

Tayside Contracts Case Study



Tayside Contracts is a commercially based local authority contracting organisation providing catering, cleaning, roads maintenance, vehicle maintenance and winter maintenance throughout the Tayside area of Scotland. They are the commercial trading arm of the Councils of Angus, Dundee City and Perth and Kinross and employ approximately 2500 people operating out of in excess of 300 establishments.

Customer Tayside Contracts	Solutions Attachment Manager	Job Costing	Time Recording
Market Sector Public Sector	Cash Management	Job Billing	
Country United Kingdom	eSeries	Procurement Card	
	Fleet Management	Purchase Ledger	
	General Ledger	Sales Ledger	
		Stock Management	

Introduction

In the past, Tayside Contracts used software that had only very limited project management functionality. The software was not capable of generating complete job costing reports so accountants maintained a running summary of project costs in a spreadsheet. This took a considerable amount of time and meant that the spreadsheets were often considerably outdated so project managers often didn't find out about a problem until it was too late to do anything about it.

Tayside Contracts wanted to improve time recording efficiency, automate the posting of time costs and improve the range and flexibility of management reporting.

A project team was brought together to find a better way to serve customers and improve Tayside Contracts business efficiencies through an integrated Project Management solution.

To ensure that all the important criteria would be met, key members of management were invited to participate in in-depth software demonstrations as well as on-site visits to see the various software packages in action.

During the process of evaluating software solutions, the importance of having a single, integrated Project Management solution became exceedingly clear.

The Solution

Tayside Contracts concluded its search for a truly integrated Project Management solution with Capita IB Solutions. The solution offered seamless integration, sophisticated reporting features and the ability to capture more relevant information.

Ed Middleton, IT Manager at Tayside Contracts said, "Having the Job Costing, Fleet Management, Job Billing and Time Recording systems in one package was the key. Tayside Contracts also found the software's scalability an important factor; choosing Capita IB Solutions, in part, because it could be customised to meet the organisations specific business requirements."

Capita IB Solutions has a solid reputation as a leading integrated, affordable business management solution for medium to large sized organisations. Middleton continues, "The ability to integrate all Tayside Contracts business functions into one easy to use system was attractive, as was the built-in job costing module that would allow Tayside Contracts to track all relevant information relating to each project it was working on.

Tayside Contracts provides catering, cleaning, vehicle maintenance and civil engineering services within both the public and private sectors, operating on a commercial basis. Controlling over 15,000 jobs annually, we needed a single integrated system to support the construction business and ensure our continued success in a highly competitive marketplace.

The team at Capita IB Solutions quickly demonstrated that they understood the needs of our organisation and worked with us to develop the solution that will help us deliver the quality management information we require." The applications are based on the eSeries Framework, which provides an integrated environment for the management of financial information. Each application can be run as part of the integrated suite or independently.

Job Costing provides up-to-the-minute information on jobs in progress. The facility is used to assign costs to a particular job, to a category of plant or equipment or to a particular project, task or activity. The system provides updates to the Job Costing Ledger automatically. In addition, it monitors and controls job costs, discovers full costing for all jobs or projects in hand makes profit/loss projections for a job; and manages and measures projects against budgets.

Fleet Management allows Tayside Contracts to maintain a record of Fleet Items, plant or equipment and to record costs and expenditure against them. Costs and expenditure is captured by the Fleet Management system automatically or can be imported from third-party sources. Fleet maintenance programs can be scheduled to take account of seasonal changes and other periodic variations and load requirements.

The system allows managers to track date-sensitive information such as fleet booking details, fleet location and

availability. It assists in maintaining planned service schedules and in Monitoring fleet income and costs. It can arrange for the billing of charges using, the Job billing module.

Job Billing issues certificates for payment to clients against jobs performed or work carried out on their behalf. It is configured to pass details of the certificates automatically to the Sales Ledger, allowing the necessary invoices or credit notes to be raised. The system reports on payment certificates, retentions, standard civil engineering billing methods and VAT calculations, as well as various pricing methods.

Time Recording permits project managers to monitor, analyse and control staff costs and performance against jobs or projects, and allows the organisation to meet Working Time and Driver Hour regulations. Time Recording offers complete flexibility: it can be configured to process timesheets and allows managers to decide on the level of controls to be applied in terms of timesheet review and authorisation. It caters for retrospective changes in pay rates, allowing updates to the Job Costing module with revisions to timesheets already processed.

The Benefits

The purpose of the system was to increase efficiency by providing management teams with better management information to make timely and effective decisions.

The Job Costing and Fleet Management applications, together with the linked Job Billing and Time Recording systems, provide an effective means of monitoring, analysing and controlling the various activities which contribute to the success of Tayside Contracts. Key business benefits include:

- Technology to enable business growth by meeting complex job costing and tracking requirements
- Realised very significant time savings, freeing employee resources for higher value tasks
- Value for money reduces costs and improved the organisations bottom line
- Functionality and capacity to support future expansion
- Users have the flexibility to tailor many elements of the Job Costing modules to suit their own individual needs and preferences
- Automated postings to financial ledgers reduces the knowledge of coding structures required by input staff, thus reducing processing errors
- Used in conjunction with Crystal Reports, provides a huge range of analytical management and monitoring information tailored to specific user requirements
- Elimination of double processing, automated reports generation, transfer of data to spreadsheets/documents, scheduled publishing of reports to intranet/individual users

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