

## SUCCESS STORIES

# Eco-friendly Firewire Surfboards Shreds, Scales with Acumatica ERP

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We're really a surfboard technology company more than a surfboard manufacturer, so we're trying to be as open source as possible in what we do and source new ideas to build better boards sustainably.

- Franklin Shiraki, CFO



### COMPANY

[Firewire Surfboards](#)

### LOCATION

Carlsbad, CA with distribution in Australia and Europe, and manufacturing in Thailand.

### INDUSTRY

Manufacturing

### APPLICATION REPLACED

Greentree Business Software

### APPLICATIONS EVALUATED

Acumatica, SAP Acumatica, SAP

### SOLUTIONS

Acumatica Manufacturing Edition

### OVERVIEW

With the expertise of Crestwood Associates, Firewire Surfboards invested in Acumatica's low-latency, high performing Cloud ERP, gaining an affordable, flexible ERP system that will help Firewire maintain its competitive edge and remain a market leader in high-performance, sustainable surfboards.

### KEY RESULTS

- Gained a modern business suite for Financials and Reporting
- Gained transparency into operations, finance and inventory
- Avoided costly on-premises server upgrade investments
- Recouped days wasted manually creating financial and operational reports
- Contained costs with unlimited user pricing; avoided increased software costs normally associated with future headcount
- Gained integration with Brandscope and other critical third-party applications

## Overview

Firewire Surfboards harnesses high tech innovations and cutting-edge materials to reduce the toxicity of its surfboards while improving board performance. The Carlsbad, CA, eco-friendly, surfboard designer and producer, cuts its waste per board by 95 percent and has attracted like-minded environmentalists such as high-profile surfers Rob Machado and Kelly Slater, who is now a member of the ownership group.

During the pandemic, one of the business sectors that flourished was the outdoor space. People were grateful for any chance to get outside and interact with nature, if we could not be together. Surfing was one sport that was entirely conducive to success during this time. Firewire made the responsible decision to shut down factory operations for a period, which, given already long lead times in the supply chain, created a fulfillment challenge that continues today.

However, the company's long-term partnership with Crestwood Associates enabled the company to keep on track, and see growth. Decisions about software solutions made years ago continue to bring returns on investment.

While still a startup, Firewire Surfboards purchased a low-cost ERP and for more than a decade used it for basic transaction processing and as a company database. As the company grew, financial leadership lacked visibility into the firm's European distribution entity and the finances of the company's weekly production operations. The finance team wanted a modern ERP system with an open platform aligning with the company's ambitions towards innovation.

With Crestwood Associates Guidance, Firewire invested in Acumatica's low-latency, high-performance Cloud ERP to help Firewire maintain its competitive edge and remain a market leader in sustainable surfboards.

## Situation

Firewire Surfboards had outgrown Greentree, the basic business software they used when the company launched. As their global footprint expanded, the company had to find a better way to manage their business operations.

### Glorified Database Lacks Visibility

As Firewire Surfboards grew, they created workarounds in Greentree to extend its usefulness. But with operations in the U.S., UK and Australia, and later, manufacturing operations in Thailand, it became apparent that Firewire needed something more robust. Rapid growth – more than 30 percent year over year in 2016 – clearly illustrated they had reached a point where the prior solution couldn't deliver the complexity and granularity Firewire needed. The sales team also could not readily access data on specific retailers. The company's Australian distribution arm was growing extremely frustrated as they experienced multiple computer crashes when logging in since the product was hosted on-premises in the U.S. office.

### SOLUTION

For years, Firewire Surfboards relied on technology partner Crestwood Associates to keep Greentree running. Understanding Firewire's needs, the Crestwood team helped Firewire research ERP offerings and introduced them to Acumatica, knowing this system would add much-needed capabilities. Firewire worked with Crestwood to implement Acumatica in each office, which includes its new eco-friendly manufacturing operation in Thailand.



## Benefits of Acumatica

### Unlimited User Pricing Key

With Acumatica, Firewire Surfboards adds as many users as it needs without requiring additional user licenses. "Acumatica's unlimited user licensing weighed heavily in our decision and was a huge selling point," Shiraki says. "It gives us the flexibility should we want to set up a customer portal. We also won't have to worry about adding licenses as we grow."

### Modern, Flexible ERP

Acumatica's open platform integrates well with several thirdparty partners, which helps Firewire remain the leading surfboard maker in the market. Acumatica is linked automatically in the U.S. and Australia, and soon Europe, to Brandscope, Firewire's custom production database, as well as its Verifier tag software, which tracks boards through manufacturing. "We were looking for something that gave us as many options as possible. Our company today won't be the same five years from now," CFO Franklin Shiraki says. "We're not stagnant; not locked into policies, procedures or software. Everything we do is with the long-term perspective in mind, and we need an ERP system that can evolve with us."

### Smooth Third-Party Integration

Brandscope is Firewire's sales and inventory management solution for its customers, giving them full insight into inventory levels, allowing them to place orders for stock. Firewire plans to add Microsoft's PowerBI to its Acumatica integrations.

### Improved Visibility Increases Sales

Acumatica helps Firewire make better decisions: Executives have increased visibility across all five operating entities and access to real time data at their fingertips. Employees no longer worry about bothering the finance team to ask for a report or using hours of their time because those with role-based permissions can run their own reports, thanks to Acumatica's ease of use. The finance team is now more responsive to the Board of Directors because Acumatica provides the ability to run real-time financial snapshots instantly.

### Shifting Technology Strategy to the Cloud

Firewire, which does not have an internal IT team, avoids costly server upgrades since Acumatica runs in the cloud. Shiraki says, "Being cloud-based, Acumatica keeps us from making costly investments in hardware, but it also allows us to pivot our business strategy in terms of technology." Previously, Firewire hosted its own internal servers in the U.S. and Thailand and relied on third parties to keep those servers running, which was expensive. "Now we have the resources of Acumatica, Crestwood and Microsoft and are benefiting from their knowledge rather than spending on technology and maintenance internally."