

Gaining efficiency, ease and liberation through Publishing Technology's hosted services

PGUK and Publishing Technology

Timeline: 2008

Company: Publishers Group UK (PGUK)

Location: Enfield, UK

Products: Sales, Marketing and Fulfillment to publishers

Subjects: Academic

Status: Company struggling with out-dated technology searching for a proven solution

PGUK

When service provider to the publishing industry, PGUK, found itself in a vulnerable

position, dependent on a lone IT technician to operate its aging database application, it knew it had to act quickly to regain control over its operation and increase efficiency to proliferate its specialized business.

Publishers Group UK (PGUK) is a sales, marketing and fulfillment service provider to publishers primarily from the USA and the UK. With a focus on the book trade and specialty booksellers, PGUK provides a range of services including outsourced marketing, warehousing, distribution, invoicing and collection.

Identifying Weaknesses to Gain Strength

Although a successful service provider, PGUK realized its weaknesses and vulnerabilities were restricting the company's growth. With warehousing representing a major portion of the company's operations, PGUK could no longer operate on the paper-based, manual system it had been using. Even more important than its need for management and efficiency, was its need for security, to relieve the business from a huge liability—in specific, its reliance on one IT professional to run a 25 year-old DOS-based database application was, "the single point of failure" according to PGUK's Joint Managing Director Medwyn Hughes. The out-of-date system was simply unable to satisfy PGUK's modern needs. Hughes believed that removing this vulnerability by

converting to the right system would bring much needed security and versatility to the company.

Choosing Publishing Technology

Looking to move its system forward, PGUK began to look for a solution that would match the business's specified requirements, with an emphasis on bringing a stock management system to its manually operated warehouse and to remove its reliance on a single person to maintain its order processing system. Confidence in a system and peace of mind were the primary goals PGUK was working to achieve when it came to selecting a provider to alleviate these concerns. And when PGUK began the supplier selection process it found the answer it was looking for in the offerings, services and abilities of Publishing Technology.

Medwyn Hughes cited the importance of selecting a service provider that could offer a completely hosted



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service, one that had a skilled and confident team behind it, and one that met and understood industry standards. According to Hughes, "Publishing Technology not only fit this criterion, but also came highly recommended by our business partner Grantham Book Services," a Publishing Technology customer since 1977 that uses Publishing Technology's system to support PGUK in its fulfillment operations. With the right capabilities and a trusted industry reputation, Publishing Technology earned the business of PGUK.

A Conversion Toward Success

"Working with Publishing Technology enabled us to move from an antiquated system to a modern system without IT specialists—that's the value of choosing a hosted service."

Medwyn Hughes, Joint Managing Director, PGUK

The decision to convert to a leading-edge system through Publishing Technology was supported by PGUK's management, accounts and logistics teams. Managing Directors, Medwyn Hughes and Cathy Parson made the final decision to utilize Publishing Technology's Applications Hosting Services and to implement its fulfillment and financial modules. The project went live on October 1, 2008, delivering



efficiency, independence and peace of mind due to the worry free hosting service provided.

As the result of working with Publishing Technology to implement a fulfillment system and to automate time-consuming processes, and to replace an outdated database, PGUK has seen many improvements in a very short timeframe. Medwyn Hughes explained that the warehousing side of PGUK is consistently transforming into a model of efficiency, stating, "Our warehousing had no management system at all with the old system. Our new Publishing Technology system warns us of fulfillment needs, keeps inventory right on course and it introduced batch picking into our warehouse—something we couldn't have before." The project also brought technical reliability and security to PGUK.

Hughes contends, "It took away PGUK's sense of vulnerability. It was always a worry being reliant on one person, and now it is liberating to be free of that reliance." The new applications modernized PGUK's technological foundation and also brought the company's processes up to speed. Hughes remarked, "We are enjoying the ease of accessing information compared to using the old system; we are very satisfied with the project and results thus far."

Unlike PGUK's former system, Publishing Technology's hosted solution includes a dedicated support and customer service team, leaving PGUK free to make the systems work for them, rather than working hard to make the system work. Having gone live only 10 weeks ago, PGUK has already experienced improved productivity, greater visibility into operations, reduced anxiety, and satisfaction in working with the helpful and knowledgeable members of the Publishing Technology team: "they exceeded our expectations in customer support and accessibility," explained Hughes. PGUK summarized its experience using Publishing Technology, stating, "The project brought us peace of mind—knowing we chose a provider who has the right people around to help us. We are very content with the project, system, and just want to say that the people we dealt with at Publishing Technology were tremendous!" Likewise, Publishing Technology is pleased to have improved PGUK's daily operations, and to have contributed to its future successes.