

Customer Case Study



Damuth Trane is a Virginia-based professional energy services company that specializes in providing building solutions to clients through the sale of HVAC equipment, controls, parts, service, access control/video security and energy solutions.

- Trane comfort systems
- Service agreements
- Building automation
- System and HVAC system upgrades
- Building services
- Training programs
- Contingency cooling plan
- Emergency cooling rentals
- New equipment and building management systems
- Refrigerant upgrades
- Laboratory and field technical services
- Indoor air quality solutions
- Energy upgrades
- Parts

Damuth Trane was experiencing rapid growth and struggled with an outdated and archaic business management system when they turned to WennSoft. With the ability to offer fully integrated systems that solved multiple problem areas for them, they now have a solution that will be able to take them confidently into the future as they continue to grow.

“The functionality and flexibility that WennSoft and Microsoft Dynamics® GP provided was so much farther ahead of where we were at. We went from a Model T to a jet airplane.”

- Bill Mitchell, CFO

Since joining Damuth Trane as CFO in 2001, Bill Mitchell has certainly seen the company change. As the regional commercial franchise for Trane, the world’s largest manufacturer of commercial and industrial air conditioning systems, the company has grown to more than 165 associates (employees) and more than 1,500 customers. Unfortunately, Damuth’s business management system wasn’t keeping up with the company’s progress and was anything but “cool.”

As an independent Trane franchise, Damuth’s system was controlled at Trane’s corporate headquarters, and Mitchell and his team had little control over their own database.

“We were on a very archaic system,” says Mitchell. “We couldn’t import data at all, and we couldn’t export data very well. From a reporting perspective, things were cumbersome, to say the least.”

In 2003, Damuth felt the need to control its own destiny, and as Mitchell puts it, “take the company into the 21st century.” Damuth was officially in search of a new business management system.

The Solution

High on Damuth’s priority list in a new system was the fact that it needed to

address the company’s multiple areas, including equipment sales, service, construction and wholesale parts. Mitchell found that while many solutions addressed one or maybe two areas, it was nearly impossible to find a solution that addressed all areas without requiring intense integration efforts.

The initial frontrunner was WennSoft because a number of other Trane franchises had implemented their Signature solution. However, Mitchell reviewed several other solutions. “As CFO, I definitely needed to research the gamut of solutions and find the one that was best for the company as a whole,” says Mitchell.

That best solution proved to come from WennSoft.

What set WennSoft apart, says Mitchell, “is that they had already done it.” That is, their Signature solution integrated out-of-the-box with Microsoft Dynamics® GP, a leading, richly-featured business management solution. WennSoft’s distinction as a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner was a deciding factor as well.

What sealed the deal, though, were the companies’ shared values.

“At Damuth, the customer is at the top of our organizational chart, and the CEO is at the bottom,” says Mitchell. “In my initial conversations with WennSoft, I could tell that they had the same corporate philosophy as us: the customer comes first.”

That philosophy shone through during challenges in the new solution’s implementation, which was an all or nothing conversion from the old solution. “It was like open-heart surgery,” says Mitchell. “We needed to turn the old engine off and the new engine on.” Completely moving from one system to another so swiftly undoubtedly can create difficult circumstances. Multiple issues were encountered with customizations during the conversion to the new enterprise system. However, the WennSoft and Damuth Trane teams worked through them one by one to ensure a successful implementation. “WennSoft truly stepped up to the plate to get us over the ‘speed bumps’ and ensure a successful conversion,” says Mitchell.

What could have been a heated implementation instead became a cool, comfortable relationship built on trust, open communication and the belief that the customer always comes first.

The Benefits

Since implementing Signature Job Cost and Signature Service Management with Microsoft Dynamics GP, Damuth has increased access to important information, gained efficiencies and streamlined processes. Previously, access to data was limited to Damuth’s accounting department. With Signature, more than 50 users

now have immediate access to the information they need. Project managers, for example, can view jobs in real time to see how the job is performing. They can drill back to review related contracts and invoices. Open access to information has enabled them to manage jobs more effectively.

With the old solution, job data was downloaded at the end of the month and then manually keyed back into the system. Now, everything is done within the Signature solution, and the data integrates automatically to the general ledger within Microsoft Dynamics GP. “This is a major efficiency for us,” says Mitchell, “and the tie to Microsoft Dynamics GP is simply great.”

Another area where efficiencies have been realized is within parts-to-service functionality. For example, Damuth’s service department’s purchases no longer need to be processed through accounts payable and receivable when they buy parts and supplies through Trane HVAC Parts and Supplies locations. The transactions are seamlessly tracked and recorded within the system, eliminating the need for the Damuth accounting team to “touch” and approve them.

With the former solution, a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet was filled out whenever a new job or sale was initiated or completed. That information was then passed on to the accounting department to be set up in the system. Now, sales-administration team members input the information directly into Signature, eliminating one or more data entry points and lessening the possibility of errors prone to happen with multiple data points.

“Signature created a paradigm shift for us and empowered our sales team with more ownership and accountability,” says Mitchell. “One of the great results of that shift is streamlined processes.”

As for the future, Damuth is looking toward WennSoft’s MobileTech mobility solution as a way to increase productivity within its service department and ultimately serve customers better. One thing is for sure: with Damuth and WennSoft each believing that the customer comes first, success is inevitable.

“We’ve only scratched the surface of what this system can do for us.”

- Bill Mitchell, CFO (2013, September)

About WennSoft

With over 25 years of industry expertise, WennSoft is an innovator in the field service, construction and building intelligence markets. Originally developed by a commercial/industrial mechanical contractor, our Signature solution provides field service enablement, job costing and equipment rental solutions while our Building Optimization Broker (BOB) monitors facilities’ health. Over 600 clients turn to WennSoft, not only for our industry expertise, but also for the knowledge extended by our professional services and customer-centric teams to simplify complex business problems. For more information on WennSoft, please visit us at www.wennsoft.com.

WennSoft

Purpose Built Solutions for the Skilled Trades