

Strength Strategy Stability

Office Furniture USA's Progressive Technology Plan Remodels Industry Expectations

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Gary Sweetapple
CIO
Office Furniture USA

This is the story of the little furniture company that could. Their mission was to lead the market by leveraging and maximizing their technological assets within the furniture industry (which is notoriously slow to change). It took the courage and determination of one forward-thinking CIO named Gary Sweetapple and the support of a brave CEO, Gary Kitchen, to pioneer this vision and take radical steps toward improving revenue growth over the next ten years. In 1997 Gary Sweetapple was faced with creating a system that could accommodate the fast-paced growth this company anticipated. "We needed someone with technical expertise and business vision to help us create and develop a system



infrastructure. We looked at many consultant companies and finally picked BravePoint," Gary Sweetapple explains.

BravePoint stepped in to help OF/USA design a multipurpose extranet that they called "Triple-Net" because it offers, from a single home page, information for three constituencies: the general public; furniture dealers, manufacturers and potential franchisees; and their own customer service representatives.

A Well-Furnished Solution, Made to Adapt

The "Triple-Net" solution, both economical and successful, was just the start of an ongoing partnership between BravePoint and OF/USA. The key to continuing success was in developing applications that were easily modifiable as the company grew and diversified. OF/USA, today a division of Chordus, is now reaching into new industries, piloting both Kitchen Cabinet and Residential Furniture divisions. Through BravePoint's expert guidance, that original infrastructure (developed when OF/USA had 39 stores and one distribution center) has grown to accommodate the workload of 130 franchises and five distribution centers today. "The changes we've implemented should easily carry us to the \$2 billion mark in the next two years," Gary S. adds.

BravePoint understood the nature of the industry, seamlessly phasing in applications as users became accustomed to being online, then tweaking and supplementing the framework according to the changing needs of the company and marketplace. OF/USA's original site was eventually split into two sites: an E-commerce site; and a Partners site that gives dealers, manufacturers, and certain customers access to their ordering system and to their Distribution Center and Customer Service Intranets.

The result? Just ask Gary... "BravePoint has done just an outstanding job with providing quality deliverables that are easy to implement and maintain. Using industry-standard Microsoft ASP products, they've continued to enhance our systems with virtually no operational interruption in applications once uploaded to production." Another BravePoint solution that's built to last.

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Strength. Strategy. Stability.