

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: J E ELTHERINGTON & SON

Sage Enterprise
helps aluminium company to shine



Enterprise Solutions

Client profile

Family-run aluminium company J E Eltherington & Son is one of the UK's largest independent aluminium companies, with over 40 years' experience in the stockholding and fabrication of sheet and extrusions, and in manufacturing transport body kits.

It is also a major producer of PVCu windows and doors for the caravan and portable building industry.

The company is based in Hull and has 160 employees.



"We are able to keep our total cost of ownership low, whilst ensuring that our staff have access to the right tools to enable them to maximise productivity."

Keith Billinge,
Finance Director, J E Eltherington & Son

The challenge

J E Eltherington and Son had a long experience of using Sage Enterprise Solutions products. The upgrade from Sage CS/3 on UNIX to Sage Enterprise enabled them to take advantage of the Windows 2000 environment.

The new powerful functionality available in the developments from Sage Enterprise Solutions with seamless integration to the web and Microsoft Office 2000 would mean the business critical solutions would be future proofed.

At the same time, the company was looking for a low-cost method of upgrading its software.

A further business objective was to enhance the sales and marketing functions and gain greater control over leads and opportunities.



Solution summary

Sage software:	Sage Enterprise – Finance/Distribution/Manufacturing modules
Operating system:	Windows® 2000
Database:	Microsoft® SQL Server 7 database
Hardware:	Windows terminals and PCs
No. of users:	48

The solution

The solution developed for J E Eltherington & Son introduced thin client technology, which off-loads work from the user device, working with Windows 2000 Terminal Services. This approach was combined with using PCs where appropriate.

Key components of the solution were as follows:

- Sage Enterprise, running on Windows 2000 and SQL Server 7 database
- Pivotal Corporation's eRelationship 2000 CRM and eBusiness solution, also running on Windows 2000
- Integration links between Sage Enterprise and the Pivotal software in the areas of customer information, contact details, orders and products
- 29 Acer thin client Windows terminals, running some or all of the following: Office 2000 (including Outlook 2000), Sage Enterprise, Zetafax fax software and Internet Explorer
- PCs running Sage Enterprise and Office 2000
- Specially developed forms for purchase orders, statements etc, linking Sage Enterprise and Zetafax
- Tailored Visual Basic scripts, which bring live stock enquiry information both to the desktops of sales, purchasing and trade counter staff, and to the public web site
- Integrated Datalinx Warehouse Management barcoding technology
- Powerful Sage Business Alerts controlling the internal Purchase Order Requisition, Authorisation Process and automatic eMail of customer orders to suppliers

The benefits

The Sage Enterprise solution has delivered major business benefits to J E Eltherington & Son.

These include reduced cost of ownership, increased user productivity, improved service to customers, integrated sales and marketing, and better management information.

Sage Business Alerts offers a complete management tool, enabling quick and easy order acknowledgement, and providing additional users with the empowerment to take orders to specified rules-based authorisation levels.

Through thin client technology, employees have access to the latest 32-bit technology of Sage Enterprise and Office 2000, without an upgrade to expensive PCs being needed. There are longer-term overhead savings, too, as administration and support requirements are reduced.

Further cost reductions have been made by integrating Sage Enterprise and Pivotal, with company-wide data integrity, increased data accuracy and reduced need for duplication.

Staff can work more efficiently using Office 2000 and Sage GUI clients, which can be customised to suit the requirements of each user. In addition, the specially tailored Visual Basic solution means that sales, purchasing and trade counter staff receive stock, purchase order and sales history information in real time directly on their desktops, enabling them to be more proactive and to

offer enhanced service to customers.

They can also fax purchase orders, statements etc. directly from within Sage Enterprise, using the integrated Zetafax functionality.

The company's website allows customers to check stock levels online, any time of the day or night, through integration with the Sage Enterprise system. Web use can also be monitored, through a tailored Proxy Server solution.

Through its open architecture, Sage Enterprise integrates seamlessly with Pivotal. This means that data is taken from Sage Enterprise to measure the success of marketing campaigns, giving increased visibility and automation to all marketing activities.

The integrated barcoding solution gives greater visibility and control of stock levels. Further knowledge management benefits have been realised through integration of the back office (Sage Enterprise) and front office (Pivotal) systems.

In conclusion, the ability to provide a fully integrated solution through the use of Sage Enterprise means the company is more integrated as a business and able to function more effectively.

The future

Commenting on the success of the Sage solution, Keith Billinge, J E Eltherington & Son's Finance Director, says, "We can see clear benefits for our organisation in adopting the latest Windows 2000 Server and Sage Enterprise technology. In enabling access to Sage Enterprise and Office 2000 from Windows terminals, we are able to keep our total cost of ownership low, whilst ensuring that our staff have access to the right tools to enable them to maximise productivity."

But the solution not only met the company's immediate requirements, it ensured that a robust platform was in place to enable future expansion.

JE Eltherington & Son is now developing its eBusiness further, with the addition of Sage Web Enterprise. This will help to reduce transaction costs, simplify supplier management and automate purchasing.



For more details of the solution provided for J E Eltherington & Son, please contact Sage Enterprise Solutions.

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