

# Case Study:

## Bake'n Joy™



## A "Sweet" PRMS Upgrade

In order to retain a competitive advantage and increase market share, Bake'n Joy Foods must continuously find new and creative ways to utilize their systems to gain efficiencies, add more value to their customers, and increase employee productivity. They know that exceptional customer service is the key to their success.

Despite performing a technical PRMS 8.4 upgrade in 1998 for the obvious Y2K concerns, Bake'n Joy Foods had not really functionally upgraded or reimplemented their PRMS system since the early 1990's. They decided to investigate the new enhancements and their fit for business issues and challenges.

Their primary objectives were to:

- > Decrease existing modifications and replace with standard PRMS functionality.
- > Evaluate the fit between the existing business processes and the new version of the PRMS software to increase system utilization.
- > Refresh the users with PRMS system training and net change enhancements.

For several years, Bake'n Joy Foods has been partnering with Datanational Corporation for their PRMS and IBM System i needs. After working with Datanational to determine that upgrading to the new release would be valuable to their supply chain and their users, the two companies ventured into a new project as a team. Bake'n Joy Foods' Steering Committee determined that as their business was growing rapidly and many changes had taken place since the last implementation, now was the best time to embark on a new project.

First, a Steering Committee was formed to oversee the entire project and the adherence to the proposed project plan. Alice Shepherd, CFO at Bake'n Joy Foods, was the Liaison to the Steering Committee and a Project Leader. Linda Mele, IT Manager, was the Co-Project Leader. The Datanational team would join with the Project Team at Bake'n Joy Foods to develop an education and training plan,

and then develop the testing plan and technical modifications necessary to meet with the go-live date requirement.

Project Team members were appointed as module owners. Each team member had a secondary module as well, in order to share knowledge and distribute project responsibilities that could otherwise push out the project deadline. This transfer of knowledge also facilitated the necessary cross team and business process education between Project Team members. Most of the Project Team attended all module training. Many team members were educated about the other modules of the software and became more familiar with the capabilities of the software, better educated on the business processes of Bake'n Joy Foods and how they utilize the PRMS software.

At each educational opportunity, issues and questions arose which were recorded on an issue list. All team members were encouraged to report issues and questions. They were then assigned to a team member responsible for the resolution of that particular issue. During the piloting process, the team worked to resolve the business issues through process changes or, as a last result, program modifications. This helped them streamline several business processes and better understand any new previously non-utilized capabilities of the PRMS software.

More time was spent on the Order Entry and Billing module, due to a number of enhancements to the 9.2 version of the software. Bake'n Joy Foods was not heavily modified in any single module. However, the team evaluated PRMS without any modifications in order to be able to distinguish between 'vanilla' PRMS and the older modified version with which they were familiar. This helped to determine if a specific modification that existed in the older version was still necessary. While this approach to the project took additional time to plan, it allowed Bake'n Joy Foods to eliminate several modifications. Bake'n Joy Foods realized that the evaluation process would save time and money not only now but also in the future since the modification would not be necessary to carry forward in future releases.

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After the modifications and time line were established, Datanational and the Bake'n Joy Foods Project Team worked together during education and training to develop new processes and evaluate policies and procedures where necessary. Once they were corrected and the necessary modifications were complete, the Project Team began testing. A small company pilot was started to evaluate the new processes with the new software. When a pilot occurred, the team would document new issues, evaluate the results and make necessary changes to the business process or the software. Once the changes were in place, another pilot would begin. This approach continued until the team was satisfied that the business processes and the software was ready to implement.

Approximately six months after the start of the project, the upgrade cutover occurred at month end and the users were well prepared. Datanational was on site to assist with a small number of new system issues and to provide user support. The team considered the upgrade a success. As a result, Bake'n Joy Foods has realized the cost savings and efficiencies necessary to carry them into their next busy season.

#### Success Factors:

- > Users committed themselves to the project and dedicated themselves to being successful with this upgrade.
- > Users took the opportunity to correct some sins of the past and do it the right way this time.
- > Executive Management commitment and endorsement of the project by creating a Project Steering Committee, which set specific milestones and constantly monitored results.
- > Continuous flexibility needed to be applied to adapt to every situation in order to maintain the project constraints.
- > Sound communications infrastructure had to be quickly developed so that all teams and committees could be immediately informed of significant events.

We at Datanational have to attribute the overall success of the project to the obsessive dedication and perseverance on the part of the Bake'n Joy Foods users, Bake'n Joy Foods Management Team, Bake'n Joy IT team, and Datanational's own dedicated group of PRMS professionals. Only with all of the players wholeheartedly committed to the success of the project, could a full-blown PRMS upgrade be successfully implemented within the project time frame. Over the past decade, Datanational Corporation has developed a successful framework for PRMS upgrades. However, we have found that having the flexibility to adapt our framework to meet the unique requirements of each upgrade project makes all the difference in the world.



## About Bake'n Joy Foods

Bake'n Joy Foods, Inc. is a privately-held PRMS user company located in North Andover, Massachusetts. They manufacture premixed bases, batters, icings, dough, and dough conditioners for the baking industry. With their long and successful history and ability to provide a family-like setting for their employees, it is truly a "sweet" place to be.



The project methodology described within this story, upgrading Bake'n Joy Foods to then current version 9.2, has been successfully used by Datanational in upgrading many PRMS customers to version 10.0, as well as other PRMS versions and releases.