



SME eBusiness Case Studies

Multis Group



ENTERPRISE
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This case study is one of a series produced by Enterprise Ireland to meet the need for in-depth eBusiness cases relevant to the needs of our client base, the majority of whom are small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in manufacturing or internationally traded services.

We in Enterprise Ireland hope the case studies not only illustrate the relevance of eBusiness to traditional Irish businesses, but also highlight the problems and pitfalls the case companies experienced and the solutions they adopted to overcome these problems.

These cases are only one of a range of eBusiness resources provided by Enterprise Ireland. Most of the other resources can be accessed through our eBusiness webpages

www.enterprise-ireland.com/ebusiness

Here you can access more cases, "how to" guides about eBusiness and related topics, details of solution providers, access to our free eBusiness e-zine and discussion forum, eBusiness events guide and links to interesting reports etc.

We wish to thank the participating companies for their cooperation in the preparation and publication of these case studies.

Many of the case studies are about participants in our eBusiness Acceleration Fund Initiative under which grants of just under €12.7 million were made available to 102 Irish companies to encourage the early implementation of significant eBusiness projects. The funding for these grants and these case studies was provided to Enterprise Ireland by "The Information Society Fund" which was established by Government to progress the objectives of the Government's Action Plan for the Information Society.

1. Overview

Galway based Multis Group (www.multigroup.com) is a re-manufacturer of high-end computer equipment for the second-use market. Much of the work undertaken by Multis is for large multinational IT brand manufacturers.

This service involves the acquisition of disposed assets and remanufacturing them to meet both the brand manufacturers' standard and the configuration and service requirements of customers. The equipment sold by Multis is rebuilt to an 'as new' standard, ensuring functional quality to the latest serviceable revision levels of hardware and software as prescribed by the manufacturer.

Unlike many SMEs who took advantage of the Enterprise Ireland eBusiness Accelerator Fund, rather than simply putting new technology in place, Multis chose to look at the company as a whole and then identify what needed to be done to ensure the ongoing growth and stability of the organisation.

From this investigation, a list of business requirements was developed and the management team then identified the best ways to fulfil those requirements. One of the elements within this list was the organisation's business system. The current system had been in place since 1997 and would be unable to manage the volume of activity that the company's growth plans entailed. Multis needed to upgrade or replace its business systems in order to facilitate its future growth plans.

As part of this strategic consultation process, a number of objectives for a business system were identified:

1. **Provision of an end-to-end solution** – The business system needed to support end-to-end supply chain connectivity - looking at the process of stock movement from point of purchase, to arrival at Multis, re-manufacture, sales, delivery and invoicing.
2. **Ability to interact with business partners automatically** – By providing an online system, Multis could provide a better service to customers and OEMs.
3. **Better access to information** – Multis customer base had a large requirement for information and required access to that information on an as-needed, self-service basis, without ongoing input from the teams within Multis.
4. **Provision of online transactions** – Multis wanted to provide customers with the ability to transact online.

There were two ways in which these objectives could have been achieved:

1. Stay with the current system, upgraded to include an order processing system or
2. Replace the current system with an entirely new package

It became pretty obvious early on in the process that a new Business System was required. A lot of the future functionality required was unavailable and the current system was operating near to full capacity. It is important to note that this decision wasn't predetermined at the start of the review but was made as a result of it.

Additionally, Multis had an issue with the consolidation of information between sites. The two sites – one in Galway and one in Holland were running identical systems but with a mainly manual consolidation process. This was likely to become even more cumbersome as the volume of transactions within the company grew.

Following a business process consultation program with Galway based consultancy firm BSM, Multis chose Pinnacle-Online, a Sage Reseller, to provide the new business system. The new system supported five key areas of functionality:

1. The Multis website
2. Customer extranet
3. OEM extranet
4. Multis group intranet
5. Links to digital marketplaces

The new system was hosted in Ireland with users in Holland linking in via a Worldcom hosted VPN (Virtual Private Network) that guaranteed bandwidth and security of access.

The business strategy and decision on whether or not to change the company's current business system took longer than originally planned but this time was made up in the development and implementation phases. Development of the new business system processes and procedures commenced in July 2001 and the installation was completed in November 2001, in line with the original plan. The system went live on November 2nd 2001 about 5 months after vendor selection.

The time that the team managed to regain in the development and implementation phases was due, in part, to the foundation work that had happened in the earlier stages. Decisions made early on, and the time dedicated to strategy, gave both the team and suppliers a clear roadmap to follow and everyone involved knew exactly what was expected of them.

The benefits for customers and OEMs were almost immediate and included:

- **Stock availability** – Inventory availability is now viewable online populated with data from the business system.
- **Fully integrated system** – All inventory & sales order processing transactions are now fully linked to the general ledger in real time.
- **Customer extranet** – Customers can check details of their Orders & account online without the need for the assistance from Multis staff.

The entire project was a great success for Multis, not only in deliverables to Multis but also in how the company was viewed from the outside (by customers & OEMs for example).

Major benefits included:

- **Enhanced competitive advantage** - "We knew we would get benefits from it but the benefits we are seeing are far greater that we could have envisaged", said Sean Keenan, MD of Multis.
- **Less resource issues** – Multis now has the capacity to dramatically increase the volume of business it processes without adding greatly to its administration overheads.
- **Real time access** – The introduction of the VPN means that there is real-time access between the company's plants.
- **Capability** – Brand manufacturers have been impressed by the sophistication of Multis' systems.
- **Cost reduction** – The implementation of the eBusiness strategy has resulted in significant cost savings.

There were many lessons learnt by the team in Multis during the eBusiness project:

- **Have a solid infrastructure** – Organisations need to have a solid IT infrastructure on which to build for growth.
- **It's a business thing** – It's important to identify where the company is going and to plan the eBusiness strategy from there – any IT project should be based on the company's business requirements.
- **Vendor selection** – Take time in choosing a software vendor - it's vitally important to select the right one for the company.
- **Involve everyone** – It's important to understand staff requirements of the system and the processes they follow on a day-to-day basis. If there is resistance to change, a new system will never be implemented properly.

Although the eBusiness Accelerator Fund element of their eBusiness strategy has been completed, development of the functionality and design of the Multis eBusiness system is ongoing. Like many of the organisations that took part in the Enterprise Ireland program, the needs of both Multis's OEMs and customer base are dynamic and the system needs to react to these changes in requirement.

2. Background

2.1 Company Information

Galway based Multis Group is a re-manufacturer of high-end computer equipment for the second-use market. Much of the work undertaken by Multis is for the large multinational IT brand manufacturers.

This service involves the acquisition of disposed assets and remanufacturing them to meet both the brand manufacturers' standard, and the configuration and service requirements of the customers. The equipment sold by Multis is rebuilt to an 'as new' standard, ensuring functional quality to the latest serviceable revision levels of hardware and software as prescribed by the manufacturer.

Multis provides an outsource service for its clients and has responsibility for the entire life-cycle of the product from when it arrives in one of the company's plants until it leaves to go to a customer site. This involves the overall process from production and storage, to order processing and delivery, and finally invoicing and the transfer of funds.

Multis was founded in 1994 by a group of senior executives from Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), and commenced volume operations in 1995.

Today, Multis has 60 employees, (mainly technical) with facilities in Galway and Holland, with a manufacturing facility, of 32,500 sq. ft. in Galway and 18,000 sq. ft. in Holland. Multis has an asset base of \$6m.

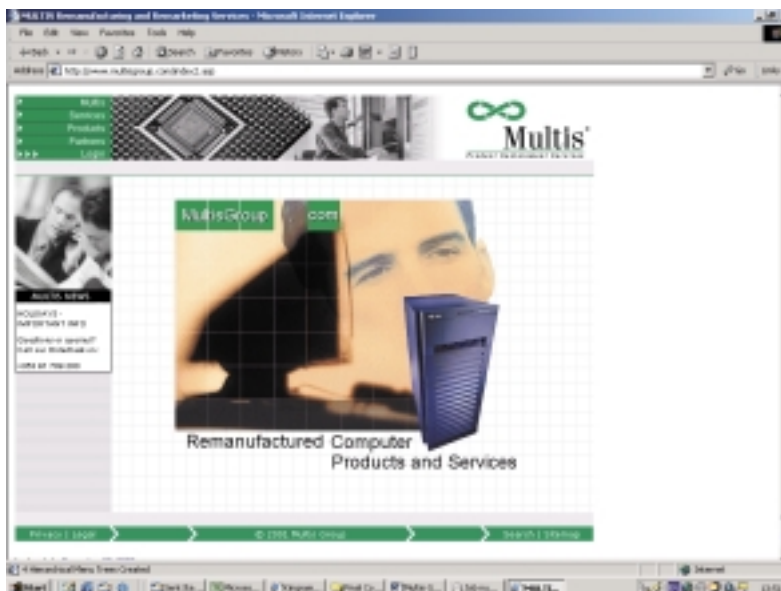


Diagram 2.1 – Multis Group home page

2.2 Market Information

The market for re-manufactured equipment is on the increase as the life expectancy of equipment rises and cycle times for new technology fall. Additionally, the increased environmental responsibility placed on manufacturers has also buoyed the market and, as a result, there are increased opportunities for growth.

The major markets dealt with are U.K., France and Germany. The 'go to market' model is structured through established local brand distributors in the territories.

3. Problem Definition and Objectives

Unlike many SMEs who took advantage of the Enterprise Ireland eBusiness Accelerator Fund, rather than simply putting new technology in place, Multis chose to look at the company as a whole and then identify what needed to be done to ensure the ongoing growth and stability of the organisation.

This strategy looked at a number of areas:

- Reviewing the company's business plan and identifying the company direction
- Identifying the demands of customers
- Identifying where the market was heading
- Identifying the organisation's requirements from an operational perspective

From this investigation, a list of business requirements was developed and the management team then identified the best ways to fulfil those requirements. One of the elements within this list was the organisation's business system. Effectively, Multis needed to replace its internal systems in order to consolidate its current business and facilitate future growth.

The current business system was purchased back in 1994 when Multis was in 'start-up mode' (it was upgraded in 1997) – it suited the company's needs perfectly and was used on both the Irish and Dutch sites. In addition each plant had its own infrastructure for Business System, email and internet access. After six years of usage with just one upgrade, the current system was becoming unsuitable for the company's current business model. It didn't provide all the functionality required by Multis, particularly on sales order processing – this functionality was a bespoke addition and was not fully integrated to the system.

Additionally, a lot of the interaction with customers was incredibly resource intensive for Multis – orders and queries from OEMs required a team of customer service staff. As the level of business was growing, this level of manual interaction wasn't an option – the levels of staff required (and the associated cost of those staff) would have inhibited the future growth of the company.

Issues with inventory reporting

The fact that there were independent systems in each plant that were only consolidated on a daily basis created many difficulties. Data was often up to 24 hours old and two systems needed to be checked to see if a piece of equipment was available for sale.

Daily reporting of stock availability to the customer base was time consuming and required manual intervention. Data was taken from both stock systems and manually consolidated before being distributed to customers. While this report was being prepared nobody could process any transactions on the system. Other reporting generated by the system had first to be exported to Excel and then edited before being forwarded out to customers and OEMs.

As part of the strategic consultation process, a number of objectives for a business system were identified:

1. **Provision of an end-to-end solution** – The business system needed to support end-to-end supply chain connectivity - looking at the process of stock movement from point of purchase, to arrival at Multis, re-manufacture, sales, delivery and invoicing.
2. **Ability to interact with business partners automatically** – By providing an online system, Multis could provide a better service to customers and OEMs.
3. **Better access to information** – Multis' customer base had a large requirement for information and required access to that information on an as-needed, self-service basis, without ongoing input from the teams within Multis.
4. **Provision of online transactions** – Multis wanted to provide customers with the ability to transact online.

It was these objectives for the business system that brought the Multis team to the conclusion that the current business system would not suit the organisation's requirements in the long term. Multis required a fully integrated business system that would allow all transactions to be completed on-line.

There were two ways in which these objectives could have been achieved:

1. Stay with the current system, upgraded to include an order processing system or
2. Replace the current system with an entirely new package

It became pretty obvious early on in the process that a new business system was required. A lot of the functionality that would be required in future was unavailable in the current system and it was operating near to full capacity.

It is important to note that this decision wasn't predetermined at the start of the review, but was made as a result of it.

4 . D e c i s i o n

Once the project team determined that the current business system wouldn't suit their needs, it became necessary to select a new business system that would meet the company's requirements now and in the future. The company had formulated a business plan and this gave the project team a guide to the type of functionality the company would require in the future. They wanted to put in place a system that would meet those requirements and differentiate Multis from the competition. The team asked themselves two important questions:

1. What should Multis be able to offer their customer base in the future?
2. How can Multis improve its customer interaction and reporting?

A strategy was then set under the broad heading of eBusiness. As it was going to be so fundamentally important to the ongoing survival and growth of the organisation, the project was given a true business focus with responsibility lying with Head of Finance who oversaw a team selected from the various business functions.

It wasn't until the project had reached this stage that Multis commenced discussions with Enterprise Ireland and subsequently secured funding under the eBusiness Accelerator Fund. Through Enterprise Ireland, Multis was introduced to the Galway based process management company BSM (www.bsm.ie). BSM worked with a number of organisations that were part of the Accelerator Fund, providing guidance on generation of key business requirements, business process and strategy.

5. The Project

5.1 eBusiness Solution

Sage Line 500

Sage Line 500 is a web-enabled financial, distribution, manufacturing and service software package designed for use in medium and large-scale businesses in a wide range of industry sectors. The package is easily scalable and offers a huge range of options that can be fully adapted and configured to meet an organisation's requirements. The open architecture provides ease of integration with other applications as well as third-party products.

Digital Marketplace

A Digital Marketplace is a web-based electronic service that allows organisations to conduct business with their suppliers. Its purpose is to deliver benefits by streamlining the purchasing process and allowing the organisation to fully leverage the buying power of its scale of activity, thereby effecting significant cost savings. It is an impartial environment, unbiased towards either buyer or seller that allows organisations to leverage the efficiencies of eBusiness securely and reliably.

5.1.1 Business Dimension

Following the rigorous selection process put in place by BSM, Pinnacle-Online (www.pinnacle-online.com), a Sage business partner, was selected as the best-in class vendor for the type of system Multis required. The new business system was based on Sage Line 500 and was designed to support five key areas of functionality:

1. The Multis website
2. Customer extranet
3. OEM extranet
4. Multis group intranet
5. Links to digital marketplaces

As well as being a source of information for potential customers and OEMs, the website acted as a front end to the customer and OEM intranets, allowing users to access information pertinent to their needs. This is shown in Diagram 5.1.1.

Customer information and functionality included:

- **Product availability reporting** – With a simple search engine, customers were able to see what inventory was available at any given point in time.
- **Reservations** – Once a selection was made, stock items could be reserved for later purchase.
- **Ordering** – Online ordering was available via the Customer Extranet allowing customers to order directly from the website without having to speak to a customer service representative in Multis.

Functionality for OEMs included:

- **Inventory reporting** – The new system made it easier for OEMs to get real-time information on inventory levels. The installation of a VPN made real time updates possible – as soon as a piece of equipment is sold or bought it is added to or removed from the inventory list.
- **Account information** – OEMs are able to view the current status of their accounts.
- **Forecast sales data** – The forecast sales data is now available to OEMs allowing them to view expected levels of business.

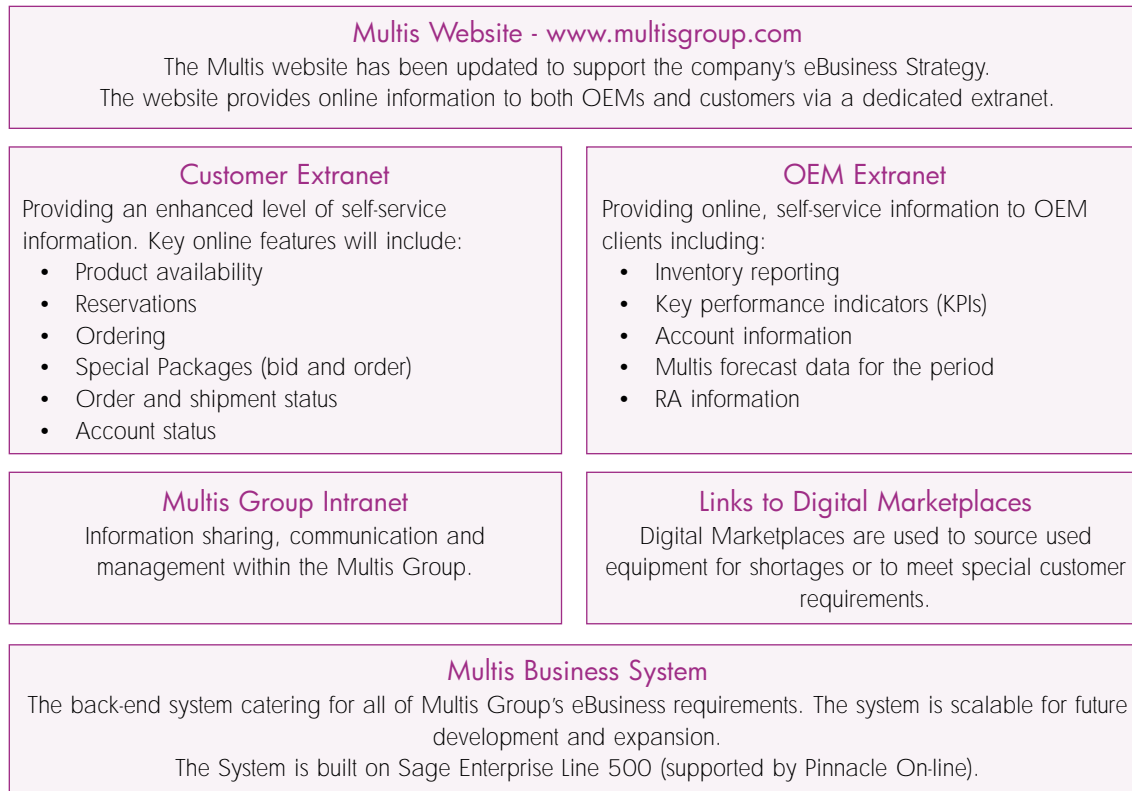


Diagram 5.1.1 – The Multis Business System

Inventory Control and sales order processing

Two major requirements for the system were inventory control and sales order processing.

In order to support Multis in the coming years, the system had to be able to control inventory across both sites and report on it as though it was all in one location. The system was able to automatically generate stock availability reports, format them, publish them on the website and forward them out to customers with little manual intervention.

One of the big failings of the old business system was its inability to process sales orders. The new system allowed customers to transact directly through the website with little or no input from customer service staff.

This functionality is vitally important as the company moves forward. It gives the company significantly increased capacity especially in the areas of operations and customer services.

5.1.2 Technical Dimension

Since the new system implementation involved use of a VPN (see telecoms section below) to link both the Dutch and Irish sites, Multis was able consolidate its resources across both sites.

Some additional hardware was purchased and current hardware upgraded in order to host the new system. A managed firewall solution was introduced into the overall IT infrastructure. Capital cost of equipment accounted for a significant part of the budget spent on the system.

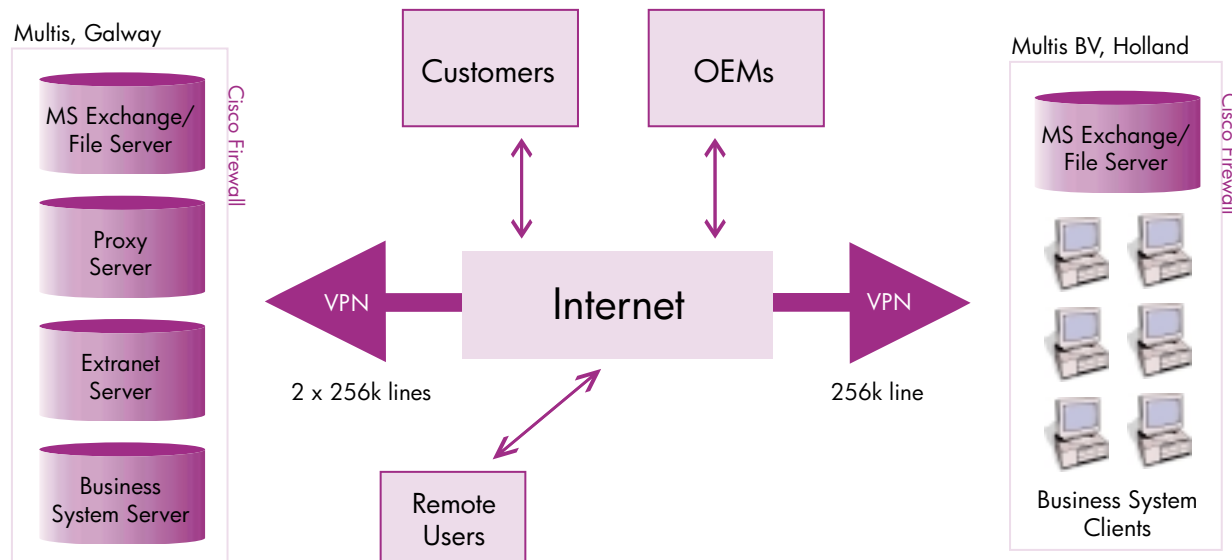


Diagram 5.1.2 - Technical overview of the Multis business system

VPN

A VPN (virtual private network) is a way to use a public telecoms infrastructure, such as the Internet, to provide remote offices with secure access to their organisation's network. A virtual private network can be contrasted with an expensive system of owned or leased lines that can only be used by one organization. The goal of a VPN is to provide the organisation with the same capabilities, but at a much lower cost.

The telecoms dimension

The linking of its two sites was an integral part of the eBusiness strategy. Up until the introduction of the new system, the two separate installations were linked using daily data updates. A decision was made to link both sites via a VPN (see sidebar). Whilst offering similar bandwidth to a leased line, a VPN offers a higher level of security which is achieved using private lines. The service provider (Worldcom) guarantees the contracted bandwidth as part of their overall Service level agreement.

5.2 Third Party Selection

Using Business System Selection, a very structured and iterative process designed by BSM, Multis was able to easily identify the requirements for the new system, build tender documents and, based on the responses, select a vendor that best suited the needs of the company.

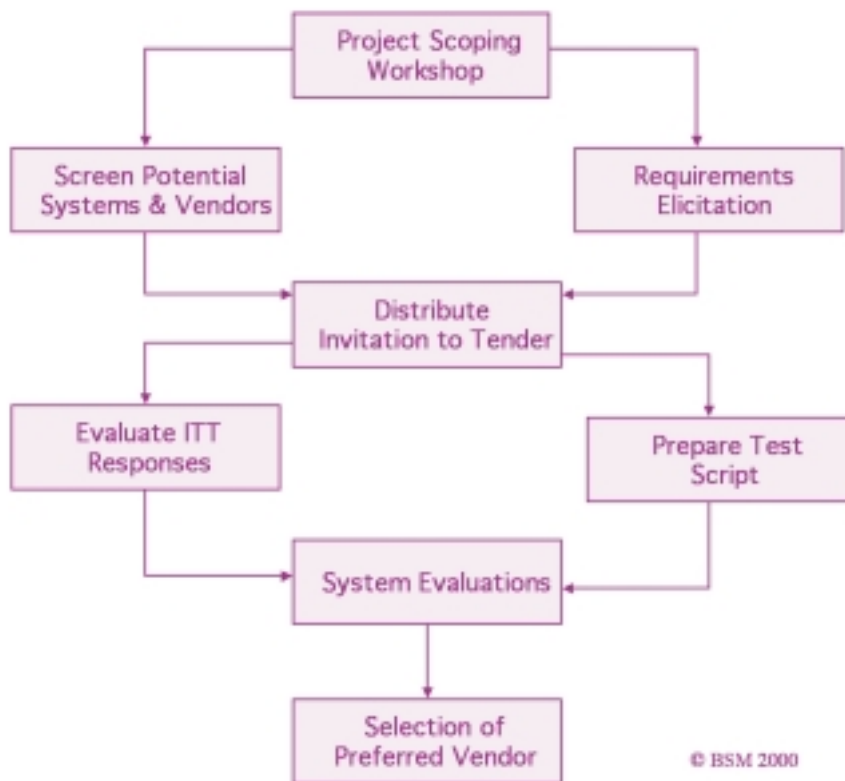


Diagram 5.2 – The BSM Business System Selection Process

Multis started out with eight potential vendors - a list that was quickly narrowed down to three following first round ITTs (Invitation to Tender). The remaining three vendors were then given test scripts and asked to present their systems to the team based on those test scripts. Multis wanted to see that the systems could deliver what the vendors said they could deliver.

A clear favourite was selected from the three - Sage Enterprises - to be supplied by a Sage approved vendor Pinnacle Online. They went on to design and implement the system for Multis. Sage Enterprise was chosen for a number of reasons:

- Sage Enterprise's package was flexible and easy to adapt.
- The structure of the package better suited Multis' requirements.
- The web-linking side of the package was impressive – Sage Enterprise already had a customer extranet package.
- Downloading to Excel was easier – information was exported from the system in a format that could be sent straight out to clients and OEMs.
- It was flexible and easy to expand in future.
- Support was both country and world wide.
- The system was easier to learn and therefore adapt to – the functionality was very straightforward.
- They had installed sites in Ireland.
- Coding was done in VB and that was preferred internally over C++.

5.3 The Project Team

Ongoing maintenance of the internal IT systems is the responsibility of a team of three individuals in the organisation who report into the finance function.

Virtually the entire staff was involved in some way in the development and implementation of the new business system in Multis. There was an overall project manager who oversaw the implementation of the entire system (and relevant team members) in both Ireland and Holland:

Key members of the internal project team included

- **Eric Reed, Financial Director** – Eric (Albert Mannion's predecessor) was responsible for the development and implementation of the eBusiness Strategy. Eric and his team oversaw the entire project from a business viewpoint.
- **Paul Whelan, Project Manager** – Paul was responsible for project managing the development and implementation of the business system.
- **Eugene Devaney, Operations and Quality Manager** – Eugene had overall responsibility for implementing the business system.
- **Tom Hogan, Sales and Marketing Manager** – Tom's responsibility lay in the implementation of the customer extranet, building links to the relevant digital marketplaces and development of the Multis website.

The external team included consultants from both BSM and Pinnacle:

- **Fiona McCann, Pinnacle Online** – Fiona was a project manager within Pinnacle and worked closely with Paul Wheelan on the implementation of the business system. She very quickly understood the idiosyncrasies of the Multis business model and was therefore able to add value very quickly.
- **Sean Jackson, BSM** – Sean led the team in BSM in helping Multis to identify process and requirements and, from there, identify suitable vendors with whom Multis could work to build the required system.

5.4 Timeline

Driven by the time constraints of the Euro changeover, commercial considerations and the eBusiness Accelerator Fund, the business system was implemented very quickly – in fact, it was one of the quickest installations ever done by Pinnacle Online.

The decision to change the current business system was made in January 2001. Between January and July 2001 an intensive period of planning and preparation was undertaken. Development and implementation of the new system started in July and the system was fully operational by 2nd November, 2001.

Additionally, the planning and specification process that Multis had gone through with BSM meant that the team knew what they wanted at the beginning of the implementation and Pinnacle knew exactly what was expected of them.

5.5 Setbacks and difficulties

The early appointment of a project manager was key to the successful implementation of the Multis system and this was highlighted in the time it took to design and implement the system – a little over 4 months.

The main difficulty faced by Multis was that of getting the communications infrastructure in place to support the business system across the two sites.

Vendor selection for the VPN was fairly straightforward as there weren't that many vendors to choose from. A date for installation of the VPN was supplied but there were difficulties in implementing the infrastructure to support the VPN (Local loop & cabling issues). The VPN was promised by October 2001 but wasn't delivered until Jan 2002 (even though the business system went live in November).

A workaround was put in place to cover the period November to January 2002. Holland dialled in directly to the business system using an ISDN line. This was fine as a workaround and users in Holland received an acceptable performance from the system. This workaround was possible largely because of the thin client capabilities inherent in Sage Enterprise. This solution was only acceptable in the short term as it only supported a limited number of users, had no guaranteed bandwidth was susceptible to security breaches.

The VPN was operational by the end of January 2002

5.6 Budget

The eBusiness strategy implemented by Multis represented a significant investment for the company. The actual spend came in under budget mainly due to a saving in capital costs. Multis will be able to use the systems in place as leverage for future growth.

For Multis, the system represents an ongoing investment that the company is continually upgrading and investing in to meet the ongoing requirements of its customers and OEMs.

5.7 System Rollout

During the development of the system, Multis closely involved its biggest customers and OEM partners.

The team had planned to run the old system in parallel for a period of four weeks. When the new system went live on 2nd November, 2001, it was such a success that the decision was made to turn off the old system after just 7 days. With no extra value being added by its presence there was no good reason to keep it running.

6 . O u t c o m e

6.1 Benefits for Customers/OEMs

The benefits for customers and OEMs were almost immediate and included:

- **Stock availability** – Inventory availability is now available online, populated with data from the business system
- **Fully Integrated system** – All transactions on inventory and sales order processing are fully integrated to the general ledger in real time.
- **Customer Extranet** – Customers can check details of orders and accounts online without assistance from Multis staff.

6.2 Benefits for Multis

The entire project was a great success for Multis, not only in deliverables to Multis but also in how the company was viewed from the outside (by OEMs for example). Even as a relatively small company, the systems now in place make it very easy for both customers and OEMs to work with Multis.

Other benefits included:

- **Enhanced competitive advantage** - "We knew we would get benefits from it but the benefits we are seeing are far greater that we could have envisaged", said Sean Keenan, MD of Multis.
- **Less resource issues** – Multis now have the capacity to dramatically increase the volume of business it processes without adding to its administration overheads.
- **Real time access** – The introduction of the VPN means that there is real-time access between the company's plants.
- **Capability** – Brand manufacturers have been impressed by the sophistication of Multis' systems.
- **Cost Reduction** – The implementation of the eBusiness strategy has resulted in significant cost savings.

"We knew we would get benefits from it but the benefits we are seeing are far greater that we could have envisaged"

7. Lessons Learnt

There were many lessons learnt by the team in Multis during the eBusiness project:

- **Have a solid infrastructure** – If a company wants to grow, it needs to have a solid IT infrastructure on which to build that growth.
- **It's a business thing** – It's important to identify where the company is going and to plan the eBusiness strategy from there – it should be based on the company's business requirements. Don't go into the project assuming that all the IT systems will need to be changed to support eBusiness – they may not have to be. The technology should work to the advantage of the company and be used to deliver performance and results within the business.
- **Vendors** – Take time in choosing both software and software vendors - it's vitally important to select the right one for the company. An organisation shouldn't feel compelled to follow the crowd as the standard systems like Sage or SAP may not suit the needs of a particular organisation.
- **Involve everyone** – The senior management team should work with external consultants to put the strategy in place - development of the system should involve the staff who use the systems on a day-to-day basis. "Don't just impose a new system on people as a management directive", commented Keenan. It's important to understand staff requirements of the system and the processes they follow on a day-to-day basis. Once that information is on hand, it makes it much easier to implement the strategy. If there is resistance to change, a new system will never be implemented properly.

"Don't just impose a new system on people as a management directive"

8. Future Plans

Although the eBusiness Accelerator fund element of their eBusiness strategy is complete, development of the functionality and design of the Multis eBusiness system will be ongoing. Like many of the organisations that took part in the Enterprise Ireland program, the needs of both Multis and its customers are dynamic and the system needs to react to these changes in requirement on an ongoing basis.

Two specific areas for development are:

- **Bar-coding** – In order to increase visibility of the process and to increase trackability/traceability, bar-coding will be put in place on both sites.
- **Front End** – The main area of change in the system will be in the front end, adding more functionality and new services. These changes will allow Multis to have seamless integration with its customers systems.

Multis Group Epilogue

This Epilogue was written in October, 2003, after a telephone interview with Albert Mannion, Group Financial Controller, Multis Group. Its purpose is to review progress since the original Case Study, which was produced in the first quarter of 2002.

General update

Multis Group is a remanufacturer of high-end computer equipment for the second-use market. Much of the work undertaken by Multis is for large multinational IT brand manufacturers. The organisation's eBusiness project focused on it developing and implementing a system that allowed more efficient tracking and management of the inventory it managed on behalf of its OEM customers. The system went live on November 2nd, 2001.

The expansion and development of the Multis client base necessitated managing diverse business and transaction models. In early 2002 Compaq computers were merged with Hewlett Packard. The eBusiness investment enabled Multis to demonstrate flexibility and scalability to accommodate the changes required by this transition. This was a key factor in securing an ongoing relationship with the new business partners. It was also a significant competitive advantage in securing new business with Sun Microsystems.

According to Albert Mannion, Group Financial Controller at Multis Group, the system allowed the organisation to meet and exceed the expectations of its new customers during a time of great change. Without this system in place the investment required in resources to process the increased volume and diversity of transactions would have been significant, and a risk to competitiveness.

Multis are now positioned to seamlessly integrate their business system with major ERP systems such as Oracle and SAP.

Available Measures of Success

With little operating cost increase the new business system put in place has allowed Multis to process transaction increase of 180% when measured against their previous systems and volumes. Given this growth in transactions, Multis would have found it difficult to remain competitive due to the additional resources required to fulfil customer requirements. Additionally, the system allowed Multis to speedily & seamlessly integrate with its new customers systems & business requirements.

Changes in work practices or business model

Like many of the organisations that took part in the eBusiness Acceleration scheme, Multis undertook a lengthy and detailed analysis of its business requirements. They then implemented a system that fulfilled those requirements with the minimum of modifications to the core control system. There were some bespoke modifications to increase functionality, to accommodate integration, and to provide robust analysis and reporting capability. They maintained the integrity of their core business system while allowing integration with multiple and diverse client systems. The benefits of the developed functionality has not only resulted in a more efficient Multis cost base but has also allowed its OEM clients to reduce their cost base. i.e. more activities being performed by Multis)

The success of the new Business systems has facilitated transaction volume growth. In the future to facilitate further capacity and control, new systems and processes will be developed. The introduction of bar-coding technology and a simplified works order model will allow Multis additional control and analysis capabilities.

Future developments

In the coming months, Multis will implement new systems to eliminate any remaining manual operations still existing in the process. Additionally, minor modifications will be made to some of the control and reporting interfaces as a result of a review of their experiences since implementation.

Irish Office Network

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	+(353 1) 857 0000/206 6000	+(353 1) 206 6400	Merrion Hall, Strand Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4.
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