

Grand Prix Tours Races Ahead With Sage Pro

In today's volatile economic climate, one of the best weapons the travel tour industry has at its disposal are Web stores. As proof, at a time when industry tour sales are generally down 30 percent, at least one specialized tour operator, Grand Prix Tours (GPT), which specializes in arranging tours to automobile and motorcycle racing events around the world, has reported sales increases of 200 percent through its Web store. The key to the California-based company's success, Sage Pro ERP, has provided an unprecedented level of business management expertise that has enabled GPT to zip ahead of the pack.

"By implementing a complete business management solution that not only manages but integrates all of our accounting and reporting processes, our inventory of rooms and tickets, and our Web site, we have been able to maintain our momentum in the most challenging of times," says Gerhard Widtmann, vice president of GPT. "The system automates our complete operation, allowing us to cut back on staffing costs, focus more attention on planning and forecasting, become more responsive to changing market conditions, and watch revenues flow in."

Instant Payback, Ongoing Savings

A Sage customer for over ten years, GPT upgraded to Sage Pro to become Microsoft® Windows®-compliant and leverage the Web integration features of the application. "Before implementing Sage Pro," Widtmann says, "We considered other applications that were tailored for tour operators, but they did not offer the inventory control and Web integration capabilities that we wanted and were too costly and complex for our requirements. Only Sage Pro met our needs from both performance and ROI perspectives."

"Beyond the instant payback, the cost benefits of Sage Pro will continue long into the future because of its forecasting capabilities," Widtmann says. "By projecting future sales based on previous years of business, we can effectively manage the risks of either purchasing too many hotel rooms and tickets or too few—a capability that has the potential to save us hundreds of thousands of dollars each year."

Customer

Grand Prix Tours

Industry

Administrative and Support
and Waste Management and
Remediation Services—
Travel Agency

Location

United States

System

Sage Pro ERP

Challenge

GPT sought a solution that could seamlessly integrate with and more effectively handle its accounting and inventory management functionalities and Web store activities.

Solution

GPT upgraded to Sage Pro to become Microsoft Windows-compliant, leverage the application's Web integration, and fully integrate all of the company's accounting and reporting processes.

Results

GPT's Sage Pro solution automates the company's business infrastructure, allowing it to reduce staffing overhead and focus more attention on planning and forecasting.

A Tailored Business Automation Solution

GPT's integrated accounting/Web store solution was implemented by Sage partner DFC Enterprises. "GPT came to us in search of a way to automate as much of their operation as possible," says Jay Rubin, president of DFC Enterprises. "GPT's accounting operations were already well set up with Sage Pro, and they wanted to make sure that the same processes could be applied to bookings and revenues from the Web. They also wanted the ability to continuously update tour availability on the Web site each time a booking was made—whether that booking was made over the Web, on the telephone, or through a travel agency."

GPT's Sage Pro solution has provided the company with the automated, integrated system it wanted. A visitor to the GPT Web site can request specific hotels, events, and dates, and Sage Pro will automatically charge his credit card the 30 percent down payment, and then, 60 days before the tour date, will charge the balance.

In addition, Sage Pro also books requested rooms and tickets, decrementing the available inventory and appropriately updating GPT's Web site. The system also generates invoices and confirmations, which are e-mailed to customers, prints labels for mailing the tickets, and periodically produces rooming lists that are forwarded to hotels.

"This solution really does have it all," Widtmann says. "It manages and automates every aspect of our business, from the time we first purchase blocks of rooms and event tickets for our inventory, down to the point where customers book tours. It provides all required budget, forecasting, inventory, and rooming and event reports. Thanks to Sage Pro, we have become more productive, more competitive, and more successful."

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