

 infor

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CASE STUDY

Hap Seng empowers multiple business subsidiaries with Infor M3

A publicly listed company in Malaysia, Hap Seng Consolidated Berhad is a diversified group with six business subsidiaries that operate oil palm plantations, property investment and development, credit financing, automotive, trading, and building materials. Since its incorporation in 1976, Hap Seng has grown rapidly and is now among the top twenty companies in Malaysia by market capitalisation.



Enabling business growth over two decades

Back in 1997, with several business divisions across different industries and growing rapidly, Hap Seng needed an ERP solution to bridge its islands of automation and enable disparate systems to operate cohesively for greater efficiency. To achieve the next stage of business growth, the company's systems and data silos needed to be centralised with a common system to support the operations of the group.

After an evaluation of suitable ERP solutions, the decision was made to deploy Infor M3 (Movex) at that time. The investment proved to be a sound one: The deployment and regular upgrades of M3 over the years coincided with the growth of the group's annual revenues from 657 million ringgit in 1997 to 5.8 billion ringgit in 2020.

“ Back in 1997, we were running separate systems in different divisions and needed a solution to bridge the islands of automation. Infor M3 (Movex at that time) met our requirements, and we continue to use it to this day—24 years later.”

CHIA NAM LIANG

CIO, Hap Seng Consolidated Berhad

Headquarters

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Locations

Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, China, and the United Kingdom

Revenue

RM 5.8 billion

Industry

Diversified group

Infor product

Infor M3

Website

hapseng.com.my

A time-honed partnership

In any successful implementation, the right business partner is a critical ingredient for success. With a deep understanding of both the business and the technology, Infor partner SL Information Solutions Sdn Bhd played a vital role with various migrations and deployments of M3 at Hap Seng over more than two decades. The successful partnership was attributed to the strong element of trust, excellent working relationship, and detailed knowledge of specific customisations that have been implemented. As a virtual extension of Hap Seng's IT team, SL is entrusted to ensure that these customisations are properly migrated to successive new versions of M3.

Businesses challenges

- Business divisions were using their own systems, resulting in silos of data and information
- A common ERP platform was needed to cater to a diverse range of industries
- The new system needed to interoperate with third-party solutions and mobile apps

Business results

- Group revenues increased almost nine-fold over two decades
- Improved workflows, processes, and productivity



Regular upgrades and seamless integration

Hap Seng has maintained its partnership with M3 since 1997 as a result of its reliability, the stability of the ERP solution, good support, and regular upgrades to the platform. Upgrades range from new user-friendly improvements to the development of powerful new capabilities at the backend. For instance, the interface has evolved to a browser-based UI that is cleaner and easier to use, while various productivity-enhancing features were introduced over time.

Among the major enhancements is an improved integration toolset, which led to a more open platform which benefitted Hap Seng tremendously. A set of new application programming interfaces (APIs) allowed the firm to build customised applications that integrated seamlessly with the Infor backend system. This made it possible to exchange data between M3 and third-party front-end systems, a vital capability for Hap Seng. It also made it possible to develop mobile apps that interface directly with the ERP.

Saving time with improved workflows

Hap Seng used M3 to optimise and automate various manual processes to save time and execute tasks quicker. While approvals for purchase requisition were previously done by manually seeking the requisite approvals using print-outs, the process is now fully digitalised. A new workflow for approvals was built to be accessed from a web browser or smartphone, with changes captured and updated directly in the ERP to significantly speed up the process.

“ The rich suite of APIs in M3 allowed us to exchange data with third-party systems. Infor has done an excellent job on interoperability.”

CHIA NAM LIANG

CIO, Hap Seng Consolidated Berhad

Another example of workflow optimisation can be found at the quarries operated by Hap Seng, where tickets are typically generated for customers for every load transported out. Tickets generated at each remote quarry are transmitted in near real time to a centralised system in the head office. From here, sales orders are created with the corresponding invoices automatically generated in M3 ERP via the APIs.

By integrating various workflows with M3, manual data entry is reduced, and business transactions are sped up substantially.

A robust and well-supported platform

That software must meet business requirements is a given. But reliability, while less often mentioned, is an equally important trait, says Hap Seng CIO Chia Nam Liang. According to him, a robust, trustworthy ERP solution frees up the IT team to develop new capabilities using the platform to further improve productivity and benefit the bottom line.



“Once you have your ERP up and running, you want it to be stable. You don’t want to have bugs all over the place. If your core system is not stable, then you waste time fighting fires or reconfiguring it. We have been using Infor M3 for 24 years. I can unequivocally state that the platform is extremely robust and reliable,” said Chia.

Hap Seng is currently working to complete the upgrade to the latest version of Infor M3, with just two more business divisions to go. Plans are afoot to build additional new features on top of the newest APIs and latest version of M3. From new mobile apps to speed up front-end tasks, powerful visual dashboards for faster decision making, and experimenting with IoT devices, the team is looking expectantly to the future.



“M3 is a reliable product, and Infor and its partners offer excellent support. I think it’s a great testament that our users hardly encounter any major issues with M3 over the years.”

CHIA NAM LIANG
CIO, Hap Seng Consolidated Berhad

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