

# NEW YORK BUSINESS.COM

Powered by Crain's

RSS Feeds

Register now and get FREE custom e-mail alerts  
Monday, April 02, 2007

 SEARCH  
Advanced Search

2007  
**FORTY Under FORTY**

SIGN UP TODAY AT LifeWithLG.com  
VISIT LifeWithLG.com FOR FULL RULES

**NATIONAL TEXTING CHAMPIONSHIP**

WIN UP TO \$25,000 REGISTER NOW!

enV THE ULTIMATE MULTIMEDIA HANDSET

## FEATURES

- Home
- Daily Headlines
- Current Issue
- Insider
- Health Pulse
- Crain's Lists
- Events
- Classifieds
- Photo Gallery
- 40 under 40

## DEPARTMENTS

- Accounting
- Arts
- Economy/ Econ. Dev
- Financial Services
- Health Care
- Hospitality
- Human Resources
- International
- Law
- Media
- Minority Business
- Nonprofits
- Pharma / Biotech
- Politics / Public Policy
- Real Estate
- Retail / Apparel
- Sales / Marketing
- Small Business
- Tech / Telecom
- Women

Ads by Goooooole

### Warren Buffett's Stocks

Free report reveals stocks owned by value investor Warren Buffett.  
[www.TopStockAnalysts.com](http://www.TopStockAnalysts.com)

### Investools

Learn to invest from the experts. Register for a free class near you!  
[www.investools.com](http://www.investools.com)

### Stocks Ready To Soar

Hot News Alert, Huge Profits 1000%+ Stock Near Explosive Breakout  
[www.otcstockexchange.com](http://www.otcstockexchange.com)

### Stock Market Chart

Analyze The Market Like The Pros w/ Our Charting

## Management software bears fruit for wine seller

By: **Karen J. Bannan**

Published: **March 25, 2007 - 6:59 am**

On the surface, the idea looked terrifically simple: Bring together some of the renowned winemakers of the world and sell small quantities of their choicest vintages under one label. But as entrepreneur John Hunt quickly found out, working with two dozen vintners — spanning the globe from Chile to Australia — and selling to customers across the United States is a wildly complex business.

Despite the odds, about two years after the launch of Mr. Hunt's Oriel Wines, the company is doing so well that he expects it to be profitable by year's end.

Oriel's success is due in part to the power of a good idea. But that success would never have been remotely possible if not for modern management software.

"We knew right away that we needed a platform that could support all [the facets of the business] without the need for a lot of human interaction," says Kelly Ford, the company's managing director.

### Crunched by the numbers

That's an understatement. Manhattan-based Oriel has more than 20 suppliers and offers about 30 different vintages, which it orders in quantities ranging from 300 to 4,000 cases. These take anywhere from a few days to five weeks to arrive and must be paid for in nine different currencies, all of which are constantly fluctuating. On top of everything else, Oriel operates both retail and wholesale businesses, with different profit margins and varying distribution requirements.

To manage all these moving parts, Ms. Ford turned to a software package that allows small businesses to take care of everything from managing inventory and sales calls to creating marketing campaigns to organizing e-mail.

Ms. Ford, a former senior manager of knowledge management at International Business Machines Corp., chose NetSuite Inc.'s small business package, originally developed by Oracle Corp. Like some of its rivals — including Salesforce.com Inc.'s eponymous product, Sage Software SB Inc.'s ePeachtree and Intacct Corp.'s Intacct Small Business — NetSuite allows users to monitor a variety of functions from easy-to-use dashboards, just like pilots of 747s.

### Leader of the pack

PRINT THIS STORY  
EMAIL TO A FRIEND  
RSS FEEDS  
REPRINTS  
MOST POPULAR  
SEND A TIP



## MOST POPULAR STORIES

1. Immigration lawyers in work-visa frenzy
2. Columbia graduate school ranked No. 1
3. Bloomberg puts kibosh on pedicab limits
4. New contract reached with city workers
5. Battle over outdoor ad deal heading to court
6. Princeton Review names new chairman
7. Mets gaining momentum with ticket sales

**London.**  
Nonstop flights every day.

Book on AA.com

Learn More

American Airlines

CRAIN'S SPECIAL COMBO OFFER

SAVE \$65  
Subscribe Today!

## Stories from This Week's Crain's

### Online jewelers aim at high end

Move into luxury sector; traditional retailers are slow to counter threat  
▶ Full Story

### Hearst playing the teen angle

Publisher defies title shakeout, expanding print, Web offerings  
▶ Full Story

### Foreclosure investors take the deals inside

Tactics involve negotiating settlements, adding value  
▶ Full Story

### Mets on pace to score record ticket sales

Last year's success carries over to this season; rival Yankees still lead big leagues  
▶ Full Story

### New fashion district

Zoning will legalize office conversions, use nonprofit to protect factory space

### Free Investment Guide

Learn to invest smarter, safer, and better from Ameriprise Financial.  
[www.Ameriprise.com](http://www.Ameriprise.com)

Advertise on this site

## HOW DO I ...

[Find the Photo Gallery](#)  
[Find a Restaurant](#)  
[Plan a Meeting](#)  
[Grow a Business](#)  
[Join an Organization](#)  
[Find a Local Business](#)  
[Send a Press Release](#)

## GUIDES

[Corporate Party](#)  
[Higher Education](#)  
[Executive Gift](#)  
[Golf](#)  
[Residential](#)

## CRAIN'S CALENDAR

April 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

[View Calendar](#)  
[Send Us Your Event](#)

[Register for Crain's Events](#)

## ADVERTISING INFO

[Print Media Kit](#)  
[Online Media Kit](#)

"Oriel Wines is definitely on the cutting edge," says Liz Herbert, a senior analyst with Forrester Research, based in Cambridge, Mass.

She notes that many entrepreneurs stretch programs like Microsoft's Excel spreadsheet program and Sage Software's ACT! contact-management software to help run their businesses, rather than using full-fledged management packages.

In some cases, Ms. Herbert says, this practice stems from businesspeople's ignorance of the products on the market. In other cases, "people wonder if the programs are worth the investment, since something like NetSuite runs \$100 per user per month."

Ms. Ford has no question about the software's value to Oriel.

"For us, having an eye on the cost of doing business is critical," she says. "NetSuite lets us look at the cost of goods sold, the total revenue, total profits, gross profit margin."

If she needs to see how well a particular wine is doing in New York, she can pull up a report with a few quick clicks and get up-to-the-minute data.

Ms. Ford also relies on her software to cut the cost of marketing campaigns, as well as the time they take to produce.

Last month, Oriel Wines ran a Valentine's Day promotion for trade and retail customers and prospects. The campaign, centered on a rose called Femme Fatale, included everything from merchandising materials for merchants to e-mail come-ons — all produced with NetSuite's help. The push proved so successful that Ms. Ford churned out another campaign, this one geared to St. Patrick's Day; it took her just 24 hours.

She uses the same software to track, in real time, who's clicking through the Oriel Web site and who's buying. By looking at the "Profitability by Market" report, which she has access to via her dashboard, Ms. Ford can also figure out when she should use her own salespeople, and when to go with outside distributors. She can quickly see how much a staffer is selling, analyze the cost of the revenue and run a quick calculation to see how that figure compares with the cost of using a distributor.

Ms. Ford recently replaced her Florida sales rep with an outside distributor after running such a comparison, fattening the company's Florida profit margin in the process and freeing up her Florida salesperson to take on a regional position.

### IN A NUTSHELL

#### **ORIEL WINES**

**FOUNDED** 2004

**EMPLOYEES** 10

**REVENUES** Over \$2 million

**MOST EXPENSIVE BOTTLE** 2003 Sygnet, McLaren Vale, \$100 at retail

**LEAST EXPENSIVE BOTTLE** 2003 Courant, Côtes du Rhône, \$15 at retail

Comments? [smallbiz@crain.com](mailto:smallbiz@crain.com)

[Profitability space](#)  
▶ [Full Story](#)

### **Street tests slippery slope of ski resort ownership**

Execs take long view on money-losing sites; aim to make real estate work year-round

▶ [Full Story](#)

### **City sets tough plan on energy**

Steps would cut use, pollution, encourage new power plants

▶ [Full Story](#)

### **Challengers score in Clinton country**

Obama, Edwards lure party stalwarts in hunt for money

▶ [Full Story](#)

## CUSTOMER SERVICES

[Subscription Center](#)

[Renew my subscription](#)

[Manage my subscription](#)

[Reprints](#)

[Newsstand Locations / Single Copy Sales](#)



Today's Headlines Daily E-Mail - FREE