



## ACC Accounting Solutions

by Amanda Hamm Hengel

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**Freshly Brewed: ACC Accounting Solutions helps Lacas Coffee usher in a new era of business success.**

If you've ever had a cup of coffee at a diner in South Jersey, chances are you've had Lacas Coffee. A staple of the area since 1921, when it was started by brothers Constantine and George Lacas, Pennsauken-based Lacas Coffee's niche for decades was diners. While many area diners still carry the coveted brew, Lacas Coffee's core market has expanded over time to accommodate a changing marketplace, says new majority owner Jonathan Del Re. Though the coffee remains as memorable as ever, these changes to its business strategy have brought new advances—and challenges—to the company.

### **The Changes**

One of the major changes Lacas Coffee has faced in recent years is new ownership. Del Re took over majority ownership of the company two years ago from members of the third generation of the Lacas family and an unrelated CEO. Since then, the company has acquired the Dallis Bros. brand of specialty coffee, a staple in New York City for more than a century, and more recently, the Philly Bean Coffee brand.

The company has also invested in a variety of new capital equipment, including a third, higher capacity grinder and a new packaging machine to enhance throughput and efficiency, and a new small-batch, solid drum roaster for specialty coffee. The company has also refreshed its branding and packaging and expanded from two locations to three.

“We've also invested heavily to build a stronger online presence so we can sell directly to home consumers,” Del Re adds. “The direct store delivery restaurant channel remains a core focus for us, and something we pride ourselves on doing very well, but it's now a minority of our business. The majority of our coffee volume goes through other channels.”

### **The Challenges**

As a successful company with new leadership and an accelerated growth strategy, Lacas Coffee has faced a number of challenges in recent years. One particular challenge was the fact that its business management software, Sage, was not being used to its full potential. “Our enterprise resource planning system (ERP) wasn't really being used properly,” Del Re says. “For example, one person would initiate production orders on their



Outlook calendar, not within the robust ERP system we have. The result of working outside of the ERP system was a number of redundant processes and lots and lots of paper, or said another way—inefficiency. We knew we needed help with IT training, along with additional software.”

Such inefficiencies were hindering the Lacas team’s efforts and led the company to its next level of success.

### **The Solution**

After working with several companies that were not able to fulfill their software needs, Del Re and Lacas Coffee turned to ACC Accounting Solutions. Led by president and CEO Sean Atkins, ACC is a software consulting firm that partners with some of the most well-known business-related software names in the industry, and is a Sage-endorsed authorized partner.

Del Re says the staff at ACC actually took the time to listen to what their needs were and spent time getting to know what the company does, so they could maximize the efficiency of their systems.

“ACC remained agnostic through the evaluation process and helped us get to the answer that was right for us,” Del Re says, noting that the evaluation process involved a hands-on approach from ACC staff, who discussed Lacas Coffee Company’s needs with management in a conference room, and at the desks of employees throughout the organization, to get a full understanding of how the company operates and what would work best for their business.

ACC led Lacas Coffee through the successful implementation of a bill of materials process, which allows the company to better track product costing in real-time.

Calculating the true cost of numerous coffee SKU’s using excel sheets was yet another inefficiency to streamline. The new business process utilizes Lacas Coffee’s ERP system, providing the benefit of accurate, real-time information with less work.

Though this implementation required a significant time commitment from both ACC and Lacas Coffee, Del Re says ACC was very accommodating to Lacas Coffee’s needs.

With its initial challenges addressed, Del Re says Lacas Coffee will continue to lean on ACC for their software expertise and as a business partner. “We’re not done yet. There’s much more that we need to do over time,” he says, “and ACC is working with us through the process in a flexible way, instead of everything becoming an invoice with very little guidance.”

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