



Big Balloon | Victoria | Industry: Wholesale/Distribution

Big Balloon is a Victorian-based distributor of exclusive toy brands like Fireman Sam and Bob the Builder. In the space of just a few months, the company has secured contracts with some of the largest retailers in Australia, including BIG W, Target, Myer and Toys-R-U's, despite being a start-up.

Behind each transaction between the distributor and these retail giants is their business management software MYOB EXO Business.

Planning for Growth

Big Balloon first heard of MYOB EXO through a business associate in New Zealand. "Their business model was similar to ours," says Big Balloon managing director, Tony Oates.

"As soon as we saw how suitable MYOB EXO was, we decided to check it out for ourselves."

Big Balloon considered a number of different products in the MYOB stable before deciding on EXO. "EXO was too big and powerful for what we needed in the beginning - and we could have gone with a more entry-level product, but we knew we had to have something with scalability for the future. And EXO gave us that."

The Right Features

EXO also has a number of features that make it extremely attractive for importers, says Oates, including the ability to handle multiple currencies.

"Big Balloon purchases products from overseas through a master toy manufacturer (traditionally based in the UK, America or Japan), and also buys finished goods from China - normally in US dollars. So keeping an accurate track of costs is essential," says Oates. EXO's ability to interface with other systems (thanks to its SQL database) was another plus.

The likes of BIG W insist on engaging through an EDI, so it was essential that any system taken on by the distributor would sit happily alongside third party software.

A Flexible Approach

To find the right MYOB implementation partner, Big Balloon went through a quotation process with four companies. “Between the four, their price was pretty similar,” says Oates.

“We chose Axsys due to their understanding of the difficulties businesses face.”

Oates says the other implementers were too rigid in their approach. He says, “We needed a very fluid environment, and Axsys’ flexibility was far more appropriate”.

Keeping Costs Down

“With any system installation, there’s always a certain amount of customisation required,” Oates explains, “But that can end up being costly, and Axsys understood our concerns about cash flow”.

What Axsys tried to do was adapt and adopt what was existing in EXO, rather than create a lot of new functionality.

All Roads Lead to June

Work on the installation began in February, with a launch date set to coincide with the start of the new financial year.

“Four months seemed like plenty of time,” says Oates, “but the weeks went by very quickly”. There was the EDI integration to coordinate, as well as the need to get staff up to speed with the new interface.

Axsys was adamant Big Balloon start invoicing out of EXO before launch. Because of that, import and invoicing functionality had to be up and running before P&L and balance sheets were in place.

Since Going Live

“Since going live, things have been running smoothly. We had a few minor issues. But all the traditional stuff is working really well, as is the operational data we’ve got on inventory, invoicing and sales.”

Thanks to the EDI interface all orders and payments are sent to the distributor electronically. Recipient-created tax invoices can even be produced. “Important as it is, a business administration system should never be the tail wagging the dog. It should just play its part in enabling you to get on with business”, states Oates.

In Conclusion

When asked what he thinks EXO’s most significant contribution has been, Oates is in no doubt.

“EXO has allowed us to hit the ground running at full steam from day one. To have a system that lets you deal seamlessly with a major retailer like BIG W without issue, i think, is nothing short of incredible.”

“Being able to set it all up in such a short time is a real bonus too,” he adds. “This hasn’t been a two year implementation. We just knew we had to make it happen, and Axsys helped us do that.”

For More Information

Want your business to become a success like Big Balloon? Learn how you can further improve and develop your business with MYOB EXO. Contact our sales team on **1300 553 228** or email: sales@axsys.com.au



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