

## Sapphire Case Study: National Geographic Channel Europe



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**Darren Poynton,  
Finance Director**



National Geographic Channel Europe ("NGCE") is a world leader in factual television, showcasing diverse programming that explores the modern world through subjects including science, technology, real-life investigation, history and wildlife.

Darren Poynton, Finance Director, and his team at NGCE wanted to move from a partly outsourced accounting model to a fully integrated in-house financial management system. This move meant that a new accounting system would need to be acquired. NGCE required that the new system should be customised exactly to meet specifications of the current situation and accommodate the anticipated future growth of the business.

A comprehensive investigation into the financial accounting solutions market led Darren to SAP Business One from Sapphire - the leading UK reseller. Darren commented "During the review process the team at Sapphire were very professional; giving us all the information we needed to make our decision and answering all queries promptly. We were very impressed with the presentations they gave us and the products that they offered. This, combined with the endorsement of their customers in recommending Sapphire as a business partner, gave us added assurance in selecting them to manage the implementation of our finance solution."

In making the final decision, Darren said "We chose SAP Business One as it allows integration with Sales and other operational functions, to provide for a complete business solution. We felt that this approach would allow for greater flexibility moving forward."

He goes on to say "The integration links that SAP Business One has with other systems really made it stand out from the crowd. We felt it to be a user-friendly solution that can easily be tailored to the individual requirements of an organisation, with the added benefit of SAP's experience and reputation."

During the implementation Darren observed "The team at Sapphire were happy to accommodate the deadlines we had set and gave us quick responses to queries we had during the design period. The rollout phase took slightly longer than we had expected, as we were delayed getting a server in place at our end, and by the complexity of the sales database which we needed to integrate into our SAP Business One solution."

Now that SAP Business One is in place Darren tells us "We have a good system which is tailor made for NGCE. Although the implementation of the billings database took longer than anticipated, we are now in a position where we are saving money and the team is very happy with the usability of the system. Sapphire's support team is very good and deals with routine enquiries very quickly – though some of our more unusual queries may take slightly longer! Overall, we find it easy to deal with Sapphire, as their business model ensures that there are no levels of hierarchy to contend with."





#### Need More Information?

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SAP Business One has also been selected as the accounting system for National Geographic Channel Iberia in addition to NGCE in London and there are plans to further develop the solution for their Sales team. Darren says "Sapphire have built us a tailored billing system for subscriptions so that we can upload the monthly subscriber numbers into the Sales Order Templates to automatically generate orders, and enable us to report accurately on subscriber figures and contracts - regardless of billing frequency. We intend to integrate this fully with the sales department in the long-term."

Sharing his experience Darren says "I would advise other companies changing their accounting and business solutions to ensure that the timetable has sufficient slack to accommodate delays that may occur. Also, be prepared for the hard work which is to be expected when going through a period of change. I would recommend Sapphire for their ability to understand the key drivers of the project as well as their personal approach through all the stages of the project."

Ian Caswell, Managing Director at Sapphire, concludes "SAP Business One will seamlessly integrate virtually every aspect of an organisation's financial, customer and supplier relationship management, sales data, inventory and operations. For SMEs looking for more than just an accounting system, it is an ideal solution for comprehensive integrated business management."

