

ST. ROMAIN OIL COMPANY

A PDI CASE STUDY

Executive Overview

“What’s unique about our Y-Not Stop store brand is our commitment to food service and our success with it. We tend to sell over double the NACS average and four times our region’s average in food service sales,” says Annie Gauthier, co-owner and CFO at St. Romain Oil (SRO). SRO is a small convenience store operator based out of Mansura, Louisiana that started in 1970. The company has passed down ownership across three generations of the St. Romain family.

Business Challenge

One of the primary issues facing SRO was the use of separate software systems to manage multiple parts of the business. “We were using a really cumbersome process,” Gauthier explains. “It took us 3 to 4 hours a week in Excel – exporting a lot of numbers, keying in a lot of numbers, running a lot of formulas – to try to make sure that we were capturing it; it just really wasn’t efficient.”

Using multiple software platforms to manage financials was only the beginning of SRO’s issues. Like many c-store companies, SRO was dealing with vendor creep and shrink in key areas, costing the chain valuable time and money. “We knew it was happening, but we didn’t have an efficient way to deal with it,” explains Gauthier. Additionally, SRO was seeking a solution that would make better use of the sales data they were collecting. “For years we were using item-level, and we wanted to maximize that data to produce better marketing and promotions.”

One final key issue on SRO’s agenda was trying to improve labor efficiency without sacrificing customer service.

PDI Solution

PDI/Enterprise—the industry’s most widely-used enterprise management software—became the core of SRO’s business operations.

PDI/Financials

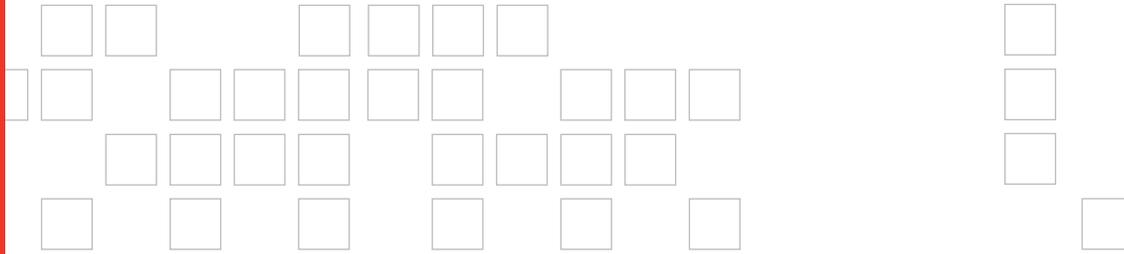
To address the issue of dual accounting systems for its retail and wholesale businesses, SRO implemented PDI/Financials. “Eliminating the need to maintain multiple platforms saved so much time for our small staff,” says Gauthier. “Now, we can produce consolidated financials by simply clicking a button.”

PDI/Retail

“We were very focused on trying to improve our store performance and, more specifically, food service profitability, both of which are big drivers of our overall success as a company,” says Gauthier when discussing SRO’s retail operation.

Prior to PDI, there were two main factors affecting SRO’s profitability: foodservice shrink and vendor creep. “PDI/Enterprise gave us the ability to track menu and recipe items, which helped us easily address the shrink problems we were seeing in our foodservice department,” Gauthier says. “On the vendor side, cost and invoice exceptions helped us proactively catch discrepancies instead of reactively dealing with them on our financial statements.”

Another tool Gauthier implemented was PDI’s Market Basket reporting program which provided actionable data visibility. “Now we can better promote our items and actually delete some items that really aren’t moving our business forward or only being sold at certain times.”



PDI/Workforce

To alleviate its labor management struggles, SRO began using the PDI/Time Clock and PDI/Labor Scheduler modules in PDI/Workforce. “The software really helps us understand how to better schedule labor for our food service operation, because that was the biggest variable. It was easy to schedule the front of the house, but it was hard for us to schedule the back of the house. PDI gave us great tools to do that better.”

Customer Results

Since implementing PDI/Enterprise, SRO has seen a vast improvement in several key areas. “This year, we’ve reduced

shrink by 33 percent, improved our foodservice margin by over 2 percent, and we’re on track to reduce our labor costs by 8 percent,” explains Gauthier.

When asked if she would recommend PDI to an industry friend, Gauthier says she already has. “The first time I ever talked with someone from PDI, I was so impressed with PDI’s integrity over salesmanship. Everyone I dealt with at PDI seemed to share that same sense of integrity and professionalism. They really focus on how they can help their customers, and each other, make today and tomorrow better.”

