



# Pullmax

## COMPANY DESCRIPTION:

Pullmax, which is part of the Karolin Machine Tool Group, supplies and services metal forming machine tools. It also imports machine tools manufactured by parent group companies in Sweden and is an agent for a Swiss company's machines.

## PARTNER:

Raven Computers Limited

## SECTOR:

Retail/Services

## PRODUCT:

Microsoft® Business Solutions–Axapta®  
Microsoft Windows® 2000 server

## CHALLENGE:

Pullmax needed a replacement for the DOS-based Pegasus system it had been using previously, and decided on a system that could handle its whole supply chain, including automating ordering, delivery and invoicing.

## SOLUTION:

Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta, an enterprise business solution with integrated applications including Financials, Logistics, Master Planning, Document Management and Customer Self Service.

## BENEFITS:

- Response rates of Axapta are virtually instant, no matter how many users are simultaneously accessing the system
- Customer Self Service application allows customers to buy goods easily via the Internet with all purchases done directly on-line using up-to-the-minute data that is residing on the database
- Reports are simpler and faster to make, with data easily transferable into Excel.

Pullmax decided to replace its ageing accounting system in favour of a system that could handle its whole supply chain, including automating ordering, delivery and invoicing. Pullmax decided upon Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta, which provides a range of integrated applications that offer Pullmax the e-business functionality it requires.

## BACKGROUND

Established in Leeds in 1978, Pullmax supplies and services metal forming machine tools. The company is owned by Pullmax Ursviken AB, whose parent company is Swedish stock exchange listed Karolin Machine Tool Group. Pullmax imports machine tools manufactured by group companies in Sweden and it is also an agent for a Swiss company's machines. With around 75 UK staff, including 40 engineers on the road, Pullmax's turnover last year was £21 million. It also has a Basingstoke office and is expanding into Ireland with the imminent opening of a showroom near Dublin.

Pullmax had been using DOS-based Pegasus system for some 10 years, when Pegasus brought out a new 32-bit Windows-based system. "We purchased the first few modules to be released, but the rest never materialised as Pegasus was taken over by Systems Union," says Lee Murrell, IT & systems manager at Pullmax. "We evaluated Sun Systems but it was not really suitable for us."

## SOLUTION

With a long established solution provider Bradford based Raven Computers Ltd, Murrell explained,

"We wanted to stay with Raven and we asked them to look round the market for an alternative solution." "They suggested Damgaard Axapta (now Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta), which we thought was fantastic. It had all the functionality we wanted, was very user friendly, was easy to configure to our own particular needs and it was also designed for e-business. Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta had everything Pegasus had plus a lot more."

Additionally, the Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta architecture would facilitate a link with Pinnacle Service Director, which Pullmax purchased a year ago. This is used to coordinate its engineers and includes all the machine history and field notes.

In the autumn of 2000, Pullmax purchased Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta's integrated applications including Financials, Logistics, Master Planning, Document Management and Customer Self Service.

The company decided to go for the three-tier option of Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta, so that its office in Basingstoke, as well as field based-engineers, could have remote access to the system.

The three-tier approach enables Pullmax staff to access the system from home using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) running across the Internet. This VPN allowed Raven to provide immediate remote support in the event of queries or problems arising.

Pullmax had a fast implementation and went 'live' on 1 February 2001. The Pegasus ledgers and stock data were transferred to Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta, but Pullmax decided to input the transaction data manually, as it knew everything balanced and it was also a tidy up process. Rather than having modifications carried out by Raven prior to implementation, Pullmax decided to have the basic system installed and then have the system tweaked as they went along.

Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta is running on a Microsoft Windows 2000 server with an additional Windows 2000 Axapta Object Server. "The object server helps Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta to run at any speed, so we didn't need to go round upgrading client PCs as one server does all the processing," explains Murrell. "We have a 20 user licence although currently only around 15 staff are using the system."

#### CONCLUSION

After a few initial teething problems and the fact that Pullmax users had to familiarise themselves with a Windows-based system, having previously only used a character-based one, they are now confidently using Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta.

"Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta is an extremely sophisticated product and the more people use it, the more benefit they get," says Murrell. "We are continually finding hidden gems in the system."

It is also extremely solid and reliable compared with our old system, which kept crashing and it gave us problems every day. Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta handles our whole supply chain, including automating ordering, delivery and invoicing to improve customer service.

"Reports are produced in the same way as before. Our Swedish parent company sends over their report formats in Excel spreadsheets so we can input the UK figures. We consolidate our financial ledger at the end of the month and transfer it into Excel to quickly produce the reports."

He also points out that the response rates of Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta are virtually instant, no matter how many users are simultaneously accessing the system. "Our previous system was running on a network and response rates were very slow."

Pullmax has had a simple online ordering facility for machine spare parts on its web site for the past year and Raven has completed the configuration to make this facility available through Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta Customer Self Service application. This is a business web shop that allows customers, not only to buy goods easily via the Internet, but also to make the purchasing experience quick and complete. All purchases are done directly online using current, up-to-the-minute data that is residing on the database.

"Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta is great and was the right choice for us, giving us limitless options to improve our business management and customer service," enthuses Murrell. "We've had a 15 year relationship with Raven so they know our business well. They have customised Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta to our exact requirements and we are delighted with their support and quick response to our queries."

#### ABOUT RAVEN COMPUTERS LTD

Raven Computers Ltd are one of the UK's leading providers of Microsoft based solutions and E-Commerce. With a background in providing ERP solutions to the Construction and Service industries and years of experience in the development and customisation of Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta we are able to provide the best service to support the business needs of our customers.