

ViX Swimwear

San Diego, Calif. | www.vixswimwear.com

NOMINATED BY: Computer Generated Solutions | www.cgsinc.com

Women purchasing bathing suits hope not to grow too much from season to season. But for swimwear companies like San Diego-based ViX Swimwear, seasonal growth is not only desirable — it's essential. In this regard, ViX has been extremely successful.

The company, which is named for the Brazilian beach city of Vitoria where founder Paula Hermann grew up, is known for its luxury bathing suits and use of cutting-edge materials such as resin in addition to tortoiseshell, leather and gold detailing. The ViX collections also include flowy beach cover-ups, dresses and sarongs, as well as hats, bags and sandals. The company's designs have been spotted on models, actresses, and celebrities and featured in the coveted *Sports Illustrated* Swimsuit Editions.

With its fast-growth track, however, ViX found it was lacking the back-end system it needed to support its rapid expansion. "The system we were using was not robust enough for the company that we had become," says Greta Binette, ViX operations manager. Most glaring was the lack of allocation capabilities in the previous system — which meant it was hard for ViX to ensure, when it came time to ship orders, that it still had the required inventory in stock to fill those orders.

"We had expanded into department stores including Nordstrom, Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Neiman Marcus, and we were receiving more, and larger, orders. So we needed a system in place to ensure that we reserved the necessary units for those orders, and could meet the needs of our customers," Binette explains.

In addition, ViX sought a solution that could help it meet the varying needs of its diverse distribution channels — which include large department stores and swim retailers such as Everything But Water and Diane's Beachwear, as well as small specialty boutiques, e-commerce sites including Amazon and Zappos, plus ViX's own

web site. "We needed a solution that could give us the capability to store each of our retailers' unique requirements so we could fulfill orders correctly," Binette notes.

ViX found the right fit in Computer Generated Solutions' (CGS) BlueCherry, a comprehensive end-to-end business solution designed specifically for the apparel, footwear and accessories industry. Since the 2010 implementation, the software has delivered improved supply chain operations and on-time deliveries while also positioning ViX for exponential multi-channel growth. The implementation included integrated EDI, financials, robust reporting capabilities and automation.

Today, ViX's allocation woes are a thing of the past. "BlueCherry has provided us the allocation capabilities we were so sorely missing," Binette says. The company also likes the scalability that BlueCherry offers, and the fact that CGS is currently developing best practices that ViX stands to benefit from as it continues to grow, she adds.

BlueCherry's robust reporting capabilities have also been a big benefit for ViX, freeing its employees of the need to hunt down information.

"Instead of chasing data, we are able to focus on building our brand while BlueCherry delivers all the data we need right to us," Binette explains. The solution provides reports and key performance indicators that give ViX greater visibility to what is happening in its supply chain and how that will affect orders. Two reports in particular have been especially beneficial. "The available-to-sell report gives our sales reps visibility to what units from the collections are still available to sell; and the no-ship report gives us visibility to units ordered past the available number so we can proactively reach out to our accounts to adjust delivery expectations," Binette explains.

The visibility brought about through BlueCherry's reporting capabilities also allows ViX to capitalize on demand, and ship and deliver on time, Binette notes. "We



ViX Swimwear's luxury bathing suits are known for their use of cutting-edge materials such as resin, tortoiseshell and leather.

can see and plan our business differently because we know what we need in stock. Our supply chain is no longer crippled due to the visibility that the BC reporting gives to us," she says.

In addition, the solution seamlessly integrates ViX's EDI transactions, which has been a major timesaver. Instead of relying on a third-party to handle EDI transactions, ViX can now do it all in-house — which has helped the company recover time in its ship window that was being eaten up waiting on a middleman.

Next up, ViX is eyeing possible solutions from CGS that will help the company capitalize on its growing e-commerce business. "E-commerce is an important channel for ViX and we are exploring the ways that BlueCherry could integrate into our e-commerce business and optimize those processes as well."

— Amy Roach Partridge