



Agresso solution Case Study

Crest Nicholson

Crest Nicholson is a leading developer of sustainable communities whose mission is to be the market leader in the design and delivery of sustainable housing mixed use communities. The Company aims to provide better homes, work places, retail and leisure spaces, and the ongoing emphasis is on environmentally responsible housing. Their commitment to deliver truly low carbon sustainable schemes is evident via its enviable development portfolio.



Moving with the times – a new system required

As a housing developer, Crest Nicholson needs to have reliable and accurate financial information as well as efficient costing and ordering processes as it works with lots of different contractors and sub-contractors on the building of its developments. The company had been using incumbent solutions for some fifteen years and was finding them increasingly demanding in terms of the resource needed to manage and maintain them. Myles Gibbins, Group IT Director, comments: "Put simply our old system was becoming outdated and just trying to bring it up to speed with the changing nature of our business and informational needs was proving time consuming and costly, involving a lot of man hours, writing of bespoke code and manual data input. We wanted a streamlined financial management process and a more integrated system that would work alongside our other applications without issue and one that would support our growth strategy. We knew our existing system could not accommodate these requirements easily so we decided it was time to change."

Sub-contractor module – a real partnership

UNIT4 Business Software was looking for a partner to develop a specialist sub-contractor module which was fundamental for Crest Nicholson. Myles explains: "Most of our procurement is done through sub-contractor arrangements. The module we sought from UNIT4 Business Software would streamline this procurement process and ensure all project costing and billing was accurate. The project was successful and the module is now available for other companies to buy and benefit from."

An integrated solution that embraces change

Crest Nicholson also wanted to ensure that its chosen solutions integrated together and in working with UNIT4 Business Software found the ideal solution partner. The Company has been impressed by Agresso Business World, provided by UNIT4 Business Software, as a package. Myles explains: "The Agresso solution offers us a combination of rich financial management information, a streamlined procurement

process and fixed asset management. All of which are integrated in the one solution ensuring we have the single view of our numbers from within a single system. We don't have to spend time switching between systems, extracting and importing data, building new databases or creating reports. This means we can focus on what we do best – analysing and using the financial and operational data Agresso generates to improve our business and its performance.”

The Agresso solution is built around its unique VITA architecture which allows users to make changes easily, quickly and cost effectively, even after implementation. Myles comments: “In such a changing landscape we need to be able to respond to internal and external market drives quickly and efficiently, and with UNIT4 Business Software we can modify the system easily and without lots of re-programming. We only have one person looking after the Agresso system within Crest Nicholson on a day to day basis and only need to bring in additional help for significant changes that are required.”

Change has been a good thing...

Crest Nicholson has gone from a highly manual process to a fully electronic system which is easy to use and one which has made the lives of users much easier. Myles concludes: “Of course it takes time to bed in a new system but now we have got over the initial changeover to the Agresso system and feedback suggests that everyone finds it straightforward to use. Today around 350 people, both finance and non-finance professionals, actively use the Agresso solution and the information it generates within the business and all of our orders and placed and processed through the system. Life has become much easier and the quality of information and its accuracy has improved significantly. We have a single version of our numbers and can see at a glance how we are performing against our corporate growth objectives and respond accordingly.”

Building for the future

Myles and his team are working on future enhancements to its sub-contractor module. UNIT4 Business Software really is contributing to the ongoing success of this leading property company.

About UNIT4

UNIT4 is a global business software company that creates, delivers and supports adaptable business software and services globally to help dynamic organisations manage their business needs effectively. We aspire to set the global standard for business software that helps dynamic organisations to embrace change simply, quickly and cost effectively. We have a broad portfolio of solutions that address different markets, requirements, technologies and types of organisation.

With offices in 13 European countries, as well 6 countries across North America, Asia Pacific and Africa and sales activities in several other countries, a revenue of €393.6 million was realised in 2008. UNIT4 is headquartered in Slidrecht, the Netherlands. The company has around 3,450 employees.

The Group incorporates a number of the world's leading change embracing software brands including Agresso Business World and CODA financial management software.

For service-intensive organisations, the Agresso Business World ERP suite is widely acknowledged as the business software solution that delivers the lowest Total Cost of Change. This is achieved thanks to its VITA™ architecture which allows for ongoing, post-implementation changes without the typical external IT costs and services that can cost firms huge sums of money each year.

CODA, our best-of-class financials brand, offers mid- to large sized organisations around the world financial management, analysis and business process management. CODA solutions are differentiated by its LINK™ architecture that provides financial executives a 'no compromise' approach to application change management by allowing business systems to be added or changed and easily integrated into the most dependable enterprise financials solution on the market.

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