

## Customer Profiles



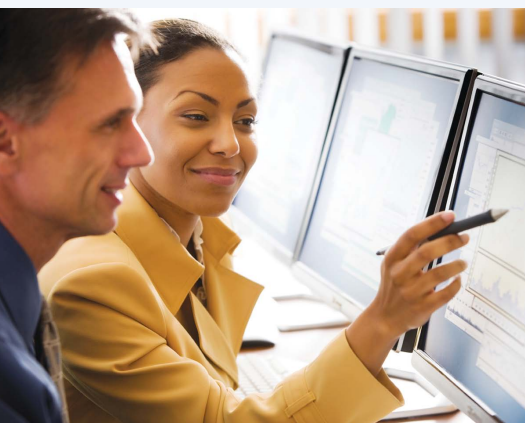
AriZona Beverages USA LLC is the national marketer and supplier of the popular AriZona® brand iced teas, flavored waters, juices, coffees, energy drinks and powdered tea mixes. [www.drinkarizona.com](http://www.drinkarizona.com)



Brother International Corporation is one of the premier providers of products for the home, home office and office. [www.brother.com](http://www.brother.com)



Ebro North America is a leader in the rice and pasta sectors. Subsidiaries include Riviana Foods Inc. and New World Pasta Company. [www.ebropuleva.com](http://www.ebropuleva.com)



## Streamlining Start-Ups

### *Transition process proves effective for Saddle Creek customers*

Planning a transition of operations can be a daunting task. Whether you're opening a new facility, moving to a different location, or changing 3PL providers, a smooth start-up is critical. It can not only provide peace of mind but also help to maintain your speed to market, control costs, and uphold customer service levels.

Saddle Creek Corporation has demonstrated its ability to handle complex start-up operations, accommodate tight timelines, and provide a seamless transition for many well-known companies, including AriZona Beverages USA, Brother International Corporation, and Ebro North America. The 3PL has developed and implemented start-up solutions from the ground up in as little as 30 days, thanks to clearly defined processes, experienced management teams, extensive resources and its creative approach to business challenges.

### Proven processes

"At Saddle Creek, we have established processes that help guide every aspect of the start-up and ensure proper management and support for such transitions," explains Doug Johnston, Saddle Creek's vice president of customer solutions and operations support. "By formalizing the approach, we can handle a high degree of difficulty with a high degree of certainty that we can achieve objectives."

At a high level, Johnston says, the project management process includes:

- Defining project scope – Thoroughly understanding a customer's needs and wants is a critical first step in the process. On-site meetings help to identify over-arching objectives, deliverables, and timetable and provide a framework for the project.
- Soliciting project sponsors – Based on customer needs, Saddle Creek assembles management and IS teams skilled in facilitating start-ups. Establishing appropriate project champions at the customer is also valuable for keeping the project on track.
- Planning and resourcing – The team develops a comprehensive action plan for the start-up. Identifying necessary tools, available resources, incremental steps, key milestones and due dates up front helps avoid surprises such as unexpected costs.
- Implementation – Throughout the process, experienced and knowledgeable staff are on hand to monitor progress, track the budget, provide on-going communication, and implement contingency plans as needed to ensure a seamless transition.
- Transition to on-going operations – Once the facility is fully functional, a post-implementation review helps assess the process and identify areas for fine tuning.

This project management process streamlines transitions. It proved particularly valuable for AriZona Beverages' West Coast start-up. Saddle Creek developed a solution, found a location that met the company's requirements for a facility in California and created a transition plan within a remarkably tight, 30-day timeframe.

"The processes and procedures Saddle Creek had in place allowed our start-up to run like clockwork," says Jay Petraghani, vice president of planning and operations at AriZona Beverages.

## Skilled project management

In launching the start-up process for each customer, Saddle Creek carefully selects a qualified transition team. The 3PL typically gathers a S.W.A.T. team made up of key players from its management, human resources, safety, and process engineering teams – all of whom are dedicated to planning and implementing efficient and effective start-ups.

When Brother International needed a new 3PL to take over distribution and transportation operations at its largest facility, for example, Saddle Creek sent key members of its management team to work on-site throughout the implementation process. Two senior vice presidents and a team of experienced associates worked side by side with Brother staff to make sure that the manufacturer had everything necessary to provide seamless service to its customers.

## Extensive resources

Saddle Creek continually reinvests in assets, systems and personnel to ensure that the company has the resources its customers need.

*Existing and new locations.* In addition to its own state-of-the art facilities located across the country, Saddle Creek is able to source or build space to suit the customer's specific needs for even greater flexibility.

Often, a customer needs assistance in selecting a site for the new operation. When Ebro needed a new facility near Los Angeles, Saddle Creek worked with the company to conduct a network optimization study and select a site that met the company's requirements. Ultimately, a new 432,000-square-foot, shared-space facility allowed two Ebro subsidiaries to consolidate multiple California operations into a single, optimum site.

"With Saddle Creek's assistance, we were able to find an environment that allows us to control operational costs, accommodate growth and provide great service for our customers," said Joseph Marelli, vice president, logistics, for Ebro North America.

*Advanced technology.* Saddle Creek's innovative logistics solutions draw on leading-edge technology and best-in-class software tools that can stand alone or integrate with customers' systems.

Saddle Creek's systems expertise played a critical role in Brother's start-up. The 3PL immediately began working to make improvements to order process flows, reporting functions and processes associated with distribution center and transportation operations.

*Quality labor pool.* With more than 2,000 experienced associates nationwide, Saddle Creek has the flexibility to accommodate its customers' labor needs to ensure a smooth start-up.

At Ebro NA's new West Coast distribution facility, Saddle Creek was fully staffed even before the facility was fully operational in order to prevent any disruption within operations.

When staffing needs were uncertain for Brother's start-up, the 3PL arranged to have dozens of hourly employees from its campuses across the country on standby, ready to travel to Memphis at a moment's notice.

## Performance driven

"Our relationships with customers are based on flexibility and continuous improvement," says Saddle Creek's Johnston. "We can apply best practices and institute industry-accepted KPIs to help measure supply chain performance. We also have the expertise to identify opportunities for supply chain improvement and the resources to implement change quickly."

Start-up customers like Arizona Beverages, Brother, and Ebro have benefitted from a variety of solutions ranging from process-oriented changes designed to improve retail compliance or warehouse efficiency to big-picture changes like integrating services and consolidating facilities.

"We've opened three DCs in the past year, and the smoothest, by far, was the California DC we opened with Saddle Creek," says Ebro's Marelli. "With their creative solutions and ability to share best practices, we were up to speed and meeting our KPIs in record time."

## Moving forward

Saddle Creek's customer care doesn't end with the start-up process. The 3PL is committed to upholding its brand promise *Whatever it Takes*<sup>SM</sup> for its customers every day. As a result, customers often ask the company to manage subsequent start-ups as they change and expand their businesses.

"We appreciate working with a company that understands our business objectives and has the resources, commitment and expertise to help us meet them," says Arizona Beverages' Petraghani.



*Integrated Logistics Solutions, One Provider — Nationwide*

Based in Lakeland, Fla., Saddle Creek Corporation is a privately held third-party logistics services company that provides integrated logistics, warehousing, transportation, and contract packaging services nationwide.

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