



Case study: R&B, Gold Coast and Sydney, Australia

The background

R&B is a leading brand, design and digital agency based in Burleigh Heads on Australia's stunning Gold Coast. Established for 10 years, the company operates on the principle that the future of brands lies in experiences, not commodity – something consumers participate in rather than buy.

The company, run by siblings Rob and Bel Bare, connects brands to people through creative visual, interactive and tangible experiences. R&B was recently named a finalist in the 2009 Australian Interactive Media Industry Association (AIMIA) awards.

The search

R&B had been using a project management system for several years but staff were constantly dissatisfied with its capabilities, upgrade frequency and support provisions. When the system was discontinued, Rob Bare conducted an exhaustive online search for a replacement that would fulfil his wish list:

- * Ability to estimate, manage and invoice jobs from a single system
- * MYOB compatibility
- * Ability to assign tasks to users and for users to record project time and materials, either in-house or remotely via a web interface
- * Ability to give real-time reporting on project progress in relation to budgets and general WIP statistics

Says Rob: 'Overall, I wanted one system that could manage both design and digital projects with comprehensive and meaningful output.'

For R&B, Synergist from Express Systems is that system. 'It's the only one that ticks all the boxes,' he says.



The solution

Synergist's web-based interface was ultimately what sold Rob on the system as it can be accessed by staff working remotely (R&B also has an office in Sydney, some 500 miles from Burleigh Heads).

The support and upgrade cycle appealed, too: 'It keeps me confident that it will be around for a long time,' Rob says.

He was also impressed by the strong financial focus that underpins the software. 'It has a strong financial understanding of how our industry works and the ability to extract any information out of it that I need to manage the business effectively,' he says.

The service

As Express Systems' first Australian client, director Jay Neale managed R&B's installation in person. Jay did some of the preliminary work via remote access from Express Systems' UK base, travelling to Burleigh Heads to complete the installation.

'Jay was extremely helpful during installation and afterward. With most things being done before he arrived, it saved much time in getting down to business on the system,' Rob says.

The result

Rob says using Synergist from Express Systems has allowed better management of budgets, faster estimating and invoicing, better resource management and better cost analysis. 'It underpins the day to day operation of our business and gives me the confidence that we can grow our business far and wide with a strong operational system that supports our workflow and processes,' he explains.

He adds: 'It's something that keeps us on the rails with full control no matter how fast we are moving. We're very happy with our investment and how the system is performing, and would recommend it to anyone.'