



MCS-rm helps Gordon Audio Visual manage the challenges of business growth

GORDON AUDIO VISUAL

www.gav.co.uk

Customer: Gordon Audio Visual Ltd

Web: www.gav.co.uk

Country: United Kingdom

Industry: Audio Visual hire services

Products used:

- MCS-rm with:
- Purchase Order Processing
- Repair & Maintenance
- CRM
- Transport Manager
- Business Intelligence

Benefits:

- A flexible solution for a diverse business
- Greatly improved management reporting
- Tighter management of quotation process
- Tracking of sales opportunities
- Saves costs through inter depot transfer of expensive equipment
- Efficiency savings through single data entry

Established in 1960, Gordon Audio Visual (AV) is one of the world's oldest audio-visual firms. They supply products and services ranging from high-tech plasma screens, audio and PA equipment, through to staging and lighting, post-production and technical support services. Headquartered in London, the company also has two other sites.

The Challenge

Managing Director Nick Clark describes the situation before the company implemented MCS-rm: "Our previous manual system could cope when we were a smaller concern of around £200,000 but it was really quite antiquated, with spreadsheets and multipart coloured forms. Working out utilisation rates was done on gut feel. As we grew, the cracks began to appear."

The pressure was on to find a centralised and integrated system to help run and manage the business efficiently.

The Solution

Nick looks back on the selection process to find a system which would match Gordon AV's budget and objectives: "Out of an initial line-up of four potential systems, two were non-starters – one had limited functionality and no training or support, while the other was an accounts package with some rental functionality bolted on."

With the field narrowed down to two finalists, Gordon AV chose MCS-rm for its functionality and flexibility: "Equipment hire is at the heart of what we do and we wanted a specialised package that would link to our existing Sage accounting system and give us end-to-end support.

We felt that MCS-rm offered the best fit with our wide-ranging business. Today, we're happy that we made the right decision in going with MCS."

A staged implementation then began. The first priority was to make the core rental functionality accessible to senior managers and the different teams within the company – hire desk, project management, dispatch and delivery, operations and accounts. Nick cautions that the effort involved in the wholesale transformation of a manual system into electronic processes should not be underestimated.

The Benefits

Gordon AV can now track all assets from quotation to invoicing. MCS-rm maintains a record of every transaction and creates a complete picture of equipment availability, utilisation and location at any time.

Users in both London and Sheffield access the system using a remote desktop connection. Being able to log in remotely is an attractive feature: "It used to be difficult to get away," says Nick, "but now I can take leave and stay in touch with the office. Distance is no object."

“MCS-rm is embedded within the business, supporting management control and day-to-day operations”

While both locations hold their own inventory, the inter-depot transfer feature opens up access to a larger, combined stock list and saves costs by enabling more expensive kit to be shared.

The data entered by the hire desk team at the quotation stage flows through and is used to create contracts and, eventually, invoices. Single data entry saves an enormous amount of time and effort and eliminates the human errors inherent within a manual system.

our sales director can check that any unconfirmed quotations are followed up, so that no opportunity is missed.”

He adds: *“Even if the customer declines a quotation, analysing the reason still helps us to build our business insight. Did we lose out on price, for example, or due to factors outside our control?”*

The Future

Today, MCS-rm is embedded within the business, supporting management control and day-to-day operations. As Gordon AV has become increasingly familiar with MCS-rm, the scope of the system has been extended, step by step. Nick is currently looking forward to implementing the new MCS-rm Project Costing module which will make life easier for the project management team when compiling the larger quotes.

Nick praises the help provided throughout by the MCS helpdesk team: *“MCS are a pleasant team to work with. The helpdesk support is fantastic and I feel I’ve got my money’s worth!”*

Nick sums up: *“The major difference MCS-rm has made to managing our diverse business is that our regular management meetings have had business data about the current and upcoming month for the first time. We’re finding this absolutely critical in today’s tough economic climate.”*



The billing side of the system was the next priority and this is now integrated into the workflow process. Today, when equipment comes off hire, it is automatically and immediately invoiced, rather than waiting for ad hoc invoicing, as happened previously. This obviously helps to accelerate cash flow into the business.

Nick highlights another key area where MCS-rm has made a big impact: *“We frequently had the problem of quoting for a job and the customer then assuming that the kit would be delivered, even though they hadn’t made a formal booking. MCS-rm has made a huge difference in helping us to avoid costly misunderstandings with customers. With all quotations logged in one place on the MCS system, our*

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