TIDEWATER INC.

Leading operator of offshore service vessels (OSVs) unifies global ERP systems, prepares for Brazilian tax reform and focuses on its continuous improvement strategy.

> " Rimini Street has proven to be more than a trusted partner for our operations, and we continue to grow our footprint with them because we know it will translate to fast and lasting results for the business.

— *Lee Johnson*
CIO, Tidewater

UNIFIED GLOBAL OPERATIONS
SYSTEM ALIGNMENT IMPROVES VISIBILITY, CONTROL AND COLLABORATION

NAVIGATED COMPLEX MIGRATION
DEEP SAP AND ORACLE EXPERTISE REDUCES OPERATIONAL RISK

COMPANY OVERVIEW:
Tidewater owns and operates one of the largest fleets of OSVs (Offshore Support Vessels) in the industry, with over 60 years of experience supporting offshore energy exploration and production activities worldwide.

VERTICAL/COUNTRY:
TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS, US

SOFTWARE/RIMINI STREET SOLUTION:
PEOPLESOFT, SAP ECC 6.0, SAP RISE, RIMINI CONSULT™, RIMINI CONNECT™ FOR OS
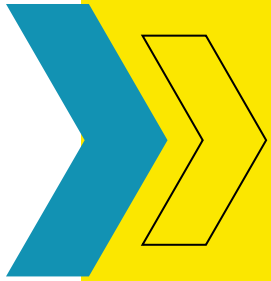
Global Fleet Operator Sails Through Complex Migration to Unify ERP Systems with Rimini Consult™

In 1956, Tidewater launched the Ebb Tide, the first offshore vessel designed for the offshore oil and gas industry. Today, the company operates the largest offshore support vessel (OSV) fleet in the world with hundreds of vessels and operations that span the globe. "Tidewater is a global company. We service all energy areas. We have over 200 vessels, and we are the largest and most efficient vessel company in the offshore service sector," Lee Johnson, EVP and CIO of Tidewater, said.

When Tidewater merged with GulfMark Offshore in 2018, it meant growth for the company, but it also introduced complexities between IT systems. "Gulf Mark was using SAP. Tidewater was using Oracle. The company decided to go with SAP rather than Oracle. And through the merger, we converted all the systems from PeopleSoft over to SAP," Johnson recalled.

Addressing the complexities of running global ERP systems

However, Tidewater's Brazil operations continued running on Oracle. "The reason that we never integrated that into SAP is because it's hard work. There's the Portuguese language and there's constant tax changes," Cherise Brooks, Tidewater's Director of IT and Enterprise Transformation, said.

Tidewater quickly realized that managing Brazil's Oracle system in-house proved costly and unsustainable. Tidewater needed a partner to bridge language barriers, improve communication and accountability, bring deep SAP and Oracle expertise while addressing compliance complexities. They used local consultants to support the Brazilian systems, but Johnson wasn't getting the level of service he expected – and the costs were getting the attention of the CFO.

"The CFO was looking for cost improvements, so we were evaluating how we could optimize our in-house operations. We reached out to Rimini Street to see if they could provide a solution for us, and they did. That's when we started the journey with Rimini Street," Johnson continued. "What was really important about Rimini Street is the presence in Brazil. They have a Portuguese speaking team in Brazil, and that was extremely helpful to us in being able to support those functions," Brooks added. "Rimini Street did a great job supporting the Brazil derivative, which led us to continue the partnership."

Rimini Street also helped Tidewater support its customizations and address compatibility issues. **Rimini Connect™ for OS**, an exclusive Rimini Street solution for interoperability, provided an abstraction layer between the enterprise application and operating system, allowing Oracle to function seamlessly with changes in the underlying OS. "It's really important for us to have partners who see the entire technology ecosystem here at Tidewater, including our many customizations that are unique to our processes, which is a big part of what Rimini Street did for us," Brooks said.
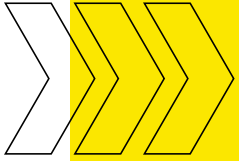
And when they faced a difficult patching situation, Rimini Street had the expertise to quickly implement a solution. "We were looking at patching the Brazil ERP and there were a lot of issues. Some of our in-house vendors couldn't do it. Rimini Street said it was possible, spent a weekend on it and made it happen," Johnson said. "The final result was that we could actually use the system, and it was patched and secure."

Successfully completing a complex system transition

As Tidewater prepared to standardize business processes by transitioning its Brazil operations from Oracle to SAP, it chose Rimini Street's professional services team, **Rimini Consult**™, to take the helm of the project. "We talked to several consultants, and it looked like it was a heavy lift. But because we had such confidence in Rimini Street and the way they looked after our Oracle support needs, we reached out to the Rimini Street account team to see if they had an SAP practice and asked if they could do this job," Johnson explained.

What followed was a coordinated, time-sensitive rollout implementing the SD (Sales and Distribution), MM (Materials Management) and FI (Financial Accounting) modules aligned with best practices and global corporate guidelines. Tight collaboration was vital as the company was also in the middle of an SAP EHP 8 upgrade and another priority SAP project, all in addition to supporting the Brazil SAP migration. "We really had to coordinate and organize effectively. The Rimini Street team did a brilliant job with that," Brooks underscored.

The Rimini Consult™ team brought deep understanding of both the Oracle and SAP ERP platforms, streamlining the migration process and reducing the possibility of system downtime. Johnson detailed the engagement, "We had multiple sessions with the Rimini Street team, and we came up with a scope, design and an SOW, and then we all agreed on it and started executing it together."

The success of the project hinged on agile execution and consistent communication. "We faced significant language and cost challenges with our then-support provider, but all of that was resolved when we met Rimini Street," Johnson recounted. "They really impressed us with how well and often they communicated with us, keeping our system running smoothly and compliant."

The rollout unified local and global operations into a single ERP platform, replacing the Oracle system. The project also delivered process improvements across business functions, comprehensive documentation for transparency and continuity and targeted user training in a compressed timeline.

The project confirmed that Tidewater had chosen the right long-term partner. According to Johnson, the experience demonstrated that Rimini Street has the capability and the resources to provide top consulting resources and projects for a company in a highly regulated industry like Tidewater. "There's a need in our industry for consulting firms that can actually create value and work in a very structured and agile way. A lot of the large consulting firms are very expensive and very difficult to do business with. I think our whole team felt Rimini Street has provided real value to Tidewater," he said.

Their satisfaction turned into advocacy. "My team hadn't worked with Rimini Street before, and they were skeptical," Johnson recalled. After experiencing them in action, they "became some of the top advocates for Rimini Street, and that's why our team is recommending that we use Rimini Street for other projects."

Taking the manual labor out of tax reporting

In the past, keeping up with Brazil's tax laws meant extra work for Tidewater's IT team. "One of the biggest challenges with Brazil is taxes. That has tripped us up in the past," Johnson explained. Rimini Street helped change that. "When we had our design sessions with Rimini Street, they were able to bring in some real knowledge of how to solve the tax problem. It became a game changer for us because we ended up getting better tax software than we were using before. It's all automated. It's not data entry in Excel and it's creating efficiencies for our internal team," he said. "With this new tax software, we were able to successfully close the books and do the taxes, and it went great. We saved lots of time. Our operations and accounting team now have to work less overtime hours."

Smooth sailing into the future with a strong partnership

"Because of how successful we were with the Brazil project, there's a lot more opportunities for Rimini Street to help us with global projects," Johnson said. "Some companies know Rimini Street solely for their expert support capabilities, but they are so much more than that," Johnson pointed out. "Our CFO is happy with the ongoing cost savings, my IT team is happy they no longer have system and security challenges, and I'm happy to have a constant, open line of communication with professionals who understand and appreciate our business needs and deliver results." Brooks agrees that the partnership is the right fit, "SAP is a critical system for us. Rimini Street is a good partner for us because they understand our business."

For Johnson, Tidewater's mission to remain "the most efficient vessel company" depends on having a partner that allows them to focus on continuous improvement, deliver measurable value and keep the systems behind its global fleet running smoothly. He adds, "As a CIO, the most important thing I can do is create value for the business. Part of that is making sure you have the right partners and team members. Rimini Street has proven to be more than a trusted partner for our operations, and we continue to grow our footprint with them because we know it will translate to fast and lasting results for the business."

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