

# Real case

## Norteña

📅 June 2024

# Real case

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The real case aims to showcase an SME with a long history in digital transformation that began in 2006 and continues today. This SME is an example of how adopting different technologies and tools across various areas of the company has allowed them to become a reference in the waterproofing sector. This sector refers to the industry dedicated to protecting structures and surfaces from the harmful effects of water and moisture. Their progress has been possible thanks to their innovative approach and commitment to continuous improvement.

This case study highlights Norteña, a company based in Aranda de Duero (Burgos), recognized with several awards for its digital transformation, such as the Cepyyme 2019 award and the 4.0 Digital Transformation award given by the magazine Castilla y León Económica.

This case aims to serve as a **source of inspiration** for other SMEs in various sectors that are in their own **digitalization process**. By sharing Norteña's experience and achievements, it seeks to illustrate the **multiple utilities and benefits** that the adoption of technological tools offers in the business environment.



01. —

## Norteña

Waterproofing  
execution



- **Dirección web**  
<https://www.nortena.es/>
- **Localización**  
Street Castaño 9  
Aranda de Duero  
Burgos, 09400  
Castilla y León
- **Número de empleados**  
25-30 employees
- **Type of company**  
Limited company
- **Sector**  
Construction





02. ———

## Initial challenges

Since its inception, Norteña has focused on **minimizing fixed expenses**. Therefore, they found it necessary to seek an external administrative support team. However, challenges arose as this team was located in Barcelona, making it difficult **to share information efficiently** due to the lack of cloud options in 2006.

Therefore, they began to look for alternatives to solve it. They discovered tools like **Dropbox Business**, which allowed them to resolve the issues of sharing information by facilitating collaboration between people who were not physically in the same place.

Additionally, at the beginning of this digitalization process, the first technological tool they implemented was **the integration of a CRM** as a solution to a **bottleneck in commercial follow-up**. This initial measure laid the foundations for more effective management of customer relationships and contributed to the **growth of Norteña**.



*“When tools like Dropbox Business and others emerged, we started using them because they solved many problems for us... We needed to be able to work with different people without having to be in the same physical location.”*

03. ———

## Growing hand in hand with technological solutions

Since adopting the CRM, Norteña has continued its digital transformation process. With the goal of being innovative and improving operational efficiency, the company has integrated various solutions across all departments.

Among the wide range of tools, they use daily, the **ERP Claris FileMaker** stands out as the central system integrating the rest of the applications.

They also use tools for **vehicle, tool, and machine geolocation**.

Por otro lado, también aprovechan herramientas como **Azure**, que les permite realizar **mediciones automatizadas de cubiertas**. Esta herramienta captura puntos en la cubierta y **genera automáticamente un plano con mediciones y cotas precisas**, lo que les agiliza y optimiza el proceso de trabajo.

### Another example

**Catral Garden and Home** is an Alicante-based SME dedicated to the gardening and DIY sector. They decided to **install an ERP** that has allowed them to **extract and analyze** customer and supplier **data** more efficiently.

In addition, they have software programs that **provide real-time control of their operations**. This technological approach allows them to optimize their processes, improve efficiency, and **offer better service to their customers**.



# Catral

GARDEN AND HOME

04. ———

## Being prepared for cyberattacks

Norteña emphasizes the importance of cybersecurity. They have a proactive mindset, preferring prevention over reaction. In 2023, they implemented a cybersecurity project after conducting an audit in 2022 that identified their weaknesses in this area.

Due to the organization at Norteña, they experience few unforeseen events in their day-to-day operations. However, they recognize that it is common for a client to be inactive for a month due to cyberattacks that prevent them from operating.

As part of their security practices, they have integrated a tool that acts as a scanner, analyzing the reliability of the links accessed by their workers. This measure helps minimize the possibility of cyberattacks.

### Another example

Galletas Birba is an SME from 1893 dedicated to cookie production. Aware of the importance of security in the digital age, the company has implemented a comprehensive security system.

This system includes double authentication in email, adding an extra layer of protection against unauthorized access. They have also incorporated a VPN so employees can securely access servers from outside the premises. This VPN encrypts all data traffic, enhancing cybersecurity.



05. —

## Different applications of Artificial Intelligence

Norteña has incorporated artificial intelligence in various departments to **improve efficiency and security in its operations**. First, they have implemented AI in **management and administrative areas**, allowing the automation of tedious tasks that consume a lot of workers' time, such as logging working hours.

They have also integrated **AI-powered cameras** that detect whether operators **comply with safety protocols** while working on the roof. If any anomaly, such as the lack of personal protective equipment, is identified, the office is automatically notified, allowing an immediate response to potential occupational risks.

Regarding their future plans, they are developing **a ChatGPT-like system** that stores all company information. This will allow any employee to access relevant information in seconds simply by querying the system.



*“At the end of the day, we are looking for artificial intelligence in different tasks that are very tedious and repetitive, which drain a lot of energy from people, and that AI can perfectly study how a person does it through a computer and the software used, and replicate it without any problem.”*

06. —

## Benefits obtained

The constant search for technological solutions to drive digital transformation has brought **three significant benefits** to Norteña::



01.

Thanks to the integration of the CRM, they managed **to increase sales by 25%** during the following year. This tool has allowed them to manage **customer contact more efficiently**.



02.

The constant search for innovation has earned them numerous recognitions for their **digital transformation**, including the **Cepyme 2019 award**, the **4.0 Digital Transformation award**, and the **FAE Innovation award**.



03.

The incorporation of artificial intelligence in management departments is generating **cost and time savings**, allowing employees to dedicate those resources to other tasks.



07. ———

## Next steps

Although Norteña has already achieved a high level of digitalization as an SME, they perceive that they are still in a *continuous process of evolution*. Their next objective is to develop their **own ChatGPT**, as mentioned earlier, and begin implementing **RPA systems with integrated artificial intelligence**. This strategy will allow them to identify and automate repetitive tasks effectively, further optimizing their operations and resources.

With the goal of always staying **one step ahead** and in line with their history of innovation as one of the first to adopt remote work even before the pandemic, Norteña has implemented a **4-day workweek** for its production operators since January 2024. This aims to improve employee satisfaction and attract the **best talent in the sector**.

However, the company has faced challenges in recruiting suitable personnel as the tasks do not require specific formal training. To address this need, they have established the '**Norteña Imperacademy**,' offering highly specialized training with a technological focus.

This real case showcases an SME that, thanks to its **commitment to innovation and the adoption of new technologies**, has allowed them to be leaders in the sector and stay ahead of their competitors.



# Acelera *pyme*