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ENCORE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

The Integrator

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Integrated Innovation

*Technology that biofuel plants need to know more about**As published in the January 2007 issue of the Ethanol Producer Magazine*

As a General Manager of a biofuel plant you come into the office in the morning and turn on your computer. The first thing you see on your screen is monthly revenue, profit margin, daily commodity prices and average ethanol production year to date. All of a sudden a reminder pops up letting you know that you have a meeting with the Board of Directors tomorrow and you have yet to prepare... and you begin to panic!

Can you *relate* to this? Are you overwhelmed with the need to find the Controller, Plant Manager and/or Lab Manager to get all of the necessary information to share with the board?

If so, we'd like to talk to you about **integrated innovation** ~ technology that biofuel plants need to keep in mind when evaluating their plant's operational efficiency.

Integrated innovation is about building the company's software systems in a way that allows the systems to work together efficiently, creating a seamless user experience. Information from one operational system—including investor or member relations, construction management, commodity procurement, manufacturing, inventory management, supply chain management, logistics, marketing, risk management and accounting—is accessible and integrated to another operational system. As a result, users will save time and increase productivity by reducing duplicate data entry and human error.

Users can further integrate their software solutions through a planned integration—referred to as the “technology stack”—which includes the user's desktop, server, system software, applications for productivity and collaboration, business applications, and additional add-ons to satisfy specific business needs. A tightly integrated stack facilitates communication by maximizing the interoperability of the system, allowing for a significant focus on management reporting.

Why it's Important

By having an integrated software system, you eliminate the need to duplicate information because the systems can talk to each other. This enables users to have easy access to information with an end result of getting the right information for the right person at the right time. Integrated innovation allows users to actually use and interpret the data that exists within the various systems to get an accurate picture of how the plant is performing today and to help predict future trends.

The benefits of integrated innovation are real and simple with the most significant being a substantial return on investment. Simply stated, by investing and implementing integrated innovation, you will receive value for every dollar spent on technology. Other benefits to integrated innovation include:

- Accurate information sharing across the entire organization

- Streamlined business processes and improved process management
- Effective and productive teams
- Improved individual performance

When is the Time Right

You may be asking yourself whether the effort, time spent and costs to implement an integrated solution within your organization are really worth it. In 2006, Keystone Strategy Inc. found that of the 161 manufacturing organizations studied, the companies with better information technology capability grew 6.8 percent faster than their peers with weaker information technology capability.

If you are building or constructing a new plant, you need to start thinking about integrated technology at the same time your business plan is being prepared. Technology exists to facilitate a number of key milestones: equity drive, the addition of shareholder/member management, plant construction, accounting and finance, regulatory reporting and more.

If you are an existing ethanol producer, you need to start thinking about integrated technology at a time when your existing systems are no longer meeting your needs, or when you are considering a plant expansion or possibly building a second or third location.

*To learn more about **Integrated Innovation** and what could transpire should plants opt to use disparate systems instead, please contact:*

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About The Integrator

The Integrator was specifically designed to provide insightful and informative information to biofuel plant owners and managers on how they can improve their plant's operational efficiency with innovative software solutions.

If you'd like to add, modify or remove contacts to the newsletter please send an email to: reap@encorebusiness.com.

National Ethanol Conference February 19-21, 2007

Will you be attending the National Ethanol Conference in Tucson, AZ? If so, make plans to meet with an Encore representative to learn how you can improve your plant's operational efficiency with innovative software.

Contact:

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Announcement

Recognized as one of the top three technology partners, Encore was chosen as a finalist for a Microsoft Partner Program **IMPACT Award** in the Microsoft Dynamics ISV Solution of the Year category for REAP.



Microsoft IMPACT awards acknowledge exceptional work and commitment technology partners do to deliver innovative solutions and value to customers.

Plant Managers Corner

Is your current system adequately managing all of your inventories? Are you able to effectively manage the co-product inventories that get created? Watch for the next issue of The Integrator to learn more about inventory control.

Investor Relations

Whether you are a cooperative or a limited liability corporation, you may have as many as 500 to 800 investors to keep informed on a regular basis. Paying out dividends can become very time consuming especially when you are using an Excel spreadsheet.

In that case, integrated office software is something you need to

consider. There is existing software programs that include member inquiry functionality, allow you to create and track investor records so that the right amount of ROI is distributed evenly and also lets you establish distribution schedules and even track offerings.

If you are looking to reduce the number of questions asked from

investors you may wish to create an online mechanism for shareholders to access and exchange information about buying and/or selling equity and for what price. Where applicable, the transactions can also be recorded in your ERP solution (accounting and finance software) enabling you to run investments reports as required.

Managing investor relations has never been so easy.

REAP™

Renewable Energy Agricultural Processing

REAP is a fully integrated solution designed to successfully manage a biofuel plant's business events. These include investor relations, construction management, process, material and product management, lab analysis as well as all of your contracting, delivery, inventory and settlement processes specific to the biofuel industry.

REAP is fully integrated with Microsoft Dynamics™ GP financial software and may be tightly coupled with other leading ERP solutions.

REAP will help your company

successfully manage the following business areas:

- Investor Relations
- Construction Management
- Commodity Procurement
- Grain Accounting
- Product Sales
- Product Scheduling
- Distribution Management
- Process Manufacturing
- Risk Management and Analysis
- Audit Trail
- Business Intelligence



To learn more about REAP™

Email: reap@encorebusiness.com

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Courtesy of Encore Business Solutions

As a dynamic leader in helping organizations implement value added business management solutions for 16 years, Encore Business Solutions has consistently been recognized in the Microsoft Dynamics community for delivering innovative, quality products. With an excess of 100 years of combined experience in the agriculture industry, we understand the pillars of successful implementation to improve the efficiency and economics of biofuel production.