



## Case study: RJ Design Associates

### Synergist: playing a part in an agency doubling its turnover

#### The background

RJ Design Associates is a fully integrated marketing communications agency that's passionate about companies' brands and getting them out to their audiences. The agency's skills include web, multimedia, photography, strategy and PR. Its in-house services also incorporate digital, litho and large format print – to streamline time and quality control and increase cost effectiveness.

#### The challenge

By January 2008, the agency had grown to such an extent that it needed to move away from a system that was largely paper-based with a separate solution for accounts.

"We discussed creating our own bespoke system, then we got a really innovative brochure [about Synergist] which caught the MD's eye and was very timely," said Company Director, Lee Day.

It was on this basis that Jason from Express Systems was invited in to visit the agency and demonstrate Synergist's capabilities – which really impressed the directors.

They also realised it would be better cost-wise than writing their own software or getting someone to write it for them, and liked the fact that Synergist was proven and regularly updated.

#### The service

The team at RJDA saw what they wanted in Synergist, and Lee Day thought the subsequent installation and training service from Express Systems was "fantastic, really good."

They found Louise [Project Manager] to be really thorough and she soon got in tune with the way they worked. On job sheets, for example, Lee commented: "She looked at our paper-based system and made sure Synergist was adapted to how we worked previously."

"They're a really good team – really good guys," he added.



## The solution

“We love the system – it’s brilliant,” said Lee. It’s a transparent system, so all account managers can see all the jobs that are going on and react accordingly.

“Our invoice process is now instant - job details feed into Sage which is a really slick functionality,” said Lee.

When it comes to time sheets, Lee said: “Synergist gives us a transparency which we didn’t have before. We can run digital time sheets and produce reports on those, which means total confidence for the client.”

RJDA has also found that the system has big benefits for cash flow. And, as turnover grows, staff can now easily keep a close eye on margins and on what the agency is paying.

Synergist has also enabled them to centralise business development. Now they can make sure they don’t miss any potential business opportunities as the system can be set up to send reminder emails about providing quotes.

The agency is about to buy a Sales and Marketing module; Synergist is effectively going to work as their CRM system. Lee said: “We can’t wait.” They’re planning to use all the data they’ve been collating over the last year. “All our data is clean, populated and updated and we feel it’s time to use that.”

## The result

Both turnover and staff numbers have doubled at RJDA since they put Synergist in. “Synergist has played a pretty strong part in that,” said Lee. ‘It has given us a slick client-facing edge.’

They can also plug in paper prices from their suppliers so that the account managers are quoting on up-to-date prices for their clients. As a result, they’ve reduced paper costs by 10-15%.

“Last month, we had a turnover in excess of £200K and the business could not have got to that level pre-Synergist...It totally underpins everything we do and it will grow with the company,” said Lee.