

Sapphire Case Study: InfraRed

About Infrared

InfraRed manages specialist funds creating value by investing in infrastructure and real estate projects.

www.ircp.com

Business Profile

Sapphire customer since: 2011

Sector: Financial Services

Version: Sun 5.4.1

Number of users: 10 in total for Sun 5.4.1

- ▶ Infor Query & Analysis - 10 users
- ▶ B4B - 10 users
- ▶ Infor PM10 - 10 users
- ▶ Expense@work - 100 users



“So often it is the people that you work with that make a difference on a project. The Project Management and Support services teams at Sapphire set them apart from and above the competition and I would recommend that any one considering a SunSystems implementation consider Sapphire”

*Jonathan Dunstan
Project Manager for Infrared*

About InfraRed

InfraRed manages specialist funds creating value by investing in infrastructure and real estate projects.

The company is headquartered in London with offices in Hong Kong, New York and Paris. Infrared's history dates from 1990 when, as Charterhouse Bank, investment began in real estate, expanding in 1997 to encompass infrastructure investments. In 2000, the organisation was acquired by HSBC and rebranded as HSBC Specialist Investments Limited ('HSIL').

Since inception Infrared has launched 11 funds, six of which have been completely or materially realised. In 2006 [HICL Infrastructure Company Limited](#) was launched on the London Stock Exchange.

Following the completion of a spin-out from HSBC in April 2011 the business is owned by its management team with HSBC remaining as a significant minority shareholder.

Background to the case

The break away from HSBC meant that Infrared's management team needed to set up on their own and implement back office systems including a financial accounting solution.

Jonathan Dunstan, Project Manager at Infrared, commented “Now that we are no longer part of a large organisation we had to put all our systems and back office together from scratch, it is important for us to stand on our own two feet as it were – and do it well. We were after a system that would offer strong reporting, with a robust structure.”

A contact at Montagu Private Equity recommended the solution they use: SunSystems from Sapphire.

One other solution was shortlisted before Sapphire was engaged to implement SunSystems for three separate business units at Infrared. Sapphire was also able to help with some other back office solutions required: expense@work, Infor PM10 and B4B.

Jonathan commented “SunSystems is a good mid-range package and is a tried and tested system. It has been around for a long time and has plenty of reference sites. I had not only been involved with a SunSystems implementation before, but had used it as an end-user, so knew from first hand experience that it is a good system.”

How is SunSystems working out?

“With SunSystems we have a robust, flexible system” said Jonathan, “There are various modules in place for different business areas; reporting is good and is fit for the purposes of a mid-size organisation, enabling us to drive the business forward.”

There were a few teething problems in the beginning admitted Jonathan: “Initially we found the system to be slow and a bit sluggish due to the large data set we are working with. I had used SunSystems before and knew it could be faster; we moved from two gigabytes of RAM to six and that has done the trick. We have multiple business units – over 30 – and more RAM had definitely helped.”

Jonathan says that SunSystems is very easy to use “It is a user-friendly system; even training new users is a simple process.”

Ten users are typically logged in at any one time. SunSystems is installed in the UK, though it is likely to be rolled out further in due course; expense@work is additionally used by operations in the US, France and Hong Kong.

Working with Sapphire

Jonathan says the service from Sapphire’s Support team is excellent, going on to say “I have found my dealings with Sapphire as an organisation good – certainly the best provider of SunSystems that I have worked with; it is an agile company with excellent consultants. I already have plans in place to work with them again on my next project with another organisation”.

Advice

Jonathan advises others implementing a new financial accounting package spend time at the beginning of the project to put together well thought out system design: “Work out what modules you need from a general ledger system – and what other systems will need to interface to it. In my experience, if you are trying to implement several solutions that need to ‘speak’ to each other it can be challenge to get them to interface seamlessly. Think about workflow at a high level.”

Conclusion

“So often it is the people that you work with that make a difference on a project. The Project Management and Support services teams at Sapphire set them apart from and above the competition and I would recommend that any one considering a SunSystems implementation consider Sapphire.”



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