



Forty-five years after Holsum de Puerto Rico began producing sliced-bread loaves, the company retains approximately 2/3 of the sliced bread market in Puerto Rico and looks forward to keeping its productivity level on a par with the best companies in the global baked-goods industry.

The company's three principal brands--Holsum, Bimbo, and Country Hearth--produce more than 100 SKU's of baked goods, including 60 bread and buns, and 40 in cakes, donuts and pies.

The 185,000-square-foot Holsum plant in Toa Baja produces approximately a quarter of a million pounds of product a day. They also have two distribution centers in Ponce and Aguadilla.

More than 200 drivers leave Toa Baja daily delivering fresh product throughout the island. Holsum also delivers product to the island of St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. Marteen.

Holsum de Puerto Rico, formerly known as Holsum Bakers, a 215 route operation is the undisputed baking expert in the Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands. Holsum de Puerto Rico ranks No. 47 of the top 300 locally owned companies and is the fourth largest manufacturer on the island.

Holsum employs routed commissioned employees who sell a variety of products to customers including grocery stores, restaurants, gas stations, and hotels. Holsum also employs merchandisers and area merchandisers at the Toa Baja facility who are assigned to specific customers. The merchandisers and area merchandisers visit these customers and make sure that the shelves are stocked with fresh Holsum products, that the area is neat and clean, and that the products are being properly displayed.

Meanwhile the delivery sales employees deliver the Holsum product to their customers and place that product on the shelves. The delivery sales employees arrive at their respective facilities at approximately 4:00 AM, then load the product into Holsum vehicles for delivery to their customers.

Additionally Holsum owns Caribe Bakers also located in Puerto Rico. Caribe Bakers produces cookies and crackers for the same market.

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Holsum de Puerto Rico

In the early 1990's, Holsum had invested in handheld computer technology which they interfaced to their S/36 and AS/400 home developed systems. Since their internally developed office systems lacked all the needed functionality of a complete route accounting system, these interfaces were slow, unreliable and cumbersome to maintain requiring continuous validation and cross checking of the daily sales, collections, accounts receivables and inventory transactions before and after posting to Holsum's in-house systems. Additionally, the handhelds generated more field level data collected during the driver's day than the office systems could accept and utilize.

The introduction of this handheld technology brought much needed advantages to Holsum, such as moving from manual to automated invoicing, improved inventory accuracy and tracking sales & damages. When the handheld implementation was completed, Holsum quickly realized that much more could be done with the handhelds and that their home grown system was constraining their business operations.

Valuable data collected during daily sales and deliveries were lost due to the lack of required functionality of their legacy systems. Simply put, like many ERP or back office systems, it could not speak the unique language required by companies that deliver their products via direct store delivery (DSD).

"It was good to finally, find a software vendor who understood the baking business and had products to support our specific distribution needs..."

**Raul Buso, Vice President of Finance
Holsum de Puerto Rico**

By the mid-1990's Holsum knew that in order to get the most of their handheld technology investment, maximize its functionality and to "tap" all the information that the system could provide, they would need to replace their home grown systems with a true route accounting application that supported the specific requirements of the baking industry.

A search among software vendors was performed and NCS was chosen based on their knowledge of the route management and Direct Store Delivery or DSD arena and their leadership and strength in the area of Information Systems Technology.

Holsum's Objectives

Holsum's objectives were multifold:

- **Replace** the home grown systems that were no longer supported
- **Keep** using their current handheld computers without interruption or retraining.
- **Obtain and utilize** detailed information on sales, inventory transactions and accounts receivables.

Holsum's Results

The move from Holsum's home developed system to NCS in 1997 took just two months. The installation of the route accounting system, RMS, accomplished Holsum's original objectives and much more including:

- On line audit of all inventory transactions
- On line display of all sales and return transactions
- An accounts receivables system that was designed for the specific needs of the Fast Moving Consumer Goods Industry such as sales, sales, buybacks and high volume of transactions. It also provided multiple ways of posting cash and drill down capabilities to the sales detail.
- Chain Customer Accounting
- Date driven promotions and multiple level pricing.
- Promotion tracking and auditing
- Sales Reporting

Holsum's Mobile

In 2001 Holsum executives made a decision to refresh their handheld technology. There was no need to look at other solution

vendors. Holsum chose NCS's handheld application, HMS, once more getting more that they expected like the ability to print customer statements from the handheld, authorized product groups, "balance forward" detail, surveys, asset tracking, and messaging.

Holsum's Next Move

Holsum is now reviewing the latest products from NCS; eRMS and eXpress Route. eRMS, NCS' latest generation route accounting offering, will open Holsum's business to eCommerce and Internet capabilities, internal flexibility in a Universal User Interface and a choice of hardware platforms and databases. eRMS is also multi-language, multi-currency and double byte enabled.



eRMS integrates to eXpress Route the latest generation of handheld technology. The .NET architecture is the strength of eXpress Route. Microsoft® .NET is a set of Microsoft software technologies that effectively erase the boundaries between applications used in business and the Internet. It does this by enabling a high level of software integration through the use of XML Web services which are small discrete building-block applications that connect to each other as well as to other larger applications over the Internet.



Holsum, through its continued partnership with NCS, expects to continue to improve their bottom line by lowering operating costs due to the flexibility these products provide. They will drive more sales by providing the right information at the right time to the right people in their organization.



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