

Tibbett and britten

Business



Company: Lawson Customer: Tibbett & Britten Submitted by: Portfolio Communications

When UK-based international logistics specialist, Tibbett & Britten, wanted to update its existing financials system, it looked to e-business solutions provider, Lawson Software. The Tibbett & Britten Group is wholly dedicated to providing physical distribution and support services for major retailers and multinational manufacturers. It primarily operates in the food, consumer goods, and hi-tech and automotive sectors.

Current turnover exceeds £1.2 billion, having grown at 30 per cent per annum since the Company's flotation on the London Stock Exchange in 1986. More than 90 per cent of the business is contractual. Employing 30,000 people, the business operates in 25 countries. It is a market leader in the UK, Canada and South Africa and has substantial operations in mainland Europe, the USA, the Middle East and Far East.

Its client list includes major high street names in the UK such as the Arcadia Group, Asda, B; Q, Debenhams, Iceland, Marks ; Spencer and J Sainsbury. In North America it works for, amongst others, Kroger, Safeway, Shoppers Drug Mart and Wal-Mart. It counts within its manufacturing clients multinational companies such as Colgate-Palmolive, Compaq, Danone, Ford, IBM, Mars, Reebok and Unilever.

As part of its supply chain management, Tibbett ; Britten operates a 150 concurrent user financial system throughout Europe running on a central UK based server. Since its foundation, Tibbett ; Britten had accumulated a number of financial systems through a mixture of organic growth and acquisitions. Among them was Ampersand Ledgers from Ampersand and

MasterPiece from Computer Associates. As part of the company's tendering process it turned to a number of providers of financial software to achieve its strategic goal of common systems and applications across the company. Its first requirement in looking for a new financials package was that it would satisfy the company's technology strategy of 'Open Systems'. For Tibbett ; Britten, this meant Unix and an Oracle database.

Its goal in looking for a new system was also to have a standard package throughout the Group that could be implemented wherever local support was available. Lawson Software scored highest in meeting Tibbett ; Britten's IT criteria, and was the best fit software solution. The result was that Lawson was selected to provide its lawson. insight financials suite that includes components for General Ledger, Activity Management, Budgeting, Allocations, Asset Management, Accounts Payable/Receivable and Cash Ledger. Additional features include Employee Expense, Average Daily Balance, Currency, Tax and Report Writer. Lawson has supported implementations in North America, South Africa, UK, Belgium, Spain and Ireland.

Andrew Michaels, Tibbett ; Britten's Group Applications Manager, said: " We wanted a very flexible and large application that would meet all our business needs without bespoke changes. Using lawson. insight throughout the vast majority of the company will give us the opportunity to provide better financial control and management reporting." As well as additional functionality, the ease with which Lawson software can be interfaced with our varied operational systems means that staff previously rekeying existing information can add value elsewhere in the business. This focus on removing

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duplicate and redundant rekeying from our business processes is still continuing and Lawson is fundamental to that change,” continues Michaels. A dual reporting modification also enables Tibbett & Britten to better integrate the reporting requirements of their clients with those of the Group.

The implementation of Lawson software has also acted as a catalyst for Tibbett & Britten to undertake business re-engineering on various levels. One small example is debtor days: the Lawson system can automatically alert staff to an outstanding invoice and can thus improve cash flow by prompting staff to take further action. A challenge for Tibbett & Britten is to make use of the Web deployable features included in lawson. insight. The company is investigating how this can be used to enable suppliers and clients to access their own accounts via the Internet.

With around 30, 000 employees across the world, Tibbett & Britten is also interested in Web access for its own line managers to allow greater access to their departmental financial information without the need or considerable expense of expanding Tibbett & Britten’s own Intranet. Added Michaels: “ We will be looking at the additional functions offered by the Lawson system with particular emphasis on its Web deployability feature. As we continue to implement the system across the globe we can integrate financial and management accounting which will enable us to consolidate financial reporting across the Group. This is particularly useful for a geographically dispersed organisation like Tibbett & Britten.” Implementation of the Lawson software is complete in the UK and is gradually being rolled out throughout the Group.

Currently the system is being implemented in France and Ireland with Holland planned for later this year. Another factor key to Tibbett ; Britten’s selection of Lawson is the ability to take ownership of the implementation. In fact, so key is it that Tibbett & Britten created its own team of experts in the Lawson product. This team has been directly responsible for all the implementations with targeted assistance provided by Lawson themselves.” Because lawson. insight is so functionally rich, we know that as Tibbett & Britten grows and our business needs change, the software should remain relevant and useful.

In fact our challenge is to ensure that we are making best use of the product by reviewing our business processes in light of what Lawson is capable of doing. Lawson is Y2K compliant which means that the system should see us well into the next millennium,” said Michaels. This recognition reflects Lawson Software’s motto – ‘ Get a Customer and Keep Them for Life’. This is achieved through Lawson’s investment in building adaptable products that grow with customer needs and technological advances.