



Case study: Cooper Cromar

Synergist: making life easier at the office

The background

Established in 1984, Cooper Cromar is a leading architectural practice with acknowledged capabilities across many sectors of the property industry. The practice's approach combines design creativity with responsive management and a commercial edge.

The challenge

Cooper Cromar had had a business system in place for many years, but more recently, they'd found it wasn't being supported or developed in any way. It soon became out of date, so for Cooper Cromar, it was time to invest in a new system.

Financial Controller Jackie Morrison began researching what was available. She arranged to have presentations from four companies as well as site visits to see their systems working for existing customers.

One of the presentations was from Express Systems, and, after seeing Synergist in action, Cooper Cromar decided this was the best solution for their business.

The solution

Synergist was their first choice for a number of reasons. "The biggest thing that Synergist had was that it linked to Sage accounts. [It's] very, very straightforward," said Jackie.

Cooper Cromar also decided to invest in Synergist because of its web option, how it linked to accounts and its attractive cost. In fact, when it came to the price, they found that "Synergist is ideal for our numbers." Jackie also liked the fact that it had a handy contacts database.

Planning and installation went very smoothly, with high quality training and advice being provided by Express Systems. And the system has certainly made life easier, with a lot of time being saved on some routine work. Before Cooper Cromar had Synergist, half a dozen tasks - including changing clients'



names and filling in time sheets and invoices - were being done three or four times. With Synergist, these only have to be carried out once. The company can also do expenses electronically which streamlines the whole process.

There are other areas it's helped with too. "We can control things better because I can run reports..." said Jackie. These reports allow her to look at issues such as time sheet completion – for which Synergist sends automatic reminders at a certain time of the day. In fact, Jackie is impressed with the system's reporting capability overall.

Synergist has also given Cooper Cromar advantages they never expected. For example, it has become their contacts database, and they do their mail merge from it.

They're aware that Synergist has other benefits they haven't used yet. "We are looking at using the project planning aspect of it...that's an aspect we've not tapped into yet," said Jackie.

The service

"The service is very, very good," said Jackie. For a start, they received a personal approach from Express Systems' directors Steve and Jay. "It's not sold and forgotten. Even now, I'll get phone calls [to ask] how it's going." She's also impressed with the Synergist helpdesk. "The help desk is exceptionally good... I've got answers within five or ten minutes."

The result

While it's still early days when it comes to assessing the impact of Synergist, Jackie believes they have achieved important overall benefits with the system. "It has made us more efficient," she said. "And the efficiency...the time that we've gained is used to do things that we didn't have time to do before."