



With MCS-rm, Power Plant Hire gains better control of its growing business

Customer: Power Plant Hire Ltd
Web: www.powerplanthire.co.uk
Country: United Kingdom
Industry: Plant hire

Products used:

Core MCS-rm with:

- Workshop & Maintenance
- Equipment Financing
- Report Writer
- MCS-bi
- Sage Line 200 Integration

Benefits:

- Better control of data leads to increased accuracy resulting in improved customer service
- Better management and co-ordination of stock movement between depots
- Workshop & Maintenance function eliminates the risk of missed service schedules and costly, time consuming breakdowns
- Integrates with Sage Line 200 to simplify and speed up accountancy procedures
- Faster, more comprehensive reports and improved data analysis

Established in 1987 in Halesowen, West Midlands, Power Plant Hire Ltd now operates out of four depots supplying over 1000 items of plant and equipment to customers throughout Great Britain. The company's hire range includes top brands of mixers, compressors, dumpers, excavators, rollers, bowsers, telehandlers, generators, tools, equipment and attachments. Due to continued growth, Power Plant sought a software solution that would provide greater operational efficiency and improve control of its expanding asset inventory.

The Challenge

Power Plant have depots in Birmingham, Hereford, Pontypool and Manchester and a head office in Halesowen. What's more, all of the sites were expanding their operations and growing their plant inventory due to increased business. As a result, the company's old, bespoke text-based UNIX hire management system was struggling to cope.

Kirk Dobson, I.T Manager at Power Plant explained: "The reasons for looking for something new were that we couldn't do everything we wanted with the previous system. Most importantly, we couldn't export data to our Sage package, which was becoming our default financial software across the company."

The Solution

Kirk Dobson and his colleagues reviewed the market and looked at two leading hire software solutions, as well as having discussions with the company that built their bespoke system. Of these three, Power Plant decided on MCS-rm, the comprehensive hire management software from MCS.

"We chose MCS-rm for its comprehensive usability and the outstanding support and training offered by the company," Kirk confirmed. "Overall MCS had the best package and it would provide seamless integration to Sage Line 200."

Modern in its architecture, MCS-rm is a Windows solution delivering fast, powerful and centralised information for improved asset utilisation, faster throughput, greater accuracy and increased customer satisfaction.

Consequently, Power Plant set about implementing the core functionality of MCS-rm and within months they went live with the new system.

"After 20 years of using the old system, which everyone was familiar with and knew how to use, the change-over went very well," Kirk continued. "Once everyone was shown how to use MCS-rm and discovered what it could do, they were converted."

The Benefits

Uptake of the system is widespread, with users throughout the depots using

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different functions to automate procedures and make their jobs easier and more efficient. Depot managers use MCS-rm on a daily basis, especially at point of sale for cash hires. The hire solution automates the generation of contracts, prints the invoices to be signed over the counter and logs the cash received when paid.



“We are also benefiting from the ability of MCS-rm to co-ordinate and manage stock movement between depots,” Kirk said. “Whichever depot houses the item of plant the customer has hired, the system locates it, books it and assists with the delivery and collection process.”

Furthermore, where the workshop managers previously relied on paper notes and memory for the servicing and maintenance of the plant, MCS-rm now manages it automatically and flashes up alerts for any item due a service. This eliminates the risk of missed service schedules as well as costly and time-consuming break-downs. Once serviced, a piece of kit is immediately identified by the company's hire office as being ready for hire again.

With MCS-rm, invoicing can be undertaken centrally, instead of each depot manager needing to use two days a month to 'do the books' then post the results to head office. Also because it integrates so successfully with Sage, MCS-rm has streamlined the company's accounting process.

“Now, all I do is dive into the system, retrieve the customer invoices from each depot, print them and organise sending them out,” Kirk stated. “This saves us considerable time and money.”

Another important benefit offered by MCS-rm is the system's comprehensive reporting capabilities with more than 50 standard reports within the Report Writer function at their disposal, users can also easily and quickly create their own customisable report formats.

“Furthermore, with MCS-bi, I can produce customer spend reports, sales rep performance reports, monthly sales reports and annual sales to date. I balance these against our accounts ledgers to confirm that they are accurate,” Kirk explained. “MCS also

developed another function for us which gives one of our customer's an instant view of all the items they have on hire on a daily basis. This is a specially formatted text file that integrates with our customer's system and gets sent to them automatically every day by our servers.”

The Future

With a separate asset management system currently being upgraded to run on SQL Server, Power Plant Hire will soon be in a position to be even more interactive with MCS-rm. In addition, the hire company's equipment financing has traditionally been run on a spreadsheet system but will shortly be activating the Equipment Financing capability within MCS-rm to automate and control this important function.

“We are looking forward to the day when MCS-rm can help us manage and control our business operations even better than it does now,” Kirk concluded. “So we've still got a lot of integration work to do and we will be working with MCS to achieve it.”

For more information about

Power Plant Hire:

www.powerplanthire.co.uk

webhelp@powerplanthire.co.uk

For more information about MCS:

www.mcs.co.uk

sales@mcs.co.uk



MCS, Ashwood, Grove Business Park
White Waltham, Berkshire SL6 3LW
United Kingdom
Tel: **+44 (0)1628 828000**
Email: moreinfo@mcs.co.uk
www.mcs.co.uk

