High-performance wheel manufacturer grows to seven times its size with NetSuite Cloud ERP and CEBA's integration support.

Racing to the Finish Line

On the auto racing circuit, speed is everything. For Apex Race Parts, being able to support a driver's need for speed while also keeping that person safe while on the road or track has been a core mission since the company was founded in Pleasanton, Calif., in 2007.

Since then, Apex has been honing its business model and expanding its product line in a way that both meets and anticipates customers' needs. Today, the company designs and manufactures high-performance, flow-formed wheels for a wide variety of vehicle models.

Its products are used by auto racing, high performance driver education (HPDE), and street performance enthusiasts around the world.

"We started out focusing on a broader range of automotive performance parts, but then quickly found a niche in wheels," said Eddy Pintacsi, Founder and CEO, who estimates that wheel sales make up about 90% of the company's revenues. Considered a manufacturer because it has a team of

inhouse engineers who design the wheels, Apex has 17 employees and works with numerous independent contractors.

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Eddy Pintacsi, Founder and CEO

Gearing Up: QuickBooks to NetSuite
Up until a few years ago, Apex was running its business on QuickBooks, which lacked many of the functionalities that this growing company needed. For example, the platform couldn't connect directly to Apex's website, which was becoming a primary point of sale for many of its products. This created inventory visibility problems for the Apex team.

"Employees would take QuickBooks sales orders with them out into the warehouse to fulfill and pull inventory," Pintacsi recalled, "and then discover that the stuff wasn't there." This lack of visibility became a focal point for Apex's move to a more robust, cloud-based enterprise resource planning system (ERP) that could be integrated with its e-commerce storefront.

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A Strong Integration Partner
After selecting CEBA from a list of potential integration partners, Apex began working with the company to implement NetSuite in a very tailored and budget-conscious manner. "Some other companies were charging extravagant hourly fees," Pintacsi said. "They'll just randomly charge you $20,000 for something that you don't even feel like you're getting anything for. That didn't happen with CEBA."

For Apex, CEBA also built numerous customizations that were tailored to the company's operations—some of which the manufacturer didn't even realize that it needed. CEBA also provided good insider knowledge of NetSuite. "They weren't just resellers; they were a team that could really jump in and help us navigate the whole process," said Pintacsi. "CEBA's ability to give feedback and suggestions on a problem was excellent."

Reaping the Rewards
As a result of its NetSuite implementation, Apex was also able to transition to using outside accounting resources instead of having full-time employees handle that aspect of its business. "With NetSuite, our outsourced professionals could do everything remotely in our system. They didn't even have to be present," he said, noting that the company has since reached a point at which it is bringing accounting back

in-house. He expects the cloud ERP to once again support that transition.

NetSuite also helped Apex solve its inventory visibility challenges. "Products don't 'disappear' on us anymore," said Pintacsi, who sees the cloud ERP as a valuable investment for growing companies. "NetSuite is a tool that allows you to customize your accounting," he said. On an RMA, for example, Apex can easily add custom fields that its warehouse needs to track (e.g., the condition of a product) and articulate them to team members via the platform.

"Our staff can go in and respond and decide where that returned product should go," Pintacsi explained. "They know if it should go back into stock, be placed in blemished inventory for a discounted sale, or thrown away. We can then use that information to modify sales orders, invoices, and reports."

Paying Long-Term Dividends

With annual revenues that are about seven times higher than they were pre-NetSuite, Apex is well braced to scale up and handle even more business in the coming years. "The system has scaled very well with us," said Pintacsi. "It pays long-term dividends while reducing the amount of time it takes to complete specific tasks—things that in the past had to be managed with a lot of human involvement."

Apex was also able to transition to using a third-party logistics provider (3PL) to manage its fulfillment and shipping. CEBA built several customized connectors to enable this pairing. Once in place, the connectors allowed Apex to outsource this non-core task to a reliable outside partner. "Fulfillment was a huge drain on our resources," Pintacsi explained. "The moment we were able to outsource it, our business grew rapidly."