



Ritzenthaler

COMPANY DESCRIPTION:

Based in Elland, West Yorkshire, Ritzenthaler is part of the C3S Group plc. The group supplies a comprehensive range of physical and electronic safety and security systems to public utilities, government local and national, financial and commercial institutions, local authorities, rail operating companies and industrial concerns. Ritzenthaler works primarily in the financial and commercial sectors, advising and providing clients with products such as ballistic and fire protection systems, mobile secure units, CCTV and other electronic protection systems.

PARTNER:

Raven Computers Ltd

SECTOR:

Security

PRODUCT:

Microsoft® Business Solutions–Axapta®
Microsoft BackOffice®
Microsoft 2000 Server

CHALLENGE:

Ritzenthaler needed a single enterprise-wide solution that would unify and manage all of its data coming from disparate sources.

SOLUTION:

Microsoft Axapta with Finance, SOP, POP, Nominal, Logistics, Trade, CRM, HRM, Project, Fixed Asset and Master Planning modules.

BENEFITS:

- **Integration of data between business processes making it easy to diagnose problems**
- **Management has instant access to up-to-date business information**
- **Linking between order processing and accounts reduces paperwork and time spent on administrative tasks**
- **Improved customer care with access to customer details**

Security specialist Ritzenthaler needed a single enterprise-wide solution that would unify and manage all of its data that was coming from disparate sources. Microsoft Axapta offers a fully integrated

and customisable system that supports all of the company's business processes.

BACKGROUND:

Based in Elland, West Yorkshire, Ritzenthaler is part of the C3S Group plc, which supplies safety and security systems to commercial and financial institutions, government and blue chip organisations. The group provides complete turnkey solutions to its clients incorporating a wide range of physical and electronic security systems and access solutions.

Ritzenthaler works predominantly in the financial and commercial sectors, advising banks and building societies on their security requirements as well as providing them with the products and systems capable of making their environments safe and accessible, Rising Security Screens, Fire and Ballistic Glazing Systems, Mobile Secure Units, CCTV, Access Control and other electronic protection systems.

Ritzenthaler was aware that not only was there a lack of expansion capability in its existing DOS-based system but it couldn't manage all its departmental business information, which came

from a number of disparate sources. "We realised that the expansion of the current business based upon our numerous and isolated information sources was not feasible," explains Mark Willis, Systems Developer Manager at Ritzenthaler. "We operated an accounts system that was not linked to any of our key business systems such as our order processing and preventive maintenance handling systems. The use of the various systems was difficult to coordinate and labour intensive requiring duplication of data input."

Willis found that using management integration of the numerous packages was becoming increasingly problematic, as the different systems suppliers all blamed one another for any problems that arose. He describes the operation as "massively inflexible" and decided to initiate a search for a new, fully integrated business management system that would manage all of the company's different departmental processes.

SOLUTION:

Willis' initial search for a new system was focused upon looking for a sales order processing package for its security glass business, which he was keen to integrate with the accounts systems.

"We looked at the Sage 100 accounts system with third party software solutions tacked on for our various business. It was obvious even at an early stage that the proposed solution didn't provide a flexible or future-proof solution.

"We searched the Internet for possible integrated systems providers and assessed and interviewed a number of companies. We were fortunate to find out that Raven Computers, who already provided hardware and software support to the company, had already heavily invested in Microsoft Axapta."

Willis was originally impressed with Microsoft Axapta's flexibility. "Our businesses obviously have certain aspects in common, but their operating processes vary significantly to cater for differing client bases," explains Willis. "Microsoft Axapta provided us with a common platform we could customise to our needs and a system that would easily cope with the expansion of the business without making existing systems or knowledge redundant."

As a result, Ritzenthaler purchased a selection of Microsoft Axapta modules that best suited its needs: Finance, SOP, POP, Nominal Logistics Trade, CRM, HRM, Project, Fixed Asset, Master Planning. It also opted for an integrated Service System to handle the after sales customer support side of the business, Preventative and Corrective maintenance handling. Ritzenthaler also runs custom-written order processing and custom-written estimating systems and makes extensive use of Product Builder.

Willis describes the implementation of the system as "smooth." Raven Computers provided an analysis of Ritzenthaler's personnel, the company's business needs and its hardware requirements. This resulted in a specialised project team, which installed new hardware, and managed the conversion of data from all of the disparate sources into the new system, as well as the training of employees.

The core accounts module went live first, then the C3S Group rolled out the other modules. Now, 18 months after implementation, the benefits of the system are becoming increasingly clear.

"We are still getting used to the product and developing its advantages," says Willis. "Our key business processes have already been considerably enhanced by Microsoft Axapta. The development of an estimating module with Raven Computers will allow us to provide end-to-end monitoring and control of project costs.

"The implementation of Microsoft Axapta has provided staff with the necessary information and tools to help them gain significant productivity improvements."

In fact, the training of personnel proved to be one of the main challenges for the company. "A lot of our staff were not particularly PC-literate and certainly would not have considered using IT systems to the degree to which they now do," Willis says. "Operationally, the staff accept that Microsoft Axapta's Windows® based functions are much more user-friendly than the old DOS-based system."

CONCLUSION:

Willis believes the integration of data between business processes and the vast array to business tools to be unbeatable. The business has real-time access to information, essential in allowing proper financial control, he says: "We now have a platform we can build upon for the future. We are looking forward to developing our business and offering our clients the benefits through E-Commerce using the Microsoft Axapta Enterprise Portal.

"The relationship with Raven Computers has proven to be invaluable and extremely flexible allowing modifications and assistance to be provided remotely using VPN access. It is a complete philosophy change for one product to encompass all of our needs. We consider the purchase of Microsoft Axapta to be the cornerstone for the future development of our business."

ABOUT RAVEN COMPUTERS LTD:

Raven Computers Ltd are one of the UK's leading providers of Microsoft based solutions and E-Commerce. With a background in providing ERP solutions to the Construction and Service industries and years of experience in the development and customisation of Microsoft Axapta we are able to provide the best service to support the business needs of our customers.