

CUSTOMER STORY

A Multi-Regional Food Distributor

How a multi-regional food distributor overcame a failing vendor relationship, found the right mobile sales and DSD solution — and the right partner — in HandApps, and hasn't looked back in over a decade.

AT A GLANCE

Industry: Wholesale Food Distribution & Direct Store Delivery (DSD)

Distribution: Full-service DSD with company Route Sales Associates — in-store stocking, rotation, and guaranteed sale

HandApps customer: More than a decade

Region: Multi-regional, operating across multiple states

ERP: Microsoft Dynamics NAV (Business Central migration in planning)

THE CHALLENGE

A vendor relationship that couldn't keep up with the business

For a wholesale food distributor, the whole business rides on Direct Store Delivery — trucks on the road, product on the shelf, an invoice at every stop. More than a decade ago, this company went looking for a mobile platform to run all of it. On their Dynamics NAV partner's recommendation, they chose a mobile DSD solution other than HandApps.

The trouble was in the integration. That solution's connection to Dynamics NAV had been built not by the vendor, but by a third party — and it proved unreliable. Data sync issues, failed transactions, and errors forced their team into manual workarounds just to keep day-to-day operations running. When something broke, the DSD vendor and the third-party integrator pointed at each other. They were one of very few customers running that solution on Dynamics NAV, and as the vendor shifted its focus to other platforms and larger accounts, the investment in fixing — let alone improving — the integration dried up. Feature requests stalled. Response times stretched. The system that was supposed to power their DSD operation had become a liability.

For a company whose entire business model depends on DSD, that's not a minor inconvenience — it's a serious operational risk. Their Route Sales Associates are the frontline of the business — driving company trucks to retail locations across multiple states, stocking shelves, rotating inventory, managing the category, invoicing on-site, and guaranteeing the sale. When the mobile platform can't keep up, the entire operation feels it.

"We reached a point where we were spending more time managing workarounds than focusing on our business. We knew it was time to move beyond temporary fixes and find the right long-term solution with a partner we could trust."

— IT Manager

Key Challenges

- **Third-party integration gap** — The Dynamics NAV integration was developed by a separate company, creating divided accountability when issues arose.
- **Few customers on the platform** — The company was one of very few customers running the product on Dynamics NAV, resulting in minimal investment and declining support.
- **Unreliable integration** — The third-party NAV integration was prone to sync failures, data errors, and transaction issues, forcing the team to develop manual workarounds to keep operations running.
- **Stalled enhancements** — Feature requests and customizations were deferred indefinitely. The system couldn't evolve with the business.
- **Mission-critical exposure** — DSD is the backbone of the business. An unreliable mobile platform put revenue and customer relationships at risk.

THE SOLUTION

HandApps — built-in NAV integration, committed support, and a partner that delivers

After 5 years of dealing with the system's shortcomings, the company made the decision to move to HandApps. The contrast was immediate.

HandApps' Dynamics NAV integration is not a third-party add-on. It is built in, standard, and maintained in-house by the same team that develops the mobile application. It uses Dynamics NAV Web Services — the ERP vendor's approved method for external integration — and is fully supported across every HandApps customer. They weren't a special case or a one-off. They were joining a mature, proven ecosystem with over 20 years of NAV integration experience behind it.

The company deployed HandApps on Windows Mobile devices initially, giving their Route Sales Associates a reliable, offline-capable mobile platform that synced orders, invoices, credit memos, and delivery confirmations directly into Dynamics NAV without manual intervention.

"The difference was night and day. HandApps owned their integration, they responded when we called, and when we needed something built, they built it. We finally had a technology partner, not just a vendor."

— CEO

- **Orders, Invoices & Credit Memos** — Route Sales Associates create all sales documents on-device with full validation. Documents flow directly into Dynamics NAV on sync — no re-keying.
- **Proof of Delivery (POD)** — Delivery confirmations with signature capture and quantity verification. Customers receive documentation immediately.
- **Email-Based Document Delivery** — Instead of a mobile printer on every route, the company emails receipts, confirmations, invoices, and credits directly to customers — eliminating printing hardware fleet-wide.
- **Sales Templates** — Pre-built product templates speed repeat ordering — associates build from established assortments instead of searching the full catalog.
- **SyncStudio Synchronization** — HandApps' proprietary sync engine gives reliable, bi-directional replication — only new and changed records transmit, keeping sync fast on cellular.
- **Full Offline Operation** — All customer, product, pricing, and stock data lives on the device. Associates work uninterrupted in stores, stockrooms, and rural areas with no connectivity.

Custom pricing logic and authorized-list control — built into the platform, not bolted on

The company's Dynamics NAV environment includes custom pricing tables and logic that differ from standard NAV pricing. For the mobile system to return the same price as NAV under the same parameters, HandApps needed to replicate that logic at the device level.

Rather than modifying standard HandApps pricing tables — which would risk affecting other customers — HandApps created a dedicated custom price module. It uses dedicated SQL tables mirroring their NAV price structures with matching lookup logic, applied to both the tablet and web versions of HandApps for consistent pricing across every interface.

Custom Price Lookup

- Replicates their specific NAV pricing rules — including custom fields and lookup sequences not found in standard NAV.
- Dedicated SQL tables mirror their price structures without touching the core codebase.
- Runs on both mobile and web, so every user sees the same price.

Authorized List Enforcement

- Items can only be added when a valid price record exists for that customer — otherwise blocked with an "Unauthorized" message.
- Validates against Customer Price Code, Customer SKU Code, and Item Number — the exact logic used in NAV.
- Enforced on both tablet and web, managed centrally through the HandApps system console.

"The custom pricing was a make-or-break requirement. Our NAV system has specialized pricing logic that no off-the-shelf mobile product could handle. HandApps built a custom pricing engine that matches our NAV exactly, and they did it without disrupting anything for their other customers. That's real engineering discipline."

— IT Manager

SCALING THROUGH CHANGE

From Windows Mobile to Android — with every customization intact

What makes this relationship durable isn't just the initial deployment — it's how the platform has adapted through years of continuous change without ever interrupting the routes.

Initial Evaluation

The company first evaluates multiple options including HandApps. On their Dynamics NAV partner's recommendation, they select a different DSD solution.

The Situation Deteriorates

Over the years that follow, that solution's third-party NAV integration proves unreliable, requiring constant workarounds. As the vendor's priorities shift, they cannot get the support or fixes the operation requires.

HandApps Deployment

Five years in, the company moves to HandApps on Windows Mobile devices, fully integrated with Dynamics NAV. Reliable, well-supported DSD operations begin immediately.

Customization & Growth

Custom pricing logic, authorized list enforcement, sales templates, and email-based document delivery are implemented. HandApps scales with route expansion.

● Android Migration

As the company transitions from Windows Mobile to Android, all customizations — including the custom pricing engine and authorized list logic — carry forward seamlessly.

● Business Central Planning

Today, the company is planning a migration from Dynamics NAV to Microsoft Business Central. HandApps will move with them, carrying every customization forward.

"The migration from Windows Mobile to Android was seamless. Every customization, every pricing rule, every workflow came across exactly as it was. That kind of reliability means everything."

— Chief Financial Officer

THE HANDAPPS DIFFERENCE

What a committed technology partnership looks like — proven by experience

They know what it's like when a vendor relationship falls short. They also know what it looks like when it works. The contrast informs everything they value in a technology partner.

HandApps builds and maintains its Dynamics NAV and Business Central integrations in-house. Support is immediate and direct — no third-party intermediaries, no divided accountability. Customizations are built as permanent, configurable features within a single codebase, ensuring they carry forward through every update and platform migration.

For this company, HandApps didn't just provide better software. They restored confidence that the technology behind the business would always work, always be supported, and always keep pace with growth.

- **Built-In ERP Integration** — Dynamics NAV and Business Central integrations are standard, in-house, and maintained by the same team that builds the app. No third parties, no gaps in accountability.
- **Immediate, Direct Support** — When an issue arises, HandApps responds immediately. Every customer is a priority — not just the largest ones.
- **Customization Without Fragmentation** — Every modification is a configurable feature controlled by settings switches. One codebase, all customers, always maintained.
- **Proven Migration Path** — Windows Mobile to Android completed with all customizations preserved. The planned Business Central migration will follow the same process.

"HandApps treats us like we're their most important customer — and from what I can tell, they treat all their customers that way. After twelve years, they've never once let us down. That's not something we take for granted."

— CEO

RESULTS

A decade of reliable DSD operations and a partnership built to last

10+

Years with HandApps

100%

Customizations Preserved

\$0

Spent on Mobile Printers

0

Third-Party Integrations

- **Reliable DSD Platform** — A professionally maintained, fully integrated mobile platform backed by a responsive team — replacing a system that could no longer keep up.
- **Built-In NAV Integration** — No third-party dependencies. HandApps' in-house Dynamics NAV integration is supported directly by the HandApps team.
- **Printing Costs Eliminated** — Emailing documents directly to customers avoided the cost of a mobile printer on every route.
- **Custom Pricing Parity** — A custom price module replicates their unique NAV pricing logic exactly — consistent across mobile, web, and NAV.
- **Platform Continuity** — Windows Mobile to Android completed seamlessly, all customizations carried forward. Business Central migration is planned next.
- **Confidence Restored** — After years of declining vendor support, they now have a DSD platform and a technology partner they can depend on completely.

"Our experience over the years has taught us exactly what to look for in a technology partner, and HandApps checks every box. They own their integration, understand our business, develop solutions around our needs, and stand behind their work. After 25 years of continued product growth and improvement, it's the kind of partnership we truly value and want to maintain."

— IT Manager

Customer name and identifying details withheld at their request. We protect our customers' operational and systems information as a matter of practice. Full details — and a direct conversation with this customer — are available to qualified prospects during an active evaluation.

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