

THRIVING IN THE CONCRETE JUNGLE:

HOW TO RISE SUPPLIES USES INFORM ERP TO COMPETE AMONG GIANTS

“When DDI System told us we’d see a Return on Investment, I didn’t realize it would happen so quickly. Inform has made everything we do more precise—from sales to accounting to inventory, it has given us the opportunity to maximize everything we do.”

~ Jorge Salcedo, CEO and Owner

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

Jorge Salcedo started his New York City-based distribution business with just a trash bag and an idea—to provide next day delivery of plastic and paper supplies to restaurants with 24/7 customer service, no minimum orders and no additional storage or delivery fees. Just seven years later, To Rise Supplies has doubled their sales and competes amidst industry giants.

Company Facts:

- Location: New York, NY
- Industries: Foodservice Supplies, JanSan
- Previous Provider: QuickBooks
- Website: torisesupplies.org

Features Highlighted:

- Embedded CRM
- Paperless Workflows
- Centralized Data
- eCommerce

Benefits Gained:

- Doubled Company Revenue
- Improved Margins by 30%
- Streamlined Accounting
- Improved Accessibility of Data
- Competitive Online Presence

Building from Data

From the beginning, Jorge Salcedo knew that data was one of the most important commodities his businesses had. Data would not only help him identify which products to sell and how much inventory to stock for, but it would also provide critical insights for the massive growth To Rise aimed to achieve.

Data wasn’t Jorge’s only challenge. Inventory management was an issue as well. “Our business model is built on providing a next-day delivery guarantee, requiring us to be on top of our forecasting game,” says Salcedo. “Forecasting was becoming increasingly challenging with each new customer due to our limited systems and lack of data around sales, net profit and tracking margins,” Salcedo adds.

Generating approximately \$2.5 million in revenue, Salcedo quickly recognized that relying on outdated Excel spreadsheets and QuickBooks to collect and analyze data was no longer effective. Additionally, it significantly hindered To Rises’ ability to meet their goals and compete against larger distributors.

“We knew we were making money, but we didn’t know if we were losing merchandise, increasing our margins or selling more products,” said Jorge.

"We love when we're selling, selling, selling, but it's not how much you sell, it's how much you get to keep. That was our goal: to keep more money in the company's pocket—not just to sell more."

Marketplace Evaluation

To Rise took to the task of evaluating ERP solutions to capitalize on their data and streamline operations. Unimpressed with the inexperience of small start-ups and the generic, off-the-shelf solutions offered by larger suppliers, Salcedo looked to larger distributors to learn what solutions they were using. That's when he was introduced to DDI System.

"I spent 10 hours talking to DDI about Inform going over all the details," said Jorge. "I had all kinds of questions and DDI answered everything I threw at them, proving to me this was a company who knew what they were doing."

From the very beginning of the implementation through the final training, DDI System guided To Rise Supplies users through the transition process. Each user received specialized role training according to their responsibilities within the business and offered around-the-clock support if they had any questions.

"This was one of the easiest implementations that we could have completed as a company," said Jorge. "The availability and the access of the support—having a person there who was live with us and guiding us step by step—it was extremely helpful."

Leveraging Centralized Data

Inform's single-screen technology and one-click workflows populate all of the customer's account information and history, making it easy to handle accounting tasks. Now, Jorge only requires one person to do the work several team members used to do. As a result, To Rise has been able to reduce its labor force by 56 percent, despite the fact that business has more than doubled since going live.

"When [DDI System] told us we'd see a Return on our Investment, I didn't realize it would happen so quickly," said Jorge. "Inform has made everything we do more precise—from sales to accounting to inventory, it has given us the opportunity to maximize everything we do."

From a data management perspective, Jorge is now able to pull the reports he needs to make decisions about the growth of his business. The system also enables him to gather data he never had access to, like how quickly the picker retrieves items in the warehouse or the consistency of shipments.

"Inform works best when you let it work for you. The more data you have, the better decisions you're able to make, because decisions are less emotional," explains Jorge.

The powerful ERP solution also gives his sales team with insights about their customers' buying habits, making purchase histories and pricing information available on a single screen. Using this information, To Rise has been able to triple their average customer sale.

"Inform allows us to look at items we might have lost to a customer because they weren't priced correctly," said Jorge. "When we know that, we can correct that."

Average customer sales aren't the only revenues that have increased. To Rise Supplies has improved its overall margins by more than 30 percent in the two years since it started using Inform.

"With Inform, we know the exact price of our goods, with all of the costs included like warehouse costs, transportation and customer service," says Jorge. "A case of C-Fold towels might cost us \$10, but in reality, it's more like \$11.60. Inform breaks down everything, allowing us to look at every factor and make adjustments as needed."

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Exceeding Customer Expectations 24/7

From a customer experience perspective, To Rise relies on Inform's connected eCommerce solution to expand their mobile selling capabilities and provide an easily accessible re-ordering tool. They implemented eCommerce functionality more than a year ago, and it was enthusiastically received by chefs and other restaurateurs who need a convenient way to check prices, view inventory levels and place orders.

"In New York, most chefs have to operate on their phones because space is a commodity," said Jorge. "Our B2B ordering portal allows them to access everything anytime—invoices, pending orders, unpaid bills... If our customers are catering an event and realize they need something, they can order it right then. eCommerce keeps customers coming back."



Competing with Giants in the Big Apple

As Frank Sinatra once crooned about New York, "If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere."

Since implementing DDI System's Inform ERP Software, Jorge has transitioned from the basement to a state-of-the-art facility he frequently showcases via social media outlets. To Rise has also been able to double both its margins and its sales to effectively compete for business against large national foodservice distributors. Even with his rapid growth, Jorge has goals to take To Rise even higher, which he is confident he can do with the insights he gains from Inform.

"Everyone who wants to make it in New York has to compete with with large scale, major companies. And I'm competing with them. Customers are choosing us because of our technology, and how easy it is to get the products they need—fast."

"Our Inform eCommerce B2B ordering portal allows customers to access everything anytime. It keeps our customers coming back!"



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DDI System's Inform ERP distribution management software is a leading, industry-specific solution for wholesale suppliers. Inform ERP optimizes distribution operations, creates lean inventories, strengthens financials and propels sales to continually exceed performance goals—all while delivering an exceptional client experience unmatched by any other software provider.

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