BUSINESS CASE STUDY

H Dawson

The Global Trader System

H Dawson

Wool suppliers and merchants since 1888

H Dawson has built a strong reputation through its specialist wool knowledge and involvement in all wool consuming markets, including apparel, carpets, interiors, upholstery and transport fabrics, felts and industrial-type products, both woven and non-woven.

Operating worldwide, H Dawson has a global network of suppliers with access to the very best of processing partners and latest fibre technologies. This enables them to offer clients the most flexible and appropriate natural fibre solutions at prices that give clients true value when processed into yarn and fabric.

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"SSi and JADE have exceeded all our expectations".

Keith Cowan,
Managing Director
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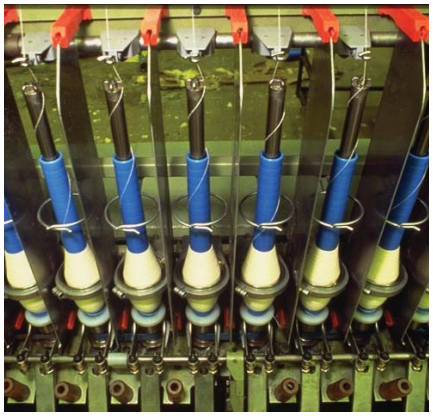
The Business Challenge



H Dawson's legacy DOS-based system needed updating. Enhancements to the current system were available but they recognised that they required a system that could easily grow with their business and accommodate their changing needs, and one that focused on the client rather than on processes and stock as was the case with the legacy system. They also acknowledged that after 20 years of running the same system they had no real understanding of how it worked. Other significant factors were the reliance on spreadsheets for over 90% of their business processes which represented a huge business risk, and their current system offered them no competitive advantage as many of their competitors were using the same software.

H Dawson engaged an advisor to help them identify alternative solutions. During this process he conducted an initial evaluation of JADE through SSi (Systems, Software and Instrumentation). SSi is a Christchurch based Jade Partner with extensive expertise in software development. After further investigations, it was decided that a package solution would have been extraordinarily difficult to match to their ever-changing and complex processes and would have been entirely cost prohibitive. A decision was made to have a system developed in JADE by SSi.

The Solution

Using SSi's base application functionality, a prototype system was developed by SSi and demonstrated to the directors of H Dawson in Bradford, (West) Yorkshire, who made the decision to proceed. The completed system went live nine months later needing only one person to complete development. In total the project took one year of elapsed time with work being undertaken in both New Zealand and in the UK.

The Global Trader System (GTS) is designed to seamlessly integrate all operational processes at H Dawson to increase control of trading activity and to facilitate closer client service.

In this context it handles:

- Master Data Management
- Sales Order Processing
- Purchase Order Processing
- Works Order Processing
- Stock and Inventory Management
- Financial Management, including Multi Currency with Futures Hedging and Letter of Credit support
- Reporting capabilities and document creation

After the New Zealand operation went live the solution was refined to become a complete fit for the company worldwide.

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H Dawson

The System

The Global Trader System (GTS) application is based upon the reusable framework already in place for all of SSi's products, including the entire financial layer and base behaviour modules. Running in JADE on a Linux platform (SUSE Linux Enterprise Server), the database is currently 1GB and will grow substantially as the rest of the company comes online.

Key Statistics:

- 50 concurrent users, scaling up to 100 concurrent users
- 24 hour operational system with users signing on from New Zealand, Australia, UK, Italy, China and India
- IBM xSeries 366 hardware platform
- EDI interfaces to banking systems and the Australian Wool Exchange Limited
- 240,000 lines of code, including SSi's reusable framework modules
- 636 forms

Key Development Issues

The key development issue was the lack of internally documented processes due to the fragmented nature of the existing internal systems. At an inter-office level these differences were a relatively minor issue, but between operating divisions of H Dawson these differences were significant. Without documented processes, an iterative development approach was adopted, with changes accommodated easily due to the mixture of SSi and JADE capabilities.

As other divisions of H Dawson prepare to come online with GTS, the system will be modified to accommodate their practices where the evolving global standards need to be extended. In this context the development is ongoing, but the core elements are complete and reflect H Dawson's desired processes.

The Future

In New Zealand, both the H Dawson Exporting and H D Farm Direct buying companies are live and H Dawson in the UK is live, with Italy, China and Australia to follow in 2008.

H Dawson's New Zealand Managing Director, Keith Cowan said they are delighted with the new system. "SSi and JADE have exceeded all our expectations". The improved efficiency has been outstanding and H Dawson is well ahead of where they expected to be at this stage.

"We needed to be able to drive the changes in our business that we wanted rather than being forced to use the same changes in a package that our competition was also using. JADE gave us this ability".

The future will see the application being made available to clients and suppliers via the internet, and also via PDAs for H Dawson wool traders.

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Jade Software Corporation (NZ) Ltd

Jade Software Corporation (JSC) is a specialist technology services company with more than 25 years experience in helping organisations quickly respond to business, customer and supplier demands.

We create targeted solutions that enable responsive businesses to rapidly manage specific and complex information requirements. By combining our expertise and agile development methodology, we've enabled customers worldwide to deliver business-critical information that provides strategic impact with the reliability and robustness that comes from a mainframe computing heritage.

More than 3,000 organisations across Europe, North America, and Asia Pacific use Jade solutions to manage their specific information requirements. Our customers span multiple sectors, including logistics, shipping, finance and insurance, national security, health, education, human resource and payroll management, and enterprise risk assessment.

A privately owned New Zealand based company, Jade has offices in New Zealand, Australia, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

SSi Systems, Software & Instrumentation Ltd

Systems, Software & Instrumentation Ltd is a software development company based in Christchurch, New Zealand. They were established in 1981, and have a broad expertise in software development, producing both package and custom solution for a wide variety of clients. They have clients in the manufacturing, retail, export, distribution and property sectors. With a highly qualified and experienced team, their focus is on providing robust, technically excellent solutions that are cost-effective. SSi has been developing in JADE™ since 1996. JADE™ is providing options for their end users that were not possible with their DOS development. They became a Jade Partner in 1998.

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