorlites is a family-run business that has been supplying glass packaging to various markets for over 35 years. Whether you are a small hobbyist or a large international company, we have something for you.

Colorlites offers a wide range of glass products in different shapes, sizes and colours. You can also customize your glass with their bespoke decoration service of colour coating and printing. Priding themselves on providing high quality glassware, Colorlites offer competitive prices and great customer service. With an ever increasing focus on sustainability, glass products are increasing in popularity as glass is infinitely recyclable.

## ▶ THE PRODUCTS

Colorlites produces a wide range of products, including glass bottles, jars, caps, lids, and accessories for various purposes, such as candle making, aromatherapy, cosmetics, food, home fragrance, and beverage. They offer plain and decorated glassware in different shapes, sizes, and colours. Some of their products are:

- **Candle glass:** Plain and decorated candle glass and diffuser bottles for many of the world's leading candle brands.
- **Dropper bottles:** Clear and amber glass dropper bottles, caps, and pipettes for essential oils, cosmetics, and medical use.
- **Food bottles and jars:** A variety of glass bottles and jars for food storage, preservation, and presentation, such as honey jars, sauce bottles, spice jars, and jam jars.
- **Fragrance bottles:** They have a selection of glass bottles for perfumes, colognes, and other fragrances, such as rosette bottles, lotus bottles, and everest bottles.
- **Medical glass:** They have a range of glass bottles and caps for medical and pharmaceutical use, such as antibiotic bottles, injection bottles, and alpha bottles.

## ECO-FRIENDLY



Colorlites are proud to be an eco-friendly brand. Besides working with glass, which is an infinitely recyclable product, they have worked hard on making sure that their operations are friendly to the planet. Whilst the end-product is recyclable, Colorlites use recycled glass as the main raw material for all of their products.



## DECORATION

Colorlites offers a full and bespoke decorated glass service for various purposes, such as candle making, aromatherapy, cosmetics, food, home fragrance, and beverage. They can customize glassware with different colours, finishes, and patterns according to the customer's specifications. Some of their decoration services are:

- **Spray coating:** Full or partial painting of glass products of any shape, with various paints by spraying techniques. With a wide range of stock standard colours or a custom colour of the customer's choice, subject to quantity. These are available in a variety of finishes: simulated etch, gloss, matt, metallics or pearlescent in solid or transparent.
- **Screen printing:** This is the process of pressing ink through a stencilled mesh screen to create a printed design on the container. Screen printing can be used to decorate both round and square glass containers with individual patterns, both in the form of pictures and graphics.
- **Hot Foil Printing:** A multilayer foil is applied to the glass, giving almost a three dimensional feel in one of a number of finishes.
- **Transfers and decals:** Water slide transfers can be applied where multiple colours are required.



### A TEAM FOR SUCCESS

With any project of this nature, there needs to be a core team and ownership. In this case, the team was lead by the managing director, but very much was a joint effort by the team.



### PAUL TODD

MANAGING DIRECTOR

With over 20 years of experience in production and Fast-Moving Consumer Goods roles, Paul Todd is an experienced individual in the Manufacturing Industry. As the colorlites Managing Director, Paul leads efficient teams of employees to produce high-quality products in line with the agreed standards of health and safety, quality, and budgetary requirements. He has also overseen the implementation of Business Central and has ensured the value and success of the project.

As an experienced leader, Paul directed the team at Colorlites, but the hands on work was undertaken by the skilled team. Operations director Jamie Angell, as well as many from the ops, supply chain and accounts team all pulled together to successfully implement a new system.

# PRODUCTS & PARTNERS

WITH ANY SYSTEM THAT IS RUNNING MAJOR PARTS OF YOUR BUSINESS OPERATIONS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THE RIGHT PRODUCTS AND THE RIGHT SUPPLIER.

No-one understands the way your business operates more than you do, but having a partner that has experience of working with companies to improve business processes and implement solutions is vital. With Microsoft Dynamics® 365 Business Central implemented by a manufacturing and distribution specialist such as Dynamics Consultants, you can have a system that works the way you need it to for your specific business requirements.

## Business Central at Colorlites

Colorlites is part of the THF group of companies, who have experience of Business Central and Dynamics Consultants with one of their other businesses.

With the knowledge and experience of what the system can do, Colorlites knew that they would be able to get the system they needed to help their business grow.

### BESPOKE SYSTEMS

Whilst the majority of the market is accepting the off-the-shelf ERP packages as the only solution to the issues associated with custom ERP, Dynamics Consultants has taken another path; solving the traditional issues of bespoke systems.

With a wealth of experience to understand what it takes to deliver an ERP project successfully, and an open and honest approach to projects, you will feel confident about the long-term success of our partnership.

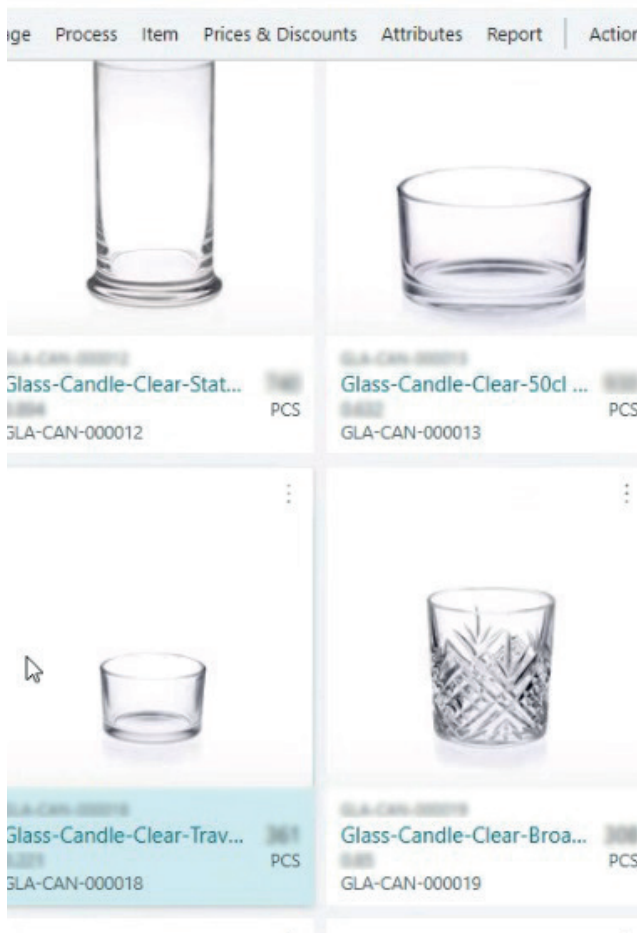
### INTEGRATIONS

Whilst an ERP system is designed to bring the management of a business into one integrated system, it is unrealistic for one piece of software to cover every piece of functionality that a business might need.

One of the benefits of Business Central is its ability to be integrated with third party systems in a way that is easy to upgrade, making developments future-proof. This is utilising "Extensions", which allow connections without altering the base code.







### About Dynamics Consultants

Dynamics Consultants are a Microsoft Certified partner specializing in providing ERP solutions based on Microsoft Dynamics®365 Business Central.

In a market that is trying to standardise “vertical” solutions, businesses with complex processes and unique ways of operating are still looking for solutions that are bespoke, but want to reap the benefits of modern cloud technology. With a knowledgeable and experienced web development team, we have a history of integrating e-Commerce solutions with Business Central.

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## Colorlites Project Team



**ANDREW TRAYFOOT**

Andrew has extensive experience of implementing Business Central, NAV and Navision in a wide variety of businesses. Having worked with Art Systems for a long time, he has been instrumental in setting up their system.



**MEGAN MILLER**

Megan is responsible for delivering projects on time and to a quality standard. She is also in charge of resource scheduling and has worked with a wide range of projects varying from small to large.



**CATARINA FORTE**

Catarina has a wide range of experience in consultancy for business software solutions, with experience in providing solutions of Microsoft Dynamics NAV to Dynamics 365 Business Central.



**JEREMY ORGAN**

Jeremy is a founding director of Dynamics Consultants and has worked on NAV and Business Central projects since 2000. One of the leading developers in the country, he even trains other partners.

With over 400 years of combined experience, Dynamics Consultants have focused on providing the bespoke solutions whilst solving many of the traditional problems with customised ERP projects.

With robust processes, repeatable functionality and modern development based on extensions, we are able to provide businesses with a solution that not only grows with them, but also helps them be unique and stand out as a market leader.

# THE PROJECT

Colorlites are a company specialising the bespoke manufacturing of products. Formed over 35 years ago, the company has seen significant growth in the last 5 years and had outgrown its finance system. The team at Colorlites was looking for more functionality and improved control through actionable reporting from a modern integrated ERP system.

*"Their expertise was essential in guiding us through a well-structured plan, ensuring that we laid the right foundations and got the fundamentals right."*



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## FROM FINANCE TO ERP

As with many smaller businesses, Colorlites started with a basic finance software. Utilising QuickBooks to manage their accounting and bookkeeping, they grew, along with the rest of the THF Group of companies. As they grow, they found that they needed more than just a simple tool to track their income and expenses. Starting with sister companies, the THF Group utilised the integrated modern ERP software system Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, as it can handle every aspect of their business operations, including finance, sales, purchasing, inventory and manufacturing.

A fully featured ERP software system can help a growing business in many ways. First, it can eliminate the need for multiple disparate systems that may not communicate well with each other, leading to data errors, inefficiencies and duplication of work. Secondly, it can provide a comprehensive view of the business performance and health, enabling better decision making and planning based on real-time data and insights. Finally, it can streamline and automate business processes, saving time and money and improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

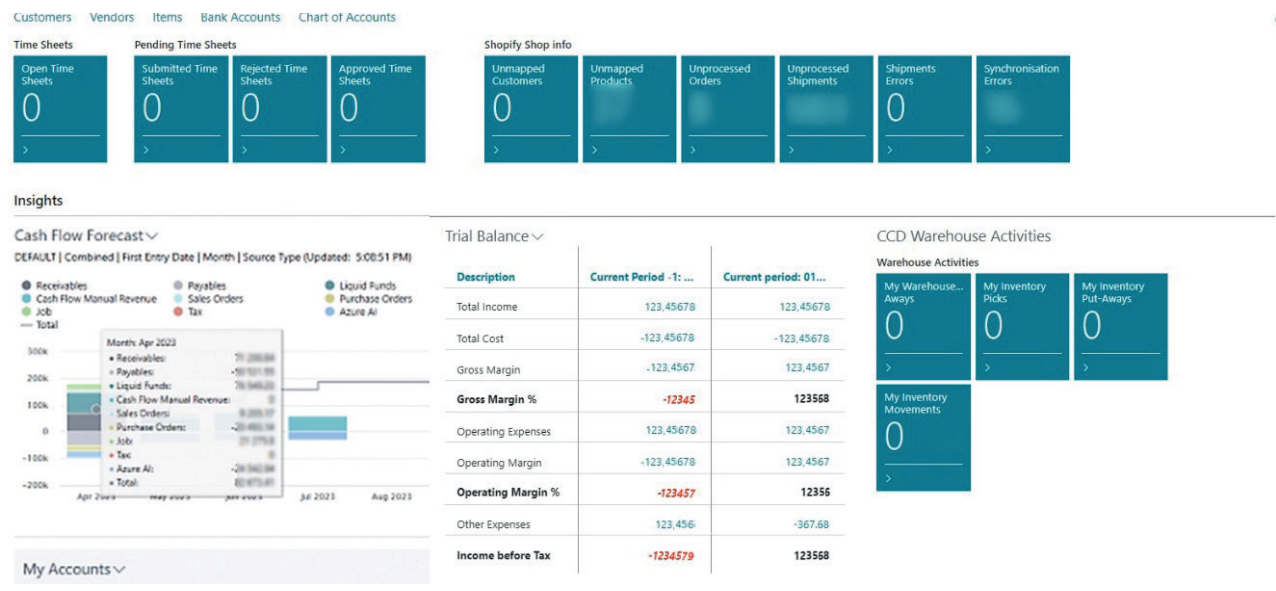
Having moved Contract Candles to Business Central, it seemed obvious to move Colorlites to a Business Central system. However, as a completely separate business, with its own requirements, this meant a bespoke ERP implementation that replaced the existing systems.



# A PHASED APPROACH

The decision had been made to transfer systems, and this meant that there was a tight timescale to implement Business Central before the license lapsed on the existing QuickBooks System. This meant that we had a tight timescale to delivery the project. The functional requirements gathering took place in July with an August start to the project, and Paul and his team had to be confident that we would go live by the end of the year. Through a mix of our proven processes and taking a phased approach, we knew that we could have the essential systems in place in time.

## FINANCE AND STOCK CONTROL



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Phase 1 of the project was to replace the QuickBooks system, sorting the finance and accounting. We also setup the stock control system, all integrated with the finance system in Business Central. This helped solve the urgent requirement for replacing the finance system whilst bringing significant improvements to the operations for the business. Internally, the team had experts with Power BI and built some of their own reports integrated with the Dynamics system.

*“The team at Dynamics Consultants were a joy to work with. Their knowledge of the system is of course exceptional, but their relatable experience is what really made the project run smoothly.”*

# CUSTOMER BENEFITS

## GETTING STOCK OF THE SITUATION

ONE OF THE BIGGEST ISSUES WITH THE GROWTH OF COLORLITES WAS THE LACK OF CONTROL WITH REGARD TO STOCK. ALTHOUGH THE TEAM HAD BEEN MANAGING THE PURCHASING AND STOCK CONTROL WITH THEIR MANUAL SYSTEMS, THE GROWTH WAS MAKING THIS UNMANAGEABLE. WITH THE NEW BUSINESS CENTRAL SYSTEM, IN-BUILT INTELLIGENCE AND AUTOMATION ALLOW FOR ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS. WITH ASSEMBLY ORDERS PROVIDING A TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS, THE NEW SYSTEM PROVIDES END TO END STOCK CONTROL.

The screenshot shows a Dynamics 365 product form for 'Gloss Black Ext Sprayed'. The form includes various fields for product details, such as 'Blocked Reason' (N/A), 'Type' (Inventory), 'Base Unit of Measure' (PCS), and 'Item Category Code' (GLA-CAN). It also displays 'Posting Details' with fields for 'Gen. Prod. Posting Gro...' (DEC GLASS), 'VAT Prod. Posting Group' (VAT20), and 'Inventory Posting Group' (COM). A blue overlay box is positioned over the bottom right of the form, containing the text 'GROUP WORKLOADS' and a paragraph about workload visibility across Colorlites and Contract candles.

**GROUP WORKLOADS**

As a group, the visibility of workloads across Colorlites and Contract candles has also meant that sharing manufacturing resource for urgent requirements or high order volumes means that the ability to deliver.

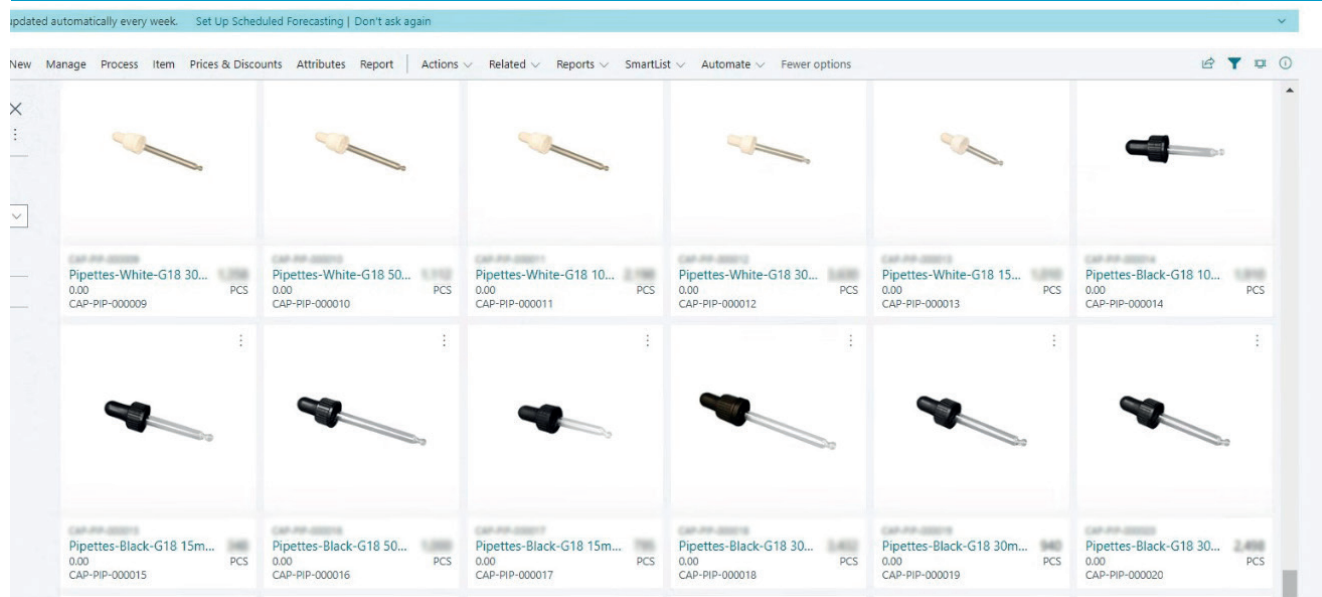
# FORECASTING CONTROL

The benefits of the system don't just benefit the company internally with a reduction in workload and simplification of planning. The control over the inventory means that forecasting and delivery of products is greatly improved, making massive improvements to the customer experience. This means that customer retention rises, with repeat business becoming much more likely.

*"The ability to run a business well from a managerial level requires a lot of the same foundations that a customer needs for a good experience."*

*"The investment in the Business Central ERP system has not only been fantastic as a tool to make strategic decisions, but customers also have seen an improved level of service"*

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# ONGOING RELATIONSHIP

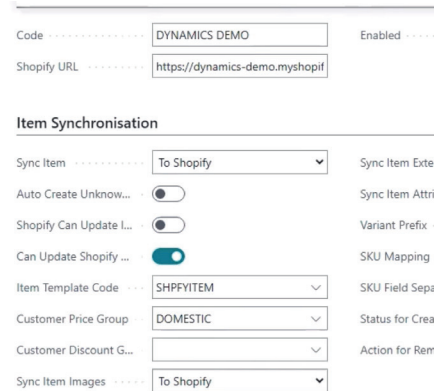
A key aspect to partnering with Dynamics Consultants is our investment in a long-term relationship. Our ongoing relationship with the team at Art Systems means that we can work together on providing the systems that they need as the business evolves.



Ongoing Support



Manufacturing



Shopify Integration

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Business Central and e-Commerce support from Dynamics Consultants offers a higher level of service than you might expect. This is because we don't separate pre-sales and post-sales; our sales, marketing and support are part of one team – Customer Success.

Our support team are on hand to help with any issues that may arise in general operations and gives the team the confidence that they will continue to provide the high level of service that their customers have become accustomed to.

Now that Colorlites is live and fully operational, the team are now looking at expanding the system to include more functionality.

This includes implementing the manufacturing tools within the software, so that they can better manage the manufacturing processes, such as MRP (material requirements planning).

We will also be looking at improving stock management in the warehouse by implementing barcode scanning, fully integrated with the Business Central system.

One of the other benefits of Business Central is the ability to integrate with 3rd party systems.

This includes out-of-the-box integration with Shopify, which will allow the team to sell products with live updates of stock and orders.

*“Working with Dynamics Consultants has not just been about having a software supplier. Their understanding of the work that we do has truly helped us with growing the business”*

# MOVING FORWARD



# COLORLITES

## CLEAR & COLOURED GLASS

We hope that you have found this case study interesting and helpful. Please feel free to contact either company for more information on their services.



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