



Independent Electric Supply: Resource Rescue

A complete ERP installation can be overwhelming, even for the smallest of companies. But it may seem downright impossible when you have a high number of users, a lack of resources, and an intense schedule. By adding the depth and experience of Zerion, and putting a strong focus on post-live support, IES's Eclipse implementation went from unattainable to praise-able.

OVERVIEW

Company: Independent Electric Supply, Inc.

Headquarters: San Carlos, CA

Annual Revenue: \$542 mil

Locations: 28

In Business Since: 1976

Industry: Wholesale distribution

Products: Electric Distribution, Independent Utility Supply, LGE/

Independent Power Systems

Employees: 450

Project Type: Eclipse Install / Training

Goals: To meet customers' growing needs with as seamless a transition as possible

Challenges: Many branches included with a sequential, overlapping go-live plan

Takeaway: Even the most challenging project can be fairly pain-free, if done with the right training and support resources.

“This is a fact: We couldn't have done it [the install] without Zerion. They gave the branches an understanding of Eclipse and the ability to function on the system.”

**Susan Walker,
Corp. Operations Manager**

SUCCESS STORY

When it comes to providing customer service, you either get it or you don't. And Independent Electric Supply (IES) GETS it. This top 200 electrical wholesaler says on their web site that they're a "Customer Obsessed Company." And, they aren't kidding around. This California-based company is

so focused on service that they decided to leave their current, beloved ERP system behind for one simple reason: customer service.

In the summer of 2009, the company was getting ready to transition its nearly 30 branches and 500 users to Activant Eclipse. IES needed more insight into the customer order process. They also needed more control over their operations with tools like signature capture, proof of delivery and wireless warehouse. Their customers were asking for off-site warehouse capabilities, web order entry and EDI. Clearly, they had outgrown their current system; and, they knew Eclipse was the ticket for them.

Customer Success Story

But, the IES implementation was larger than most, and Activant didn't have the training and support resources to manage it alone. IES wasn't sure how they would pull off the big leap they were about to take.

Then one day the phone rang. A Zerion representative was on the other line, and told IES about their demonstrated experience with large Eclipse installs. Zerion was the answer IES had been seeking, and their team became responsible for developing and delivering on the Eclipse training schedule. They were also there to hold IES's hand throughout the go live, and to be the go-to support resource for post-live questions and problems.

"Zerion's people are always upbeat and willing to answer questions. They dig into a problem and find out exactly what needs to be done."

Susan Walker, IES's Corporate Operations Manager, was responsible for managing the install for IES, as well as the relationship with Zerion. When reflecting on the training her employees received, she said, "Zerion understands the branch philosophy and the viewpoint of the people. They got to their level, whether it was the counter guy, the shipping guy, the accounts payable clerk, the salesperson or the President of the company." She added, "They never talked down to anyone. They were able to help each employee and under-

stand what they needed without being overbearing."

"All of the employees were extremely happy that they had someone to call. Zerion was always there to get us a solution, no matter what hour of the day."

Proper training is important in every install, large or small. This idea certainly wasn't lost on the IES management; but, they were facing a challenge greater than most typical projects: back-to-back, or "stacked," installs with their branches. With such an intense go-live schedule, internal resources tend to get caught up in what's ahead; and, those who have already gone live can quickly get left behind. But, this wasn't anything new to Zerion, as they'd assembled a training and support team who'd been around this block before.

One Zerion resource became solely dedicated to supporting the branches that were already on Eclipse. She acted as the go-between for IES's internal support and Activant. She managed, translated and resolved issues quickly; and she remained at IES's disposal until they were through the hardest part of the transition, which meant months of support after the go-lives were complete. Susan noted, "One of the best things about Zerion was that they were able to differentiate whether it was us having a problem; or, whether it was an actual bug in the Eclipse software."

In spite of a rigorous schedule and concerns over resources, IES's go-live happened on time. IES continues to dig deeper into some aspects of the system; but, the company considers the training and implementation a great success. "Zerion has been a partner to us throughout our entire install; and, they're still guiding us with the appropriate reports and correct and efficient processing of orders," said Susan. She added, "Eclipse can be a difficult system to learn because there are so many functions. When we think something isn't working properly, Zerion has always been able to show us how to approach it in a different manner. I would not hesitate to recommend Zerion to anyone going live. In fact, I recently did just that."

The weight of a hefty software implementation hasn't scared IES off, or even slowed them down. We can also assume Zerion was successful in making the transition as painless as possible, because IES is already planning what's next! Less than six months after they completed their implementation, they're working with Zerion to plan for Eclipse Wireless Warehouse (RF).

"Now we're able to deliver on whatever demands our customers put on us. Because of the Eclipse software, and Zerion's knowledge and expertise, we can follow through with our customer satisfaction promise."