



Challenge:

- Develop new, cutting-edge accounting suite for the construction industry
- Deliver market-ready product within a year
- Provide an open, flexible, scalable, Windows-based solution
- Ensure easy future development path

Solution:

- RM/COBOL
- WOW Extensions development environment for RM/COBOL
- Instant SQL for database access with RM/COBOL
- Professional service, support and maintenance

Customer Benefits:

- Quick development time
- Cost-efficiency
- Unrivalled functionality
- Reliability

Micro Focus puts WOW factor into Mardak accounting application

“Everything that [Micro Focus] has provided has helped us, but it is the WOW development environment that has really given our product the edge”

[Nigel Shippam, Mardak Development Director]

When Mardak set out to develop a brand new Windows-based accounting suite for the construction sector, they chose Micro Focus’s RM/COBOL development solutions to help them.

The Customer

Established in 2003, Mardak Limited provides financial and management information systems specifically designed for the construction industry.

Its integrated cost accounting product, Mardak Construction Accounts, has been newly created using the latest software technologies, and is the most innovative and flexible solution available.

The new product has a fast-growing customer base of around 50 sites in the UK. Customers include house builders, contractors and other specialist companies allied to the industry.

The Challenge

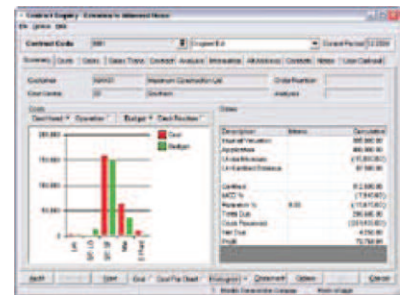
When MICAbuild, the well-respected financial product for the construction sector, was withdrawn from the market, existing and new users were forced to look at alternative solutions.

However, most of the available applications were either old products with a new front-end or standard accounting products with a few add-on functions. There was no up-to-date solution designed specifically for the sector.

Recognising the opportunity, a group of former MICAbuild key staff set up Mardak Limited. Their aim was to create a totally new and cutting-edge product using the most modern software development techniques.

To give customers the necessary flexibility and functionality and to provide an easy interface, Mardak knew they had to develop a scalable, open-platform, open-database solution with a Windows-based client.

As a new company, they also knew they had to keep costs down and get their product to market as quickly as possible.



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[Nigel Shippam, Mardak Development Director]

Solution

The first task for Mardak was to define how the new product would be developed – in which language and environment, and using which tools.

Mardak decided that the best option was to develop in COBOL and, after a thorough look at all the development tools and products available, chose Micro Focus as a development partner.

Martin Woolger, Mardak Director, explains: “We wanted a development environment that wouldn’t hold us back, one that would allow us to deliver an initial framework quickly, then add more advanced features later. In a detailed cost-benefit analysis [Micro Focus] came out well ahead with their RM/COBOL product set.”

“Another reason for choosing [Micro Focus] was our existing relationship with them,” adds Martin. “We knew we could trust them and work well with them and those are extremely important factors.”

Mardak was also persuaded by Micro Focus’s Windows Object Workshop (WOW) solution, an integrated development environment that helps developers make the most of the rich features of Windows.

During the project, the Mardak team worked very closely with Micro Focus in both the UK and USA to adapt and hone the WOW environment so that it could fully support the development’s objectives.

“It was a real partnership approach,” says Martin Woolger. “Considerable skills on both sides have added to WOW’s power and resulted in a much stronger development environment from which other [Micro Focus] customers can now benefit. The support offered by [Micro Focus] has been first class.”

Benefits

The overall benefit of the Micro Focus solution is that it has allowed Mardak to develop a cutting-edge accounting application for the construction industry in less than a year. In addition, the new application is flexible, scaleable and open, and integrates comprehensively with Microsoft desktop products.

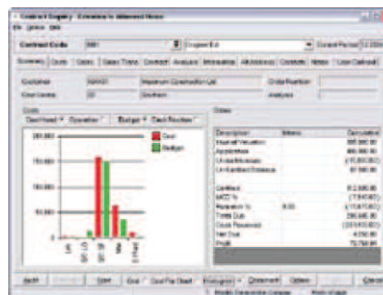
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Another benefit of RM/COBOL is its reliability.

“Once installed at a client’s site it just keeps going!” says Nigel. “And because the language remains the same, it is never superseded and is always compatible with previous releases, avoiding the need for a costly re-engineering effort, as is the case with some languages.”

Mardak’s product is in continual development and advancement, with new modules and functionality added all the time. Micro Focus too is continually developing its own RM/COBOL solutions, and the two companies are committed to an ongoing relationship based on trust, support and a sharing of skills.



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