

Sapphire Case Study: Kinetic Worldwide



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Nick Dunton,
Finance Director

SUNSYSTEMS

Kinetic Worldwide is a leading independently-managed outdoor media agency. The company was launched in June 2005 by a team with years of experience in out-of-home media and currently employs over 300 people spread across 13 cities worldwide, with billings in excess of \$1bn.

Part of the WWP Group, Kinetic was created by merging Portland Outdoor with Poster Publicity; and the new integrated finance team were tasked with selecting a financial accounting solution to be used across Kinetic's global operation. Poster Publicity had previously used Sage, but found that this was not very flexible, whereas Portland Outdoor were an existing user of SunSystems and were very happy with the solution. As a result, the group decided to implement SunSystems throughout Kinetic.

Nick Dunton, Finance Director at Kinetic, tells us "SunSystems was the most appropriate solution for us because it has tremendous flexibility. Plus, the capacity it has to process large volumes of transactions is definitely an important feature for us, as are the exceptional reporting capabilities. SunSystems is a pretty robust solution and the core product is first-rate – very stable."

The finance team undertook a review of SunSystems resellers, rather than simply going with Portland's existing supplier, to ensure that they received the best possible support with a personalised service. As part of the review process, the team attended an accounting & finance exhibition where they met with Sapphire. Nick comments "Sapphire were very helpful during the initial review phases and the people that our team spoke with were excellent."

Once the decision had been taken to partner with Sapphire and the implementation was underway, Nick observed "The team at Sapphire worked to a very logical process and were clear on the timescales involved. The initial rollout phase took about a year in all for us to go live, which was a bit longer than we had originally anticipated, as the implementation was unfortunately disrupted due to administration involved with the merger."

Kinetic currently has 4 sites using SunSystems and typically has 15-20 users logged in to the solution. Nick adds "Our SunSystems solution is working very well, and it is helping to improve the way we work all the time. I am looking into perhaps changing the way that we as an organisation do our reporting and analysis." He goes on to say "The excellent integration links SunSystems has with other systems has been proved by our ability to integrate the solution with our bespoke billing system. We are planning a complete global rollout of the SunSystems solution which has thus far been launched in New York with the next step being Singapore. In addition to this, we will also be expanding our use of the solution in terms of the number of business operations we use it for."





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Speaking on working with Sapphire Nick says “We find everyone at Sapphire very pleasant to deal with and their Services Team are very good. We find that the Support Hotline in particular is excellent – and it is refreshing to speak to someone that can, 9 times out of 10, resolve any issues immediately. In fact, the Support Hotline would be one of my main reasons for recommending Sapphire to others.”

The advice Nick would give new companies looking for a financial accounting solution includes: “Planning is very important – don’t underestimate it! It is pretty easy to use SunSystems and train new users, and I would suggest version 5 rather than version 4 as it is better in my experience. I would also highly recommend investing in the Vision reporting tool, as the reporting and analysis it can do is just fantastic.”

Ian Caswell, Managing Director at Sapphire concludes “Global organisations require a financial accounting solution that has the flexibility to handle many different operational and statutory regimes. SunSystems is perfectly suited to multi GAAP in addition to having multi-currency and multi-lingual functionality, making it the ideal solution for global business operations.”