

CAUSEWAY TALKS TO...

Angus MacLennan - Finance Director

Company Name:
George Sharkey & Sons

Business:
Interior fit out and refurbishment

Turnover:
£60m

Staff:
275

Application:
Causeway ECM

Causeway ECM has helped George Sharkey & Sons to:

- Manage and control documents and records.
- Search, find and retrieve information quickly, easily and effectively.
- Deliver cost reductions both in-house and throughout the supply chain.
- Realise significant time and efficiency savings.
- Improve and automate business processes.
- Identify & adopt best practice.
- Reduce errors and inefficiencies.
- Proactively track variations and changes.
- Maximise client satisfaction.

Q1.

Why did George Sharkey & Sons feel it was important to invest in a solution of this nature?

In early 2005 Sharkey engaged with Scottish Enterprise to carry out a full review of our systems, both IT and non IT, with the aim of introducing procedures which would best position the company to move forward into the future.

The initial report highlighted the need to implement an electronic document and records management system as the primary area that would bring a benefit to Sharkey.

It had been apparent for a long time that the company was struggling to cope with the sheer volume of information that was coming into the business and the amount of information that was generated within it.

This had given rise to a number of issues that we had to address. For example, some of the information wasn't being passed to the right people as quickly as it should have been and some was going astray or being misdirected. Furthermore, nobody knew where the documents were when they were needed. Also, staff were being copied in on information that were not relevant and finding themselves having to wade through numerous documents and emails unnecessarily. Basically the system was controlling us and not the reverse.

Q2.

How did Sharkey decide on the most suitable solution for their business?

We evaluated a number of Document Management packages which claimed to ease the flow of documents across the business. We needed to ensure that all information could be easily found and quickly distributed to those members of staff who needed it.

This process involved pulling together an Invitation to Tender (ITT), which was sent to 9 solution providers. Based on the initial replies we short listed 3 potential suppliers who were invited to demonstrate their products and respond to more detailed questions.

Of the 3 we selected Causeway Technologies as our preferred supplier as their approach was unique, and this was reflected in the breadth of functionality available in their ECM solution. We also undertook a number of site visits with existing users of the product to confirm that the solution worked in practice and offered what we were looking for.



Q3.

What will be the biggest benefits?

The critical aspect of the final evaluation was defining the business case to justify the level of investment.

We split our benefits into tangible and intangible and whilst the tangible savings will be substantial, we believe that it is the intangible benefits which will have the major impact in the long run.

Tangible savings cover areas that we can quantify and measure such as the cost reductions in postage, photocopying, printing, stationery as well as copying documents in-house for the supply chain.

We will also be able to measure the time efficiency improvements for our staff both in searching for documents and retrieving copies of information they had previously lost.

The intangible savings will not only feed through to our bottom line but will also target our business inefficiencies i.e. areas where we are losing money. For example, through better recording of information our ECM system will now ensure all variations are captured promptly and billed swiftly.

Better and timely flow of information will also reduce errors and the corresponding cost of rectifying them.

We also perceive improved response times not only from ourselves but throughout the supply chain as changes can be tracked and forwarded much more quickly and accurately.

We will be able to reduce the number of programme overruns as there will be fewer delays in waiting for information and any changes can be passed to the relevant person quickly and efficiently.

By getting our clients onto the system we will be able to keep them informed of progress and allow them to quickly and effectively implement change. We see this as a major differentiator giving us a competitive edge.

Q4.

What do you feel will be the biggest drivers for more companies in Construction to adopt this technology in the future?

The savings and efficiencies that the early adopters of ECM systems will achieve will exert a competitive pressure on other businesses to which they will need to respond.

There is now such a volume of information on each project and clients are looking for such increased flexibility and response times that

traditional manual systems cannot cope. An IT solution is required to meet the client's requirements.

Client satisfaction is a matter we take very seriously and Causeway ECM is a solution that enables our business to operate more efficiently. These efficiencies will undoubtedly be passed onto our clients ensuring we are able to respond to their needs proactively.

Q5.

Any words of advice?

Be clear on what you are trying to achieve at the outset and don't get distracted from that goal.

Spend as much time as required with existing users frankly discussing the pluses and minuses of each system.

It is a major long term investment so be sure that you are comfortable with all the staff at your chosen supplier and that you can work with them in the future. They need to demonstrate a positive attitude to the prospect of working with you to meet your goals, that they understand your business and that they and their key staff are going to be there in the longer term to support you.

George Sharkey & Sons is a leading interior fit out and refurbishment specialist in with over 37 years experience in the financial, office, hotel, leisure and public sectors. Sharkey carry out and manage over £45 million worth of projects each year varying size and complexity in both occupied buildings and empty shells.

For more information on Causeway Technologies software solutions and services for the construction industry contact:

t: +44 (0)1628 552000

e: marketing@causeway.com

w: www.causeway.com

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