



Small retailer boots competition with
transformative cloud services



Established in 1956 to provide affordable footwear to US Marines and others, Quantico Boot specializes in providing exemplary customer service. To stay competitive and grow, the small company transformed its business processes with Microsoft Dynamics 365. Now, Quantico Boot can automate financial and operational workflow, respond faster to customers, and expand business with confidence.

Located on the Quantico Marine Corp base in Virginia, Quantico Boot was started by Bill Martin Sr. more than 50 years ago. Today, his son runs the business, assisted by a small number of employees dedicated to providing exceptional, personalized customer service. Although the company has a loyal following and a unique history, it faces the same pressures as other retailers. "To really stay on top of your competition, you need to be at the forefront of technology and adopt new methods of managing your business," says Christopher Gates, Business Operations Manager at Quantico Boot. "Those were my priorities, and when I joined the company I knew it was time to make changes."

Finding a comprehensive solution

The company relied heavily on a single email account for its customer interaction and record keeping, which made it difficult to track order status, and the limited insight affected financial processes. Gates tried a few solutions including QuickBooks, but "it was obvious right from the beginning that we needed something to manage it all."

For Gates, the next step was equally obvious. "We're a smaller company, so it was always going to be the cloud," he says. "My search wasn't an easy one. I tried multiple cloud solutions and even used spreadsheet-type solutions. I probably tried them all, but there wasn't a complete solution at QuickBooks or any other place."

Gates was determined, and he eventually discovered that Microsoft was working on a new platform now known as Dynamics 365. He immediately became an early adopter of Dynamics 365 for Financials and Dynamics 365 for Customer Service, and began using the platform for everything from processing customer orders and making quotes to creating purchase orders and invoices. Gates says, "I don't know what part I don't use."

Improving workflow and access to information

He still relies on email, but now it's part of a streamlined workflow. "If I get an email from a customer inquiring about an order, I just click on the Dynamics 365 add-in within Outlook," he explains. "It pulls up all of the linked documents within the email message, so I don't have to go to another app to find the information."

Gates can easily share information with his less technology-savvy colleagues too. Quantico Boot also adopted Office 365, which works smoothly with the Dynamics 365. So whenever Gates issues a sales or purchase order with Dynamics 365 for Financials, an email record is automatically sent to his colleagues in Outlook. And when Gates tracks order status for a customer, Dynamics 365 for Customer Service creates a summary in a Word document. He also frequently shares information with customers and colleagues through Yammer.

The cloud apps make it easier to work on the fly as well. Gates handles virtually all the orders and customer questions, and with customers located worldwide, there's no such thing as standard office hours. "I constantly use Dynamics 365 on my phone when I'm out and about, because I'll get an inquiry about something," he says. "I don't have to run back to the office or get on my laptop to get information—it's all at my fingertips, and that's invaluable."

A new platform for business growth and better customer service

Gates is adopting more Dynamics 365 apps, including Dynamics 365 for Sales and Dynamics 365 for Marketing. In particular, he looks forward to using the Voice of the Customer feature in Dynamics 365, which enables businesses to capture customer feedback through custom surveys. The comprehensive platform will give Quantico Boot the tools it needs to not only run the business more efficiently, but also to expand it. "Before I really started marketing, I wanted to make sure that we had all our processes and workflows in place for handling customer service issues and orders," says Gates. "Once you have that, it's not a scary thing to say 'Oh, I could process 500 orders a day.' With Dynamics 365, you feel confident you can scale, and that was my goal with this project."

But it's not just about scaling out and acquiring more business. Quantico Boot has built its reputation and a devoted customer base by providing first-class service and a personal touch. With the latest cloud technologies, the company can strengthen that tradition. "Customer service has only gotten better with Dynamics 365," says Gates. "Our response time is so much quicker now, and that creates loyalty and happy customers."

With the Dynamics 365 platform, Quantico Boot can adopt new capabilities to meet changing business needs. "There's so much to discover in Dynamics 365, and that's exciting to me," says Gates. "I can find new features in the system to use when I'm ready. I follow all the blogs, forums, and other information sources about CRM and financial and operational management, and it's nice to see that the platform has almost unlimited potential."