

# Gold Client helps Brown-Forman achieve smooth blend with Casa Herradura Data

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## Challenge

Brown-Forman acquired Casa Herradura, one of the oldest and most respected tequila producers in the world. Herradura tequilas are handcrafted in one of Mexico’s most historic distilleries, on the premises of a 19th century hacienda in Amititan, Jalisco—a 90-minute drive from Guadalajara in the heart of Mexico’s tequila country.

Mexican law states that while most assets of an acquired company transfer to the acquirer upon purchase, transactional data remains the property of the original owners and cannot be transferred to the purchaser. The acquirer is allowed to upload master and configuration data from the existing SAP system, but not purchase, sales, or other transactional data. The consequence of this legal requirement was that Brown-Forman would have to construct an entirely new SAP landscape—a project that typically requires months of development and testing.

The terms of the agreement, however, did not allow for months. There was a legal requirement to complete the transition within one month from the acquisition date in order for Brown-Forman to keep its new Herradura brand operational. Since this was only one of many IT projects that had to be undertaken as part of the incorporation of Casa Herradura into Brown-Forman, the resources that could be applied to it were limited.

When Brown-Forman began to investigate methodologies they could use to create the landscape within the allotted time frame, Rob Evelyn, Manager of the Software Management Group, and his team started by examining SAP’s offerings. Both Casa Herradura and Brown-Forman used SAP for their ERP systems, which assured the data would be compatible if it could be moved.

While in the discovery process Brown-Forman learned that SAP TDMS does not allow transactional data to be separated from master and configuration data. Moving data from one landscape to another requires a full transfer; since that was prohibited by the legal restrictions, the team was left with the challenge of finding another way to create and test a system in order to have it fully functional by the one-month deadline.

## Solution

Evelyn and his team began searching for an alternative that would allow them to move SAP data selectively. Members of the team had previously seen demonstrations of the Attunity Gold Client Solutions software at trade shows, and were considering its use as a tool to refresh the SAP systems at the headquarters location in Louisville. After carefully reviewing its capabilities, they speculated that Gold Client might be able to help them with their data transfer challenges. Attunity was contacted and brought in to make a presentation.

“Attunity very quickly demonstrated that Gold Client Solutions could do exactly what we needed,” Evelyn says. “Its intelligent data transfer capabilities would allow us to



**BROWN-FORMAN**

## About the Customer

Brown-Forman is a diversified producer of fine quality spirits. Founded in 1870 by George Garvin Brown, the company today employs 4,440 people worldwide, including 1,300 in its Louisville, Kentucky headquarters. It is one of the largest American-owned spirits and wine companies, and is among the top 10 largest global spirits companies.

Brown-Forman offers 35 brands that are sold in more than 135 countries. The company’s portfolio includes such well-known names as Jack Daniels Tennessee Whiskeys, Finlandia Vodka, Canadian Mist Blended Canadian Whiskey, Korbel California Champagnes, Gala Rouge Wines, and Southern Comfort.

separate master and configuration data from the transactional data, allowing us to build the landscape in the required time.”

From the start, Attunity demonstrated the agility and customer support required for such a high-profile, rapidly moving project. Evelyn says the company turned the contracts around quickly, thus leaving more time for actual development, and immediately sent two of its SAP experts to Mexico to assist with design and construction.

“Attunity was on the ground with us,” Evelyn says. “They trained us on Gold Client Solutions, and then stayed with us most of the time our own team was there. When necessary, they made the trip between Casa Herradura headquarters in Guadalajara to the plant in Amititan with us. It was very reassuring that we had their expertise to draw upon whenever we needed it.”

The project itself was not a straightforward, direct data transfer; Brown-Forman and Casa Herradura used very different business models. For example, Brown-Forman uses a three-tier distribution system, while Casa Herradura always sold directly to its retail customers. This difference meant that the Casa Herradura master data would have to be significantly restructured in order to integrate into the Brown-Forman SAP system.

Differences in payroll procedures presented another challenge. Brown-Forman utilizes a separate system to run its payroll. Casa Herradura, however, had always run payroll on its SAP ERP system. As a result, the Brown-Forman team had to create systems and business rules using an unfamiliar methodology. Evelyn says Attunity understood Brown-Forman’s system and requirements, and was instrumental in creating the decision-making process to determine which data would enable the new payroll system to become operational.

Once basic construction and configuration of the new SAP landscape was implemented, Brown-Forman moved into the testing phase. Since there was no existing transactional data that could be imported, they had to create their own. Here again Gold Client was helpful in preparing the system for testing.

“When the SAP landscape was developed, Gold Client was used to create a production client for the actual transaction of business. This client was populated with sample, non-relevant data,” Evelyn says. “We then created subsequent clients to perform configuration and testing. Since hardware limitations restricted our ability to create separate testing and live systems, a mock go-live was developed in another client to ensure there were no surprises.”

## Results

Brown-Forman met the accelerated go-live deadline for which they were under legal and contractual obligation. “Without Gold Client this deadline could not have been met,” Evelyn states flatly. “It significantly reduced our development and testing time while also lowering our project costs.”

Once the system went live, Evelyn says Brown-Forman viewed the entire project as an unqualified success. “We knew there was a possibility that unforeseen problems could interrupt the process flow, but such problems never materialized,” he says. “The system became operational very smoothly, and only a minimal number of modifications were required after the go-live date. On Day One the Basis job was done. We didn’t hear of any problems.”

Although this was a critical project to complete at the time, it was really just phase one. Phase two was to bring all the data, including vendors, inventory, shipments, payroll, sales, HR and more onto the SAP system at headquarters in the U.S.—a tight deadline that was also met.

“Gold Client is amazingly versatile and easy to use,” Evelyn says. “We’re using it for a number of intelligent data transfer projects. It is a valuable tool for any SAP environment.”

**Gold Client Solutions** software consists of focused and integrated components, providing powerful features, unique to SAP applications.

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