

QUIREPACE

Kingfisher Associates and VAI offer UK-based Quirepace a one-stop-shop with S2K.

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

The acquisition of a similar business looked straight forward until pneumatic tube business Quirepace needed to bring the IT systems together. After researching various options, it turned to IBM business partner Kingfisher Associates for assistance.

Gosport based Quirepace - www.quirepace.co.uk - is a leading authority on Pneumatic Tube System equipment. The company's products are used in supermarkets to transport cash safely away from the tills and in hospitals to transfer documents, drugs and samples. Over the years, they've installed thousands of units across the UK.

In the Summer of 2007, Quirepace acquired the business and assets of Barloworld Vacuum Technology (BVT) with the intention of combining the complementary

parts of the two businesses (Lamson and Quirepace). The aim was to reduce overheads, improve productivity and enhance the existing product portfolio, while still maintaining other parts of BVT that didn't fit within the Quirepace's current business. The acquisition also included British Vacuum Company (BVC), the inventors of the vacuum cleaner, which specialised in vacuum technology for industrial applications, including ATEX compliant industrial vacuum cleaners, centralised vacuum cleaning systems and exhausters/blowers.

Incompatible Systems

While trying to combine the two businesses, Quirepace found that the IT systems it inherited were incompatible with their own systems. For example, Quirepace used Sage on a PC based network, whereas BVT ran its business systems on an IBM

AS/400, while both companies used different applications for contract costing and service. This incompatibility resulted in hours wasted re-keying data and swapping information via spreadsheets and other documents.

Having evaluated the business issues caused by having disparate systems, a decision was taken to source an integrated system that was robust, proven and scalable to cope with planned future growth, without the potential proliferation of more servers and the associated maintenance and energy costs.

The search for a solution

Quirepace went out to tender with various local and national companies looking for a totally integrated solution to fit its budget and that could be installed and implemented in a reasonable time frame. A short list was drawn up



including a Microsoft solution and an integrated ERP solution from Vormittag Associates Inc. called S2K which was designed and priced specifically for the mid-market, running on the IBM Power platform.

Quirepace came down firmly in favour of the VAI solution, due to its powerful function and ease of use across all areas of the business, a proven track record of installations across the world and the comfort of being marketed in the UK by a relatively local IBM Business Partner, Kingfisher Associates - www.kfa.co.uk - based in Dorset.

“We knew that it was time to replace our home-grown disparate software systems with an advanced, flexible solution and were looking for an established, stable company who could help us select, implement and support a replacement system that satisfied

all requirements.” said Quirepace’s Financial Director Martin Chewter.

Going live

Quirepace chose two specific modules: S2K Enterprise for Distribution designed to streamline business operations and to improve supply chain management and customer service; and S2K Service and Repair, a completely integrated service management solution, including customer orders and Inventory modules to manage customer service calls, including the tracking of technician assignments and online inquiry support.

S2K went live in August 2010 and they now enjoy faster, virtually error-free order processing and business reporting. Meanwhile, users are happy with the familiar ‘Windows’ type GUI interface. As data only has to be entered once, an added benefit is that some members of staff have been

released for more important tasks.

Streamlined operations

VAI’s totally integrated ERP system has enabled the business to view data easily across all parts of the system, which is proving a major benefit in streamlining customer service management.

Through the creative use of its own resources and the IBM Business Partner programme, Kingfisher Associates were able to offer Quirepace a one-stop-shop for the selection, sourcing and implementation of a proven mid-market ERP solution with over 1,000 installations across the world. It also supplied all the relevant IBM hardware and software via another IBM Business Partner – DU360, and included first and second line support for the implementation, along with maintenance and source code.

