

Case Study

Rentokil Initial - Worldwide success with OpenAccounts

Client: Rentokil Initial

Sector: Business Services

Project: OpenAccounts

Integrated vision

Rentokil Initial is one of the largest business services companies in the world. It employs over 94,000 people and operates in over 40 countries including the major economies in Europe, North America, Asia Pacific and Africa.

Services provided are: Hygiene, Pest Control, Security, Tropical Plants, Parcels Delivery, Conferencing and Facilities Management. Over almost 80 years it has developed into a worldwide organisation serving over one million customers.

Unlike many FTSE 100 companies most of Rentokil Initial's core systems have been developed in-house. [Mark Purcell, systems development manager for corporate IT at Rentokil Initial](#), explains: "We take a pragmatic approach to systems development, going for functionality rather than feature rich applications. The corporate IT department in the UK looks after the IT systems for a number of the Rentokil Initial businesses and we develop the majority of our business systems in-house. Rentokil Initial has used Progress software as its core development environment for the last 12 years and we deploy core systems wherever possible. However, although we recommend packages to other businesses within the company we do not enforce the use of specific applications."

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Rentokil Initial began to look for a new accounting system and because of the requirements of different businesses, it required a solution which could easily adapt to each area of its organisation. Rentokil Initial also required a solution from an organisation that could offer international coverage to support systems, if needed, in places such as New Zealand through local business partners. After a review of the systems in the marketplace the company selected Advanced Business Solutions Ltd.

Mark Purcell continues: *"The solution is ideal for our needs as it offers the right functionality and provides international coverage through its worldwide business partners. Most importantly though was that Advanced Business Solutions shares the same pragmatic view on systems as Rentokil Initial."*

OpenAccounts was initially implemented in two construction equipment businesses (which have subsequently been sold) with Rentokil Initial keeping OpenAccounts simple and just using the base product. OpenAccounts works in conjunction with Rentokil Initial's other core business systems, which consist of sales, service and billing.

Mark Purcell states: *"We began working with Advanced Business Solutions in 1996 implementing the solution with some bespoke programming to incorporate diary functionality within credit control in one of the smaller Rentokil Initial businesses. The initial implementations were so successful that the project was extended to other parts of the company."*

In 1998 OpenAccounts was installed at Rentokil Wiper Services, Initial Cleaning and Rentokil Initial Ireland in preparation for the Euro. Then in 1999 the solution was extended into Initial Security and Initial Catering. In 2000 it implemented a 56-user system in Rentokil Initial New Zealand and then in 2001 the solution was put into Rentokil Initial's head office in the UK.

Global roll-out

Mark Purcell continues: *"Although we recommend packages to our businesses we do not enforce their take-up. But with OpenAccounts the solution sells itself. The organisation has an excellent approach to sales as it offers a modular service. With Advanced Business Solutions it is not all or nothing, the company is happy to do all or just parts of the implementations. This is one of the reasons the take-up of the solution has been so successful across our company."*

OpenAccounts will have been implemented in Rentokil Initial Management Services alongside OpenAccounts e-Finance and Project Ledger solutions and in Rentokil Initial USA. Initial Textile Services has also decided to implement OpenAccounts Financials.

Mark Purcell explains why OpenAccounts was selected in the US: *"Rentokil Initial in the US made the decision to replace its existing account system in 2001. Although OpenAccounts had been recommended internally, alternative packages on the market were also considered. OpenAccounts was selected on the merits of its product functionality and also because of the support provided by Acumen Corporation - Advanced Business Solutions Business Partner. Acumen's modular approach to implementation and the fact that the core Progress-based in-house business systems were already implemented in Rentokil Initial US meant that OpenAccounts could just be integrated quickly and simply."*

Partners for the future

OpenAccounts is now deployed in all of the major Rentokil Initial UK sites as well as in New Zealand and the US and there are currently 300-400 concurrent worldwide users. The take-up of the OpenAccounts solution is still going strong with many other parts of the company choosing to take on the system.

In the future, the OpenAccounts solution will be implemented further abroad. 2003 will see a 110-user system implemented in Rentokil Initial Australia and from 2004 onwards opportunities have been identified in South Africa (with over 100 users), Canada, Malaysia, Singapore and The Philippines. Rentokil Initial's head office will also implement OpenAccounts Sales Ledger and Credit Control as will Rentokil Initial Ireland.

Mark Purcell explains why the take-up of the solution has been so wide and the benefits Rentokil Initial is realising: *"The success of the OpenAccounts solution can be explained through three areas: partnership, integration and world-wide support through its business partners. The interaction capabilities of OpenAccounts means that implementing the system is as easy as flicking a switch. Plus the flexibility of OpenAccounts' OpenLink enables us to import data from legacy systems quickly and easily. Success has been achieved through keeping the solution simple to meet end user demands. The flexibility of OpenAccounts deployment was a major factor behind its selection and why it continues to be deployed in other areas of the company. We have not yet come across one environment where OpenAccounts cannot be deployed. OpenAccounts can run on Windows NT/2000, Linux, and Client Server on a LAN and Citrix on a WAN."*

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Partnership has been the key element in the success as Advanced Business Solutions people are willing to work with us to meet quite unique requirements. For example they are currently working on a fast-track implementation methodology for OpenAccounts Financials in the Far East. The calibre of people and services on offer has also been exceptional. Any issues are always dealt with quickly so there are never any problems. There is no finger pointing, we just get together and solve issues quickly and effectively.

We have saved a lot of time in the UK operation as data is now being fed automatically into the OpenAccounts system and so there is much less re-keying. The solution is also easy to use and, in particular, the EDR Reporting module provides the management team with high level summaries and drill down reports. Through OpenAccounts we are now able to reconcile accounts to great detail simply and quickly. The solution is extremely reliable and has never failed. We have a unique relationship with Advanced Business Solutions which works well for both parties and I will continue to recommend the solution across the company," Mark concluded.

About Business Solutions

Advanced Business Solutions, an Advanced Computer Software Group plc company, provides leading integrated business applications and services that enable public, private and third sector organisations to retain control, improve visibility and gain efficiencies whilst continually improving corporate performance. It's award-winning software systems comprise core financial management, procurement, human resource and payroll systems, integrated with a range of collaborative, document management and business intelligence solutions . It also provides managed and bureau service options.

Advanced Computer Software plc is the UK's leading supplier of software and IT services to the health, care and commercial sectors. It comprises 3 main divisions and has 7000 customers and 800 staff worldwide.

For more information

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