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General Manager,  
Contender Sailcloth**



## The Fitzgerald Group and Sage MAS 90 Set a New Course for Contender Sailcloth

### Industry

Manufacturing and distribution

### Application Selected

Sage MAS 90 ERP

### Key Issues that Led to a Need for a New System

- Limited reporting capabilities
- Data files were being stretched to the limits
- Needed more flexibility within the system
- Inability to access data within the system

### Results Achieved

- Able to extract accounting data to use in analysis
- Customized screens to improve data input efficiencies
- Having a partner who understands our business
- Response time for support calls is very fast

From New Zealand to Europe sailboats are winning races with innovative sailcloth design and development manufactured by Contender Sailcloth. Contender manufactures the sailcloth from raw materials and distributes it to sailmakers all over the world. Contender’s cloth can be found on sails from competition sailboats to the Royal Clipper, the world’s largest tall ship. While the sailcloth Contender manufactures contributes to a vessel’s smooth ride, Contender’s old accounting system was not smooth sailing.

When Contender Sailcloth opened its U.S. operations in 1997, they selected Peachtree 2000 to run their back office accounting. As the company continued to grow and needed more functionality and flexibility, it became clear to general manager, Lisa Tracy Gilbert

that Peachtree would need to be replaced. “Our data files were being stretched to the max and we were unable to get data out of the system to help us make better business decisions. We also needed stronger reporting capabilities,” she said. “Not to mention the need we had for integrated manufacturing functionality.”

Contender began their research for a new product. They looked at several mid-market accounting systems, including Sage MAS 90. “We were impressed with the ability to migrate our Peachtree data to Sage MAS 90. Since both products are owned by Sage Software, the conversion appeared to be more streamline. In addition, we were impressed with The Fitzgerald Group. They took the time to understand our business.”

Lisa, who has implemented many accounting systems during her career, was

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familiar with implementation methodology and pitfalls of not doing something right or skipping a step. She also understood the value of comprehensive training and access to on-going support.

Once Contender selected Sage MAS 90 for their distribution and manufacturing needs, they attended classroom training at The Fitzgerald Group. Part of their implementation process was six months of extensive system testing and user training. “The Fitzgerald Group knows their customers very well. They understand how to work with different level of users. This ensures that no time is being wasted,” said Lisa.

Since Contender’s go-live date everything has been, “smooth sailing,” said Lisa. There are plans to add the Bar Code module this year. Contender has utilized the Business Alerts module to send out customer communications about their orders. Because of this feature, Contender’s customer loyalty remains very high.

“Working with The Fitzgerald Group has been a great experience. In addition to great service and prompt support, we have taken advantage of the annual user conference that Fitzgerald hosts. It is a great time to meet other users and learn how they solved their business problems using Sage MAS 90,” said Lisa. Contender Sailcloth

also is a member of a Sage MAS 90 user group that meets every other month. This group shares ideas on how business processes can be improved using Sage MAS 90. The Fitzgerald Group supports this group by sending a consultant to every meeting.

“A big part of the reason why our implementation was successful was we selected the right partner to help us. The Fitzgerald Group’s extensive experience and desire to understand our business coupled with their level of user knowledge was and continues to be a winning combination,” said Lisa.



Authorized Partner

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