

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY: RENISHAW GROUP

Sage Enterprise

helps precision metrology company go global



sage

Enterprise Solutions

Client profile

Wherever precision manufacturing takes place, the Renishaw Group's products ensure that exacting specifications are met. The company designs, builds and supplies high-quality metrology systems to its manufacturing customers across the world, enabling them to carry out measurements to international standards – in some cases down to approximately one two-hundredth of the thickness of a human hair, in others to the wavelength of light.

The first Renishaw company was formed in the early 1970s. Today, the Group stands at the forefront of automated metrology. Over the years, its workforce has grown to over a thousand, with around a third of employees being employed overseas.

“Operating a successful global business demands tight management control of finance and distribution. Sage Enterprise has measured up to all our expectations in providing a consolidated system to support our worldwide operations, with cost-of-ownership benefits, too.”

Steve Ponting,
Group Systems Manager, the Renishaw Group

The challenge

The Renishaw Group's success over the past three decades has been assisted by impressive growth in its export markets, which account for over 90% of its sales. To help manage these international operations, Renishaw plc, based in Wotton-under-Edge in Gloucestershire, UK, co-ordinates the design, manufacturing, marketing, sales and service of all the Group's products worldwide and liaises with Renishaw's overseas companies, distributors and agents, as well as providing support for the UK sales operation.

With rapid expansion came the pressing need for Renishaw management to increase company-wide control. In the late 1990s, they investigated the likely benefits of implementing a standard finance and distribution system to support the constant flow of information between Renishaw plc and its subsidiaries.

Transforming the ten or so existing different systems across the Group into one system offered all the benefits of consolidation, with Head Office and every subsidiary working to the same standards. There were potential savings on cost of ownership to be made as well.

Solution summary

Sage software: Sage Enterprise – Finance/Distribution modules

Operating system: Windows NT®

Database: Microsoft® SQL Server

Hardware: Hewlett-Packard

No. of users: 150 user licences worldwide

The solution

The Finance and Distribution solution chosen by the Renishaw Group comprises a Sage Enterprise system on an NT platform, with a Microsoft SQL Server database. The company also bought software modules to handle repairs, warehouse management, telesales and EDI (electronic data interchange).

Three factors influenced the choice of Sage Enterprise: its scalability, which enabled it to fit the varying sizes of subsidiary; its availability on NT/SQL, already chosen as the strategic platform; and Sage Enterprise Solutions' support in most of the countries where Renishaw has a subsidiary company.

The plan was to start with a prototype system at Renishaw's headquarters in the UK with a subsequent worldwide roll-out, beginning with Hong Kong and Ireland and moving on to Italy, the USA, Switzerland, France, Japan and Germany. Countries needing help with Year 2000 compliance were given priority.

As an important component of the implementation process, representatives from the financial, distribution and logistics operations were co-opted into regular 'virtual conferences' over a three-month period. Their involvement and commitment right from the start ensured that standard business processes could be implemented across the Group and that the prototype system matched local operational needs.

As a result, while some tailoring was subsequently needed to meet each country's legal and fiscal requirements, the roll-out work could be carried out by Renishaw itself, with some support from Sage Enterprise Solutions' overseas offices.



The benefits

With all business information now being presented in the same format, whatever its country of origin, Renishaw's management can more readily interpret data on sales, stock, debtors, and so on, and identify any areas requiring attention. This, in turn, has led to greater business control.

The flow of information from the subsidiaries to the parent company has been much improved by the use of Sage Enterprise. Renishaw continues to grow its sales in its subsidiaries without incurring additional administration costs.

Under the new system, the former multiplicity of reports is replaced by a daily consolidation of the subsidiary accounts to a central server and then all Head Office reporting requirements being satisfied from there.



The future

The roll-out of the finance and distribution system across the Renishaw Group is continuing according to plan.

As the business grows, the Group will be able to set up new subsidiaries more easily as they adopt the tried and tested standard system.

Steve Ponting sums up, "In Sage Enterprise we found a system which met our immediate requirements for closer management control without increasing administrative overheads. We now have a strong platform in place on which to build our business in the future."



For more details of the solution provided for the Renishaw Group, please contact Sage Enterprise Solutions.

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