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Jason Hare Qubik Te Awamutu General Manager (centre), with Group Administration Manager Jenni-Maree Hare (right) and Glen Wallace of Solve Consultants (left).

Agricultural company consolidates around Accredo Saturn platform

Growth, acquisition and consolidation are phases many companies experience. The change from small to medium sized enterprise is often accompanied by significant procedural change and can compel organisations to move to new accounting or business management solutions.

Not so for Qubik, a Waikato-based dairy farming equipment company, that is happily managing its recent amalgamation activity with Accredo – the business software system the firm has used for the last 15 years.

“We are taking a ‘if it’s not broken why fix it’ approach,” says Qubik Te Awamutu General Manager Jason Hare. “We have been using Accredo Mercury for the last seven years and before that used its forerunner Profax for a long time. We have had no issues with it and it has coped very well with our growth.”

Over the last 12 months Qubik has worked to amalgamate its four separate businesses into one company. Advising them on the best way to

establish and manage the new consolidated system is Accredo Qualified Support Person, Glen Wallace of Solve Consultants Limited.

Wallace says Qubik is successfully transitioning from four individual server-based installs of Accredo Mercury to a single Accredo Saturn install that handles the four branches, three operating divisions and five locations.

“The biggest issue is standardising the processes. Each office has its own way of doing things, but now they have to work off one system, so it is important we manage the process of consolidating the data and processes correctly, so we don’t create headaches.”

A chartered accountant himself, Wallace says he sees his role as helping Qubik help themselves. “Accredo is a product which copes with this type of company restructure extremely well. My role is to help Qubik get the most out of the system, which means they save money by not paying other parties to do basic compliance work for them.”

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With Accredo set up to allow easy access to all key accounting data, Wallace says, it is simply a matter of Qubik working with its accountants to make sure they are not reinventing the wheel. "Accredo collects a lot of information and provided the system is set up correctly, all of that information is usable. Once a client's accountant is aware that the information is there, the compliance side of the accounts becomes quite straightforward."

Wallace says the flexibility of the Accredo system makes it a great fit for a company like Qubik, which along with the installation and servicing of milking systems, also provides water reticulation and refrigeration services to dairy farms.

"Accredo Job Costing has been a huge benefit to us. It saves a whole lot of paperwork and the hours people save flipping through invoices are spent getting on with higher value tasks."

Jason Hare,
Te Awamutu General Manager, Qubik

"You can customise the Accredo software to accommodate a wide range of business processes and company structures," he says. "The software doesn't drive the way the business processes have to happen, and because of this it doesn't impose any limitations on the way the company is run. With many off-the-shelf packages, you don't have the degree of customisation

available in the system to reflect the way the business really operates."

For Qubik the biggest advantage and single most valuable improvement in their use of the software during the time they have been customers has been the addition of Accredo's Job Costing functionality.

Qubik's Group Administration Manager Jenni-Maree Hare, says Job Costing provides time-saving quoting capabilities and also fulfils a customer care function, tracking customer service calls from receipt to resolution.

"Our receptionist logs all calls directly into Job Costing, so straight away we have traceability of that job. She then emails it to the appropriate division.

It is coded into the system and then distributed to a service team to attend to. Our service team picks up the details on their PDAs and if the manager of the team needs any more information, he can listen to the original phone call. Customer details are of course pulled through from the system and automatically entered on the job sheet."

Jason Hare says the company also relies heavily on Accredo's automated job quoting functionality, which short circuits the quoting process, saving a significant amount of time.

"The system retains all the quotes we have done previously. If a customer rings up wanting a similar job done or wants our original quote re-issued at a later date, we bring up the quote, and at the press of a button we can update the price of all the items in the quote. And we can automatically apply discounts.

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The amalgamation of all the company's entities onto one system will allow Qubik to exert centralised control over its branches, providing better inventory management and cost control. Centralising the reporting function will also provide the management team with more timely analysis of the company performance.

Jason Hare says having a dedicated Accredo QSP on call that has an intimate knowledge of how Qubik's business runs has been hugely beneficial. "Glen is a great guy to have on hand. He is not just a computer whizz, but understands the company structure from an accounting perspective as well. I don't think there has ever been an Accredo report we have asked Glen to organise that we haven't been able to get, which is a good endorsement of both Glen's abilities and the flexibility of Accredo."

Qubik expects to 'go-live' on the new Accredo Saturn system at its main Te Awamutu branch in early April and will bring the other branches online over coming months.