CentricSoftware™

PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE
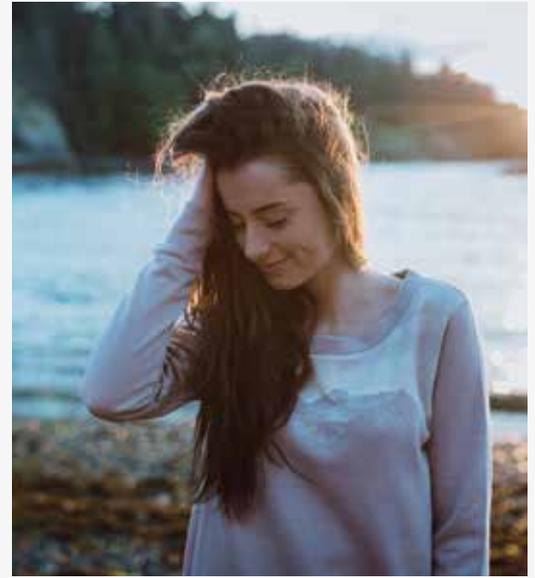**PLM SUCCESS WITH CENTRIC SMB AT TENTREE**

PROTECT THE WORLD YOU PLAY IN

Since 2012, tentree (stylized with a lowercase 't') has been relentlessly building a new kind of environmentally-conscious apparel business from its seat in the capital of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Described by CEO Derrick Emsley as "a tree-planting company first and an apparel brand second," tentree commits to planting ten trees for every single product sold. Guided by three principles – stewardship, transparency and community – tentree carefully targets the places that will benefit the most from its planting efforts. Laser-etched tokens affixed to each garment allow customers to track where their trees are taking root, and to understand how their purchase helps empower communities in countries like Haiti, Senegal, Ethiopia and Madagascar.

But while sustainability comes first for tentree, product is anything but an afterthought. The company creates high-quality menswear, womenswear and accessories that encourage people to venture outdoors and engage with their environment.

Today, tentree designs and develops more styles with each passing season and its products are now sold across North America through retail partners, wholesalers and the company's own e-commerce channel - with growing interest from retailers in Australia and Europe.

ANNUAL GROWTH AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The tentree message has resonated with consumers and the company has planted close to fifteen million trees to-date. To keep pace with this rapid escalation of consumer demand, the business has grown it's headcount by 6 in the last 4 years.

"The pace of growth has been exciting, but it's also been a definite challenge in terms of volume alone," says Emsley. "In the last year, our team has tripled in size and in just five years we've moved from printing a few t-shirts to more than >500,000 annually. As a result, the tools we were originally using to manage our internal processes – spreadsheets and emails – very quickly became unsuitable when we needed to scale production."

As an environmentally and ethically progressive organization with transparency at the heart of its relationships with customers and suppliers, tentree also recognized the limitations of its existing technologies in other key areas. "We are dedicated to socially-responsible manufacturing but having so many different, disconnected forms of communication was making it difficult to get the level of internal accountability and supply chain traceability we needed," Emsley says. "As our SKU count grew, those old methods of production tracking were beginning to hold back our ability to scale without compromising on our core values."

To manage the mounting volume of new product introductions, a yearly influx of new staff and to better track design, development and production, tentree began, in 2015, to investigate new technologies.

> **"** We needed a solution that was accessible from anywhere, available to us at all times and adaptable enough to grow as we did. Centric SMB was affordable, had everything we needed out of the box and the suite of additional modules made sure it would be scalable as our needs evolved. We wanted to lay foundations to help us grow – not just for the next two years, but for the next five or ten. **"**

CHALLENGES

+ Managing extremely rapid growth

+ Existing technologies working against transparency

+ Traditional PLM licensing model prohibitively expensive

+ Time-consuming manual reporting

+ Need for technology to evolve in line with business changes

AFFORDABLE, ADAPTABLE, AVAILABLE ANYWHERE

Like many other small-to-medium brands seeking technology guidance, tentree looked to its peers – most of whom it discovered were using PLM to manage their product design and development processes.

"We went to a lot of trade shows and spoke to a lot of other brands that we looked up to and we learned that where we relied on multiple spreadsheets, manual data entry and chains of emails between us and our suppliers, they were doing everything in PLM," explains Arthur Kononuk, tentree's Creative Director.

After examining the market, Emsley, Kononuk and their team realized that the traditional licensing model favored by many software vendors made acquiring PLM prohibitively expensive for a business as small and fast-moving as tentree.

"To sustain our growth, keeping cash within the organization is absolutely critical," says Emsley. "We needed a solution that would help us to scale effectively but one that didn't require

a dramatic cash outlay up-front. We didn't want to buy a server. We didn't want to invest in a solution that we would need to pay costly support for or employ an internal team to get the most out of. We wanted PLM that was affordable and had proven effectiveness – and we wanted to really partner with a vendor who had experienced growth of the same kind we have."

Shortlisting only the small number of PLM products that offered a more attractive subscription pricing model, tentree quickly selected Centric SMB – a cloud-based solution specifically tailored for small businesses. "There were other subscription solutions out there, but none of them could match the capabilities, usability and scalability of Centric SMB," Emsley adds.

For tentree, though, acquiring a cloud-based PLM was about more than just cost. "We're a young business made up of people from a young generation, so we live on the internet," explains Kononuk. "We needed a solution that was accessible from anywhere, available to us at all times and adaptable enough to grow as we did. Centric SMB was affordable, had everything we needed out of the box and the suite of additional modules made sure it would be scalable as our needs evolved. We wanted to lay foundations to help us grow – not just for the next two years, but for the next five or ten."

INTUITIVE INTELLIGENCE

With a team of primarily digital natives, tentree was also drawn to Centric SMB's usability and its industry-leading integration to Adobe Illustrator.

"Having such a user-friendly interface really speeds up the onboarding process, making it very easy for new people to learn the software," says Kononuk. "And for our young designers, who love the Adobe Creative Suite, Centric's Adobe Connector allows them to remain in the environment they're comfortable with and still collaborate with technical designers and other teams who are working directly in PLM."

And beyond the abstract of improved user satisfaction, the intuitive, collaborative nature of Centric SMB has also delivered more concrete results.

"Prior to implementing PLM, a single team member would have to manually update a cumbersome master sheet with any additions or changes to our lines, but now a designer working in Illustrator can push a style to PLM, and our merchandising and line management teams will receive it for review instantly," adds Kononuk. "That process used to take up to two days, but by collaborating in Centric SMB we can manage the same updates in an hour and have our line sheets exported and ready to go."

Similar time savings have also been realized at the top levels of product design and development, where Centric SMB's intuitive, visually-geared interface has become essential for ensuring the integrity of tentree's styles, line and collections, as well as optimizing the brand's speed to market.

"Centric has really become our bible: we now have visibility and transparency into our whole development cycle and can identify the roadblocks that are preventing us from getting to retailers on time," explains Laura Alexander, Project Manager. "Producing these kinds of high-level insights manually used to take hours out of my day, but now Centric can tell me, automatically and with total accuracy, how many active colorways a season contains, for example."

PLANTING FOR PROGRESS

While tentree initially selected Centric SMB to better manage the outcomes and challenges of its rapid expansion, the solution is now credited with creating the right environment for even greater growth.

"When we first went live, we had two designers working in PLM, and now we have ten," says Kononuk. "Had we not chosen Centric SMB when we did and instead stayed stuck in our ways, there's no question that our growth would have stagnated. Centric has really helped us to grow exponentially and it's allowed people to really concentrate on what they specialize in, rather than spending time in spreadsheets. Today we can get better products to market more quickly and that means more trees being planted."

tentree currently develops all individual styles and line sheets in Centric SMB, but the company plans to add sourcing and calendar management modules to support a compelling vision for the future.

"Our goal is to plant more than a billion trees by 2030," Emsley concludes. "In order to do that, we will continue to grow our team quickly and to expand our product ranges and collections more rapidly as well. To get there, we will need to be more dynamic, innovative and faster than ever before, and we fully expect Centric to support us every step of the way. The Centric SMB platform has all the modularity we need to add functionality when we need it and we grow we believe the solution will grow with us. Centric SMB is going to be the platform that helps turn tentree into the world's most environmentally progressive brand."

RESULTS

+ Support provided for exponential future growth

+ Full visibility and transparency through design and development cycles

+ Affordable Cloud-based, subscription solution

+ Automated reporting and workflow management; days-long tasks reduced to hours

+ New modules targeted for future implementation; core solution scalable to any size

ABOUT TENTREE

The beautiful landscape we know and love is fast disappearing. At tentree, we believe that we can inspire a new group of consumers to tackle the environmental issues we are now faced with. By planting ten trees and ensuring that all our clothing is produced responsibly we allow each and every customer to make a difference. Our commitment to the environment isn't just a catchy hook to drive sales. It is something we fundamentally believe in, that will have an enormous impact on our environment going forward. It's your world, your life, your playground. Let's protect it – together, we can build forests.

Tree planting is a way of restoring the environment, maintaining ecosystems, and making our world a healthier place to live. This isn't new; but what is new, is how we have used the concept of planting trees to inspire entrepreneurship, build sustainable communities, provide shelter and generally increase quality of life.

The founders of tentree have years of experience in the tree planting industry and have used this to create a business model that ensures trees are planted sustainably and in a way that will have the greatest impact. Some of the many benefits of planting trees include:

• Creating and restoring bio-diversity
• Removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere
• Creating bio-precipitation
• Building sustainable and resilient natural ecosystems

ABOUT CENTRIC SOFTWARE

From its headquarters in Silicon Valley and offices in trend capitals around the world, Centric Software builds technologies for the most prestigious names in fashion, retail, footwear, luxury, outdoor and consumer goods. Its flagship product lifecycle management (PLM) platform, Centric 8, delivers enterprise-class merchandise planning, product development, sourcing, business planning, quality and collection management functionality tailored for fast-moving consumer industries. Centric Small Business packages extended PLM including innovative technology and key industry learnings tailored for small businesses.

Centric Software has received multiple industry awards, including the Frost & Sullivan Global Product Differentiation Excellence Award in Retail, Fashion and Apparel PLM. Red Herring named Centric to its Top 100 Global list in 2013 and 2015.

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