

Sapphire Case Study: AXA Isle of Man

History on AXA Isle of Man

This financial institution is a leading provider of offshore investments. It operates from the secure tax efficient environment of the Isle of Man, where it manages more than £5.9 billion for over 26,800 clients (as at 31 December 2007). The company's success is built on a commitment to providing outstanding customer service and exceptional financial products.

Business Profile

Number of users:

- ▶ 20 Finance
- ▶ 4 Professional
- ▶ 23 Logistic
- ▶ 20 Typically logged in at any one time
– expected to grow to 35



Version used: SAP Business One 8.8

Sapphire customer since: February 2010

Cost saving with SAP Business One: £200,000 pa

Return on investment: 7 months

Sector: Finance

“Sapphire’s help and advice is always excellent – that’s why we chose them. Sapphire’s costing model is good and rates are reasonable. They charge per day of work and don’t charge silly figures, plus they always give considered responses.”

The company use a suite of business solutions from Sapphire including Infor FMS SunSystems, MaxiSun, Vision and Bank Reconciliation.

Users of Infor FMS SunSystems since 1994, the company transferred their support to Sapphire in early 2005. David McLean explained “We knew and trusted several members of the Sapphire team from the days when they worked at our previous SunSystems provider. We moved to Sapphire because of their superior support and infrastructure offering – we wanted to upgrade to the next level of SunSystems and needed a partner that could support us in this. Sapphire is a financially stable company that looked likely to expand which is what we were after. Although not the cheapest, Sapphire is competitively priced.”

SunSystems sits on a Sequel database so works well for the organisation as 90% of their IT is Microsoft based. The key features that make SunSystems right for the company include the integration functionality to systems that have been bolted on; SunSystems provides a solid database with the suite of solutions working together making an “outstanding package”. The reporting in particular is key.

MaxiSun

The company had a requirement for a system to post directly into SunSystems using SunSystems’ nominal ledger rules, so that they could move away from exporting and uploading between different systems. Sapphire recommended the use of MaxiSun for seamless integration of SunSystems with the company’s other back office systems.

“We now have 4 applications linked to Sun with MaxiSun. It is a great platform for peer to peer processing and can convert data and post directly into SunSystems in one seamless action” said David.

In November 2005 the company upgraded from SunSystems v4.1 to 4.2 and implemented MaxiSun at the same time. In February 2007 the company moved from Version 4 to Version 5, which was “managed in half the time expected. Not least thanks to strong project management and the knowledge from Sapphire’s consultants. We had a really good team, on both sides, and I was very impressed with how well it went.”

He went on to say “The main benefits of moving from SunSystems v4 to v5 are the full sequel platform, a higher degree of analysis - there is no restriction on T-codes – and usability. V4 was a basic operating system in comparison, but

v.5 gives you a higher degree of reporting and a larger number of reference fields. I'd say a key thing is that you get out what you put in, this is important for v.5 as what you get out is much more usable."

There are no further development plans in place at the moment, "We are currently on SunSystems v5.2 and recently upgraded to the latest version of MaxiSun. We have done several major implementations over recent years, so it makes sense to have a consolidation period in order to make the best use of what we've got. I daresay there will be some tweaks to our systems, but nothing too drastic."

The systems are working very well, though the team still has a bit of a learning curve as David feels they haven't yet fully utilised Vision Executive. Savings made on not needing full time staff are great and SunSystems and the other solutions are very cost effective. For example, in comparison with another system reviewed, Bank Reconciliation was a quarter of the price. The company has around 20 users in total.

Benefits

- Time saving leads to cost saving.
- Accuracy and being able to get the job done properly.
- Thousands of transactions are managed every day and 80% of what comes into the system is auto matched and manual reconciliations are no longer needed, so the team is freed up to spend time on what does need checking.

Working with Sapphire

"Sapphire's help and advice is always excellent – that's why we chose them" said David, going on to expand:

"Our account manager is very professional, he's there when you need him, but he's not in your face all the time, there's no hard selling. We have a great working relationship – one of the easiest we have.

"Sapphire's costing model is good and rates are reasonable. They charge per day of work and don't charge silly figures, plus they always give considered responses.

"Support is very good, couldn't be better. We have never had a bad service. What I expect to take weeks, takes days and days, hours. This is due to the exceptional team at Sapphire, who have great experience and are extremely knowledgeable – especially the MaxiSun team. Whenever we need any help we can just pick up the phone to the relevant contact at Sapphire – training team included, which means an awful lot"

Advice to others

David suggests "Before you implement any new system, make sure you really do your homework and get in-depth, tailored demonstrations. A seamless interface between your financial accounting system and other systems in place – as with MaxiSun – can make operations that much easier to run.

"I would have no hesitation in recommending the suite of solutions that we use to others. They are very intuitive and user-friendly and the fact that they are so easily utilised together makes them almost plug and play. Training is a lot easier than with other platforms, particularly Vision: if you know Microsoft Excel, you know Vision."

David concluded: "I wouldn't want to move from SunSystems to another product, not least because of the flexible reporting enabled by the Vision tool – the level of data that we are able to extract and interrogate is outstanding."



For more information on SunSystems please call our Product Advisory Team on 020 7648 2000.