



Case study: On Line Design & Engineering Limited

Synergist: increasing a company's profitability.

The background

On Line Design & Engineering Limited was established in 1982 to provide design and draughting services. It now employs more than 450 people in all disciplines and branches of engineering and undertakes projects nationwide in the petrochemical, oil & gas, pharmaceutical and general engineering industries.

The challenge

The company carries out a mixture of jobs, some of which are reimbursable and some of which are done on a fixed fee basis. In the early days of the business with a small number of personnel, they found it relatively easy to keep paper copies and timesheets and use these as backup for time charges to clients. It was also easy to keep control of a small number of fixed fee projects. "However," said Chairman Jeff Laird, "as the company grew, it became increasingly difficult to control and report on the amount of hours that were being booked to projects."

So in the late 1980s, they wrote their own in-house project control system, which was also completely revised and re written in 1998 to take account of growth. However, ultimately due to the number of transactions and the age of the system, it became quite unwieldy to operate. At this point the decision was made to investigate the market.

A shortlist of three different systems was drawn up and, after a presentation by Express Systems, it was decided to purchase Synergist.

The solution

Synergist went live in February 2005. Jeff Laird commented, "We quickly discovered that the system had more useful functions than we thought we had required."

One of the functions which has proved to be invaluable is the ability to invoice multiple jobs for a client, thus reducing the amount of time and invoices raised.



They've also found that the reporting function is extremely powerful, enabling them to choose from standard reports within the system or to create their own with the quick report function.

There are other benefits for the company too. Jeff added, "In addition to integrating with our accounts software, Synergist also has the ability to produce and print invoices. This has saved an enormous amount of time within our accounts department since they do not actually have to produce invoices now."

The service

"We've found the service we have had from Synergist and Express Systems has been excellent right from the original bid stage, through implementation, training and back up support," said Jeff. "At each visit that we have had for training or system back up, new functions have been identified and the support we have had has always been focused on how the software can be used to improve the profitability of On Line."

The result

Jeff has been highly impressed with Synergist and Express Systems. He commented, "The service that has been provided by Express Systems has increased the profitability of On Line and helped us grow. Another area that it has made a great difference to is the professionalism of the reporting that the company is able to demonstrate to its clients."