

Quirepace reduces the pressure



Pneumatic Tube Systems is not a new technology, as this picture of the central telegraph office in London in 1932 illustrates.

With over 125 years of experience, Quirepace specializes in the design, manufacture, supply, installation and maintenance of Pneumatic Tube Systems (PTS) together with Cleaning Machines, Exhauster Blowers and Centralised Vacuum Systems.

The Company is recognized as a leading authority on PTS equipment and has installed thousands of stations in supermarkets for transporting cash away from the trading floor safely and quickly. The Company has also installed some of the largest PTS networks within hospitals in the UK.



These systems are used for the urgent and routine transfer of documents, drugs and samples.

For more information, visit www.quirepace.co.uk.

The acquisition of a similar business looked straightforward until pneumatic tube business Quirepace needed to bring the IT systems together. After researching various options, it turned to IBM business partner Kingfisher Associates for assistance

In the summer of 2007, Quirepace acquired the business and assets of Barloworld Vacuum Technology (BVT) with the intention of combining the complementary parts of the two businesses (Lamson and Quirepace). The aim was to reduce overheads, improve productivity and enhance the existing product portfolio, while still maintaining other parts of BVT that didn't fit within the Quirepace's current business. The acquisition also included the British Vacuum Company, the inventors of the vacuum cleaner, which specialised in vacuum technology for industrial applications, including ATEX compliant Industrial Vacuum Cleaners, centralised vacuum cleaning systems and exhauster/blowers.

While trying to combine the two businesses, Quirepace found that the IT systems it inherited were incompatible with its own systems. For example, Quirepace used Sage on a PC-based network, whereas BVT ran its business systems on an IBM AS/400, while both companies used different applications for contract costing and service. This incompatibility resulted in hours wasted re-keying data and swapping information via spreadsheets and other documents.

Having evaluated the business issues caused by having disparate systems, a decision was taken to source an integrated system that was robust, proven and scalable to cope with planned future growth, without the potential proliferation of more servers and the associated maintenance and energy costs.

Quirepace went out to tender with various local and national companies looking for a totally integrated solution to fit its budget and that could be installed and implemented in a reasonable time frame. A shortlist was drawn up, including both a Microsoft and an integrated ERP solution from Vormittag Associates Inc (VAI - www.vai.net) called S2K, which was designed and priced specifically for the mid-market, running on the IBM Power platform.

Quirepace came down firmly in favour of the VAI solution, due to its powerful function and ease of use across all areas of the business, a proven track record of installations across the world and the comfort of being marketed in the UK by a relatively local IBM Business Partner, Kingfisher Associates, based in Dorset.

"We knew that it was time to replace our home-grown disparate software systems with an advanced, flexible solution and were looking for an established, stable company who could help us select, implement and support a replacement system that satisfied all requirements," said Quirepace's Financial Director Martin Chewter.

Quirepace chose two specific modules: S2K Enterprise for Distribution, designed to streamline business operations and improve supply chain management and customer service; and S2K Service and Repair, a completely integrated service management solution, including customer orders and inventory modules to manage customer service calls, including the tracking of technician assignments and online enquiry support.

S2K went live in August 2010 and Quirepace now enjoys faster, virtually error-free order processing and business reporting. Meanwhile, users are happy with the familiar Windows-type GUI interface. As data only has to be entered once, an added benefit is that some members of staff have been released for more important tasks.

VAI's totally integrated ERP system has enabled the business to view data easily across all parts of the system, which is proving a major benefit in streamlining customer service management.

Through the creative use of its own resources and the IBM Business Partner programme, Kingfisher Associates was able to offer Quirepace a one-stop-shop for the selection, sourcing and implementation of a proven mid-market ERP solution with more than 1,000 installations across the world.

