

## Client

Fanimation, Inc.  
fanimation.com

## Type of Business:

Developer and manufacturer of innovative ceiling fans

## Number of Locations: 3

Number of Employees:  
55

AccountMate Users on System: 35

## AccountMate Modules:

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Bank Reconciliation
- Consolidated Ledger
- General Ledger
- Inventory Control
- Kitting
- Manufacturing
- Purchase Order
- Return Merchandise Authorization
- Sales Order

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Application ShipIT

*“As the one who ultimately has to answer to the reliability and accuracy of our information systems, I do sleep well at night being able to count on AccountMate as the central software around which our business grows.”*

– Jay Boughner,  
CFO, Fanimation, Inc.

## Fan Manufacturer Triples Sales Volume in Ten Years and Tracks Shipping Container Movement Using AccountMate

Fanimation is an Indiana-based designer and manufacturer of unique, high quality and innovative ceiling fans. For nearly three decades, Fanimation has evolved from a one-man shop into a thriving international business. Today Fanimation sells its ceiling fans to more than 1,500 customers and ships its products to more than twenty-three countries around the globe.

Recognized as an industry leader, Fanimation continues to revolutionize the lighting industry with their energy efficient product designs and commitment to growth. “A significant part of our development process for any fan is designing the motor to best meet the needs of the overall design,” points out Tom Frampton, Founder and CEO of Fanimation. “Product development focuses on providing unique design, but the parts that clients do not see are equally important to us.”

With a mission to deliver ground breaking ceiling fan designs, Fanimation is proud to achieve this goal while using sustainable products and business practices. The company offers a wide selection of Energy Star rated ceiling fans with DC motors and integrated LED light kits, which significantly reduce energy consumption. Incorporating recycled materials in product packaging and using energy efficient lighting throughout the shipping facility has reinforced their status as an innovative leader in the industry.

### The Challenge

As the demand for Fanimation’s unique fan solutions increased world-wide, the company has experienced consistent growth over the years. Keeping pace with increased sales, as well as production and distribution demands was increasingly challenging under the company’s original, proprietary accounting system.

### The Solution

#### Scalability Requirements

Fanimation specifically looked for a robust business and financial management solution that would provide real-time information and automation, keep stride with increasing sales demand, plus handle expanded functionality requirements of their growing business. To resolve the situation, Fanimation turned to NexLAN, an Elite AccountMate Business Partner with a well-deserved reputation for solving strategic business challenges.

After an extensive in-house analysis, NexLAN recommended that the company install AccountMate SQL’s financial management system due to the program’s open architecture and scalability to meet Fanimation’s evolving business requirements. “Fanimation is an innovative and growing company so having the *perfect-fit-system* today wasn’t sufficient. They needed the flexibility of open data and available source, plus database and user scalability so their core financial management system would have legs well into the future.” explains Kevin Stroud of NexLAN, LLC.

#### Product Arrival Visibility

An early challenge was providing a means of tracking the expected arrival date of incoming intermodal container shipments from manufacturers in Asia. Shipping cargo by sea adds at least six weeks of lead time to every purchase order being received into inventory at Fanimation, before it can then be distributed on to satisfy customer orders. With over 200 customer orders per day, Fanimation needed to track the status of containers throughout their movement in order to project item availability for order fulfillment. “Quickly having access to reliable product availability dates is critical to our dealer network in order for them to secure the sale with our end customers,” notes lead customer service employee Diana Limp.

To solve this business challenge, NexLAN created an in-transit warehouse in AccountMate with a unique bin nomenclature system that references the estimated arrival date as the assigned bin number. This simplifies the entire freight transportation process and allows authorized company personnel to run inventory reports and drill down by warehouse, lot and bin for order details. As a result, Fanimation employees have access to estimated arrival times and can mitigate order fulfillment problems in advance. Equipping the Fanimation team with up-to-the-minute information creates a knowledgeable workforce ultimately boosting productivity, sales and customer service.

## Unique Inventory Attributes

Fanimation currently sells more than 70 different fan models, each with numerous unique important attributes. Examples include compatibility of each product line with accessories such as remote controls, light kits and downrods; wattage usage at different power settings; packaging dimensions; and palletization quantity. Fanimation required a means of tracking more than a hundred of these product-specific attributes, and utilizing them in functions such as order entry and inventory management.

NexLAN leveraged AccountMate's inherent flexibility to provide custom data entry screens and reports, but moreover provided an end-user friendly means of importing/exporting these values to/from Microsoft Excel to avoid tediously editing values. A current snapshot of the data can be exported to Excel, where values can be easily edited *en masse* and then imported back into the system to affect the update.

## Comprehensive Order Tracking

With over 6,000 retail customer locations in the United States, Fanimation needed a shipping system that integrated directly with numerous carriers including UPS, FedEx, and OnTrac to retrieve shipping cost, price it appropriately, and provide instant tracking information to the retailer destination.

AccountMate's award-winning program design allows seamless integration of numerous industry-specific solutions – including ShipIT, which automatically interfaces with UPS and FedEx to provide accurate shipping costs and posts shipment updates to retailers via the internet in real-time. For the OnTrac interface, NexLAN developed custom software to affect the same functionality. Integrating directly with these carriers streamlines the shipping process, dramatically improves warehouse efficiencies and provides timely customer communications.

## The Result

Fanimation has leveraged AccountMate, supported by NexLAN with industry-specific solutions, for more than 10 years. As a result, their business management systems provide real-time information, integration and automation available 24/7, supporting company goals and strategies. This has allowed Fanimation to more than triple revenue in that time frame, while adding warehouses nationwide and significant customer growth.

Not only does AccountMate software provide a robust business solution which scales to their considerable sales, production and distribution volumes, but the company continues to expand functionality. "As the one who ultimately has to answer to the reliability and accuracy of our information systems, I do sleep well at night being able to count on AccountMate as the central software around which our business grows," said Boughner.

By creating a corporate culture based on family values, producing only the highest quality ceiling fans and developing sustainable products and business practices, Fanimation will continue to be a leader in the ceiling fan industry.

## About Third Party Application

AKA Computer Consulting – ShipIT fully automates shipping processes. [akaconsulting.com](http://akaconsulting.com).

## About NexLAN LLC

NexLAN is recognized as a leading AccountMate Solution Provider. NexLAN was selected by Accounting Technology as one of eleven Killer VARs in 2005 and "Top 100 Pacesetter" by Accounting Technology for six consecutive years from 2005-2010. NexLAN is an Elite AccountMate Business Partner and value-added-reseller specializing in custom software development and mid-tier manufacturing/accounting solutions. NexLAN can be reached at [www.nexlan.com](http://www.nexlan.com).

## About AccountMate

Founded in 1984, AccountMate develops and markets fully customizable business management software designed to meet the growing needs of small to medium-sized businesses. Systems range from single user versions to those that support over hundreds of users simultaneously. AccountMate software is available for local installations or cloud deployment. It is distributed exclusively through a worldwide channel of authorized solution providers. AccountMate can be reached at (800) 877-8896 or [www.accountmate.com](http://www.accountmate.com).

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