

Customer case study in2food and Zap Data Hub



From Spreadsheets to Strategic Insights

How in2food Transformed
Financial Reporting with
Zap Data Hub

About in2food

in2food is a specialized food manufacturing business formed in December 2010.

With ten manufacturing facilities across South Africa, the company produces bespoke food products primarily for a major national retailer. in2food also services the local industrial and food service market while also servicing some export customers.

Background

Through a series of acquisitions between 2010 and 2018, in2food grew to incorporate approximately 15 different businesses, each with its own established systems and reporting methods.

This created significant challenges for consolidated reporting and business intelligence. In 2018, Trevor Goble, who had joined the company in 2011 in a financial role and later moved to procurement, was appointed as Group Information Systems Manager with a mandate to standardize the company's disparate systems.

"When we consolidated the businesses, we were dealing with numerous legacy systems across our facilities," explains Goble. "Some were basic systems with minimal support, while others were more advanced but incompatible with each other, creating significant reporting challenges."



Industry
Food Manufacturing

Website
in2food.co.za

Solution
SYSPRO

Challenges Faced

The company faced several critical challenges that hindered operational efficiency:

- **Disparate ERP Systems** - Each acquired business operated on different platforms, making consolidated reporting extremely difficult.
- **ERP Standardization Need** - in2food recognized that to achieve operational consistency and efficiency, they needed to standardize on a single ERP platform across all facilities.
- **Manual Reporting Processes** - Financial and operational reporting required extensive manual work in Excel spreadsheets, leading to delays and potential errors.
- **Delayed Decision-Making** - When executives needed critical business data such as inventory levels or accounts receivable aging, it could take up to a week to compile this information, by which time it was already outdated.
- **Limited Data Visibility** - Without standardized reporting, gaining insights across multiple facilities was virtually impossible, hampering strategic planning.

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For SYSPRO customers experiencing reporting challenges, Zap is essentially plug-and-play. Within eight weeks, we had working balance sheets, and income statements across our multiple databases.

Trevor Goble, Group Information Systems Manager

Solution Outcomes

in2food's transformation began with a strategic decision to implement SYSPRO across all operations. "We spent about four to six months planning the SYSPRO implementation. After completing the planning, we started with the implementation in February 2019 and finished in March 2020, just before COVID-19 hit," says Goble. "We completed eleven manufacturing site implementations in 12 months."

With a standardized ERP foundation in place, the company needed a comprehensive reporting solution. After evaluating several options, including data warehouses and data lakes, in2food selected Zap Data Hub based on its integration capabilities with SYSPRO and quick implementation potential.

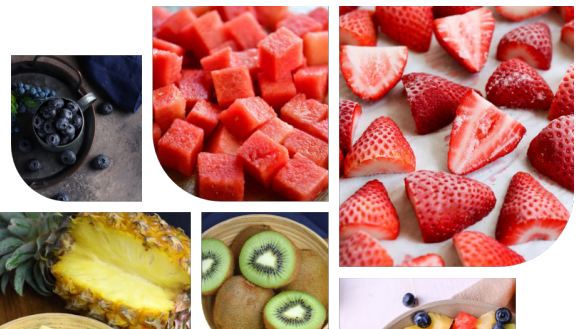
"Through our SYSPRO partner, which was then Plan-IT (now Liquid ERP), Zap was brought to the table," Goble explains. "After numerous discussions and board presentations, we decided to implement it."

The Zap implementation timeline was remarkably accelerated. Approval was granted on December 24th, with a go-live target of March 1st - just over two months later. Despite this aggressive timeline, the implementation was successful, allowing the company to launch its new financial year with the solution in place.

Outcomes and Competitive Advantage

The implementation of Zap Data Hub delivered immediate and significant benefits:

- **Transformed Decision-Making** - "It changed the conversation," notes Goble. "If you were to ask ten operations managers for their debtors aging or inventory values, it would take a week to get the answer, and then it was already a week old. Now that information is live, enabling more informed decisions."
- **Enhanced Operational Agility** - When faced with supply chain challenges, like worldwide shortages, in2food can now quickly analyze inventory across all facilities, assess consumption rates based on bills of materials, identify potential shortfalls, and adjust production accordingly.
- **Improved Working Capital Management** - The solution provides real-time visibility into debtors aging, creditors aging, inventory aging, and cash flow, allowing for more effective financial management.
- **Streamlined Reporting** - Weekly and monthly reporting that previously required extensive manual compilation can now be generated automatically, with the ability to drill down into detailed expenses across multiple sites. This also enabled in2Food to make significant improvements on reporting deadlines.
- **Standardized Analytics** - With a consistent chart of accounts and reporting methodology across all facilities, the company now has reliable comparative data for performance analysis.



Seamless Integration and Scalable Growth

The implementation process exceeded expectations in terms of speed and effectiveness. The company ran parallel systems for a few weeks until the team reached the right comfort level, then turned off the Excel-based reporting and continued with Zap. This smooth transition demonstrated the solution's user-friendly nature and robust integration capabilities.

Since implementation, in2food has continued to expand its use of Zap beyond finance. "It's used at the executive layer and operational management layer. We've incorporated additional data sources and databases to enhance our reporting," notes Goble. "Our commercial team uses it quite extensively from a sales perspective."

The solution's scalability has allowed in2food to adapt to changing business needs while maintaining reporting consistency across its operations.

Conclusion

The transformation from fragmented, manual reporting to a unified, automated business intelligence platform has fundamentally changed how in2food operates. Decisions that once took days or weeks can now be made promptly with complete, accurate information. The standardization of systems and reporting has created a foundation for more strategic business management and growth.

Looking to the future, in2food continues to explore additional capabilities, including Power BI integration for enhanced visualization and mobile access. The company is also excited about Zap's upcoming Excel add-in functionality, which promises to further enhance their reporting capabilities.

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It changed the conversation. Information that used to take a week to compile is now live, enabling more informed decisions across all our facilities.

Trevor Goble, Group Information Systems Manager

Reporting in action



Figure 1: Company Working Capital Summary Report

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Zap fundamentally transformed our decision-making process by providing immediate access to critical business data. Where we once spent weeks compiling information that was already outdated, we now have real-time insights across all our facilities. For manufacturers with complex operations like ours, having this level of visibility isn't just convenient - it's a competitive necessity in today's fast-moving market.

Trevor Goble, Group Information Systems Manager



Partnership highlights

- Increased interdepartmental alignment:** Zap centralized key metrics, providing a single source of truth across in2food's ten manufacturing facilities, ensuring consistency in financial and operational reporting.
- Empowered teams with self-service reporting:** Executive, finance, and sales teams now manage their own data needs, accessing critical business information without relying on IT or manual data compilation.
- Automated processes and workflows:** Integration with SYSPRO ERP created a seamless data environment that eliminated the need for manual spreadsheet compilation, dramatically reducing reporting time and improving data accuracy.