



## Case study: Rave

# Synergist: helping an agency increase its billings.

### The background

The Rave team love what they do. Their work ranges from developing new brands and product launches to creating TV ads, designing marketing materials and planning media relations strategies. In 2008, they won a Gold at the Cream Awards for the best item of self promotion (general).

### The challenge

The agency was established in October 2000 and, at first, didn't have a comprehensive business system. For example, everyone's job costs were recorded in different places on spreadsheets. As Rave grew and enjoyed increasing levels of success, they found they needed to put a more integrated system in place. "One of the main triggers was that we were really rubbish at doing accruals. This meant that profitability was up and down," said Managing Director, John Wilford.

In the early days, they didn't record the time spent on jobs and John recalled how this meant they were unclear about job profitability in particular.

So, in 2005, they started to investigate suitable options and John became aware of Synergist from Express Systems. He was immediately impressed by the UK's leading job costing system for creative agencies and consultancies. "One of the key attractions was that it was a bespoke agency piece of kit rather than a bolt-on."

### The service

John asked Express Systems to install the Synergist system at Rave's offices.

He summarised their service as: "Brilliant. Awesome." He also commented, "The training was exceptionally good." And Express Systems' thorough approach to this didn't stop at the initial on-site service. They gave the agency exercises to do on a test system, and then came back and did a post-training audit to help them make the most of the system.



## The solution

Thanks to Synergist, the agency now knows which jobs are profitable and which aren't. The management team know when they're under-servicing or over-servicing clients. When it comes to staff utilisation, they know who's busy and who isn't. Synergist has also enabled them to speed up the quotation process by making it more automated.

It also integrates well with their accounting package. "When we weren't doing accruals properly, our figures never matched what we thought we'd done (on profit)," said John. "Now they do. Which is really important. If you make decisions to spend money and they're on the basis of false numbers, it's no good."

Another huge advantage for the Rave team is that they're now billing some clients by the hours worked. "This way, we know when we've worked additional hours and can bill it," commented John. "Therefore we're now more profitable."

## The result

John is extremely impressed with Synergist and believes it has benefited the agency greatly. "I would say that we've increased billings by 15%. And on the back of knowing how we're spending more time, we've achieved an 8% improvement in productivity."