



Overview

Country: United Kingdom

Industry: Retail/Consulting

Customer Profile

Ritzenthaler is a safety and security company that provides clients in the financial services and public sectors with physical and electronic security systems.

Business Situation

Ritzenthaler relied on a series of separate IT systems for each business function. This lack of integration led to inefficient processes and duplication of information across multiple systems.

Solution

Deploying Microsoft® Dynamics™ AX across the entire business, supported by Microsoft BackOffice® Server 2000 and Microsoft Windows® 2000 Server gave Ritzenthaler a stable, scalable enterprise-wide IT solution.

Benefits

- Better access to information
- Efficient project monitoring
- Improved after-sales support
- Customised processes



Security Business Takes Flight With Raven Computers and a New IT Solution

“We’re still developing the product and discovering new advantages, but already our key business processes have been considerably enhanced by Microsoft Dynamics AX.”

Mark Willis, Systems Development Manager, Ritzenthaler

Ritzenthaler is a safety and security firm based in West Yorkshire. Ritzenthaler’s customers, including banks and government agencies, demand fast, efficient and reliable service. However, the lack of integration between the companies IT systems was slowing down key business processes hampering Ritzenthaler’s ability to provide a good service. Microsoft® Dynamics™ AX offers a fully integrated and customisable system that supports and enhances all of the company’s business processes.



Situation

Ritzenthaler, part of the C3S Group, provides customers with consulting services and supplies products for all aspects of safety and security. Among the Yorkshire-based company customers are banking and financial companies, government agencies, and other large blue-chip organisations.

In today's uncertain world, demand for the Ritzenthaler service is growing exponentially. The company advises customers on all aspects of safety and security, providing a range of security solutions, including Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), fire and ballistic glazing systems, mobile security units, access control, and other electronic protection systems.

The major challenge for Ritzenthaler was meeting the growing demand for its services while relying on an outdated series of the MS-DOS® operating system—based business applications. Mark Willis, Systems Development Manager, Ritzenthaler explains “We realised the expansion of the business wasn't feasible using numerous and isolated information sources.”

The problem with the existing IT systems was that they were not integrated, and couldn't manage business information from all of Ritzenthaler's departments. “For example, we couldn't link the account system to the order processing and preventative maintenance systems. Using various systems was difficult and labour intensive, because we often needed to input the same data into different systems,” adds Willis.

Additionally, the MS-DOS—based system couldn't manage the volume of Ritzenthaler's business information and was difficult to expand. When conflicts arose between different systems, suppliers tended to blame one another, and the operation of the IT architecture was extremely inflexible.

“Expansion based on the numerous existing, and isolated information sources wasn't feasible,” says Willis.

To meet these challenges, Willis decided to look for a fully integrated business management system that would manage all of the company's different departmental processes. To find the right system, Ritzenthaler turned to Raven Computers, a Microsoft® Gold Certified partner, to help with the project.

Solution

Initially, Ritzenthaler thought that the best solution was a new sales order processing application that would integrate with the existing accounts package. However, it quickly became apparent that this wouldn't meet all Ritzenthaler's requirements. “We looked at integrating our current third-party software with Sage 100TM but it was obvious from an early stage that the proposed solution wasn't flexible enough for us.”

Instead, Raven Computers recommended that Ritzenthaler implement Microsoft Dynamics™ AX across all its business units, including finance, sales order processing, logistics, HR, and customer services. The new application would run on the Microsoft BackOffice® Server 2000 family server and the Microsoft Windows® 2000 Server operating system.

Microsoft Dynamics AX offers all company employees a comprehensive suite of software modules covering all business processes, from providing customer quotations to contract management, invoicing and post-sales support.

Previously, many of these processes were paper-based. “Someone purchasing materials had to write a requisition order which was typed onto a purchase order and received into a stock management system that was

only available to selected members of staff," Willis says. "Now we can do the whole thing electronically and make the information available to all staff without a single piece of paper."

To ensure the installation went smoothly, Raven Computers performed an upfront analysis of Ritzenthaler's personnel, the company's business needs, and its hardware requirements. This resulted in the creation of a specialised project team of Raven personnel that installed new hardware and managed the conversion of data from all of the disparate sources into the new system, as well as the training of employees.

"Operating procedures across our businesses vary widely, but Microsoft Dynamics AX provided us with a common platform we could customise to our needs, and a system that would easily cope with the expansion of the business without making our existing systems and knowledge redundant," says Willis.

Raven Computers's experience was vital to the success of the project. Willis adds, "We searched the internet for possible integrated systems providers and interviewed a number of companies. We were fortunate to find that Raven Computers, who already provided hardware and software support to the company, had invested heavily in Microsoft Dynamics AX."

"The relationship with Raven Computers has proven to be invaluable and extremely flexible allowing modifications and assistance to be provided remotely using Virtual Private Network (VPN) access. It is a complete philosophy change for one product to encompass all of our needs. We consider the purchase of Microsoft Dynamics AX to be the cornerstone for the future development of our business."

Benefits

Better Access to Information

Since Microsoft Dynamics AX went live, employees in all areas of Ritzenthaler's business have been able to access key business information quickly and accurately. In addition, many processes have been improved by automating tasks and reducing duplication of effort across disparate systems.

The company is continuing to find new benefits, adds Willis: "We're still developing the product and discovering new advantages, but already our key business processes have been considerably enhanced by Microsoft Dynamics AX."

Efficient Monitoring of Projects

One of the key benefits has been the ability to monitor projects from start to finish, using a new estimating module developed by Raven Computers. Estimates used to be created using Microsoft Excel 2002 but maintaining the template when prices fluctuated was a time-consuming process. The new estimating module uses data already present within Microsoft Dynamics AX to create flexible estimates that can be customised, quickly and efficiently.

Improved After-Sales Service

Ritzenthaler has also benefited from the Microsoft Dynamics AX integrated service system, which handles after-sales customer support, preventative and corrective maintenance. "The service module is used to manage corrective and preventative maintenance jobs, and records details of faults, work needed and parts used," explains Willis. "It also integrates with the sales ledger and stock module to help create invoices for the client, greatly enhancing our customer service."

For More Information

For further information about Microsoft products and services please visit www.microsoft.com/uk or call 0870 60 10 100*.

For hearing impaired customers with a Minicom contact: 0870 50 30 400*.

*Lines are open 8am-6pm Monday to Friday. Please note Numbers prefixed 0870 will be charged at national call rates. For details of national call rate charges please contact your telecoms provider.

For more information about Raven Computers products and services, call 01274 200 400 or visit the Web site at: www.raven-computers.co.uk

For more information about C3S / Ritzenthaler products and services, call 01422 370723 or visit the Web site at: www.c3ssecuritysystems.com

Fully Customised Processes Support Expansion

Finally, the company makes extensive use of custom-written order processing and custom-written estimating systems and makes extensive use of Product Builder™. “The design of Microsoft Dynamics AX as a development platform has allowed Raven Computers to refine areas of the software so that we can do completely new things, like colour-coded priority management or automatic service renewal letters,” adds Willis.

Willis believes the integration of data between business processes and the vast array to business tools to be unbeatable. The business has real-time access to information, essential in allowing proper financial control. Willis says, “We now have a platform we can build upon for the future. Microsoft Dynamics AX Enterprise Portal will give us the chance to grow our business and offer our customers greater choice through the use of e-commerce.”

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to: www.microsoft.com/dynamics

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Software and Services

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– Microsoft Dynamics AX

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