

Case study:

# Haymarket Publishing



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## Truth dawns at Haymarket

Having one version of the truth is the biggest benefit Haymarket Publishing has seen from replacing its separate finance, HR and payroll packages with a single integrated business management system from Agresso.



### Haymarket Benefits

- One version of the truth
- Reliable and readily accessible information for managers
- An integrated solution for finance, HR and payroll
- Bringing payroll in-house - it was formerly outsourced
- Reduction in HR administration through self service access
- Flexibility of the system to support a dynamic business

“Having everybody working from one source of accurate data is absolutely invaluable. It’s stopped the endless debates over whose figures were right so our managers can get on and run the business based on reliable and readily accessible information.”

In HR terms, Haymarket has built a single HR database with accurate information on all its almost 2,000 employees based in a network of offices worldwide and it is introducing self service access to take much of the administration work away from the HR team. For payroll, it has been able to bring the service in-house, which will produce cost savings.

## Largest

Haymarket is the largest private magazine publisher in the UK, turning over some £200 million annually. Under the energetic stewardship of founder Lord Heseltine, it has grown into a complex, people-centric organisation with ambitious growth plans. As well as owning almost 100 consumer and business titles ranging from Motorsport to Human Resources, it also publishes customer magazines for the likes of Nike, Jaguar and the Army and has built a thriving events and exhibitions management business.

Macdonald explains: “Our businesses have very diverse needs so we wanted a system with close integration between finance, HR and payroll to give us a good understanding of who is doing what, where and how they are being remunerated.”

An illustration of the complexity of Haymarket’s people requirements is that it has a fluctuating army of hourly paid temps who complete a wide range of tasks such as standing in for sub-editors, producing artwork and working in the exhibitions business. Supporting the employed

editorial staff is a bank of several hundred freelance contributors who invoice Haymarket for their work.

Added to that, Haymarket has a particularly fluid workforce, with around 150 people a month, or nearly 10% of its UK employees, taking up opportunities to move between titles and divisions, being seconded overseas or joining or leaving the company. Some staff also work on more than one title and are based in more than one building whilst there is the usual churn of sales staff and a complicated commission structure to deal with.

The company’s rapid growth is a further complicating factor. 150 new permanent staff joined Haymarket and six magazines were acquired in the 15 months from choosing AGRESSO Business World as its core business management system to going live. The organisation also has 700+ cost centres and a large number of GL analysis splits which are reflected across the whole AGRESSO system.

All of which creates a wide range of challenges for the finance, HR and payroll functions from keeping track of personnel movements, to recharging staff time and assets across different publications. In addition, there are weekly and monthly payroll runs, as well as the need to make sure that contributors’ invoices are checked, authorised and paid on time.

“AGRESSO is very powerful in what it delivers as an integrated system and the efficiency benefits will be enormous as we move forward and make more use of it in all areas of the company.”

Charlotte Macdonald, Haymarket’s Agresso project manager.

## Single

The net result is that for Haymarket to continue to go forward it needed a core business management system which provides a single source of accurate data, integrates with the company's specialist software systems and, critically, is both flexible and scalable.

Before AGRESSO Business World was implemented by Haymarket in 2004 / 2005, information on staff was held in a variety of systems in different places, leading to some duplication, inaccuracies and inefficiency. "The management accountants, HR and payroll all had different headcounts," notes Macdonald.

Now, the Agresso HR database holds all the personal information on each of the 2,000 or so employees worldwide and feeds that information into other key Haymarket systems, such as sales, telephone, buildings access, IT helpdesk and the Intranet, to give a single version of the truth. To maintain that, if any information anywhere is found to be incorrect it is immediately updated in AGRESSO as the core system.

Moving to an integrated system has also allowed Haymarket to bring its payroll in-house. Formerly outsourced to a bureau service, the salaries and expenses of Haymarket's 1,500 UK based staff are now handled efficiently and more cost effectively using AGRESSO.

"Being part of a single system has made HR and payroll's lives so much easier," says Macdonald. "The HR team might initially have hankered after a 'best of breed' system and there are a few niggles over some aspects of functionality and feel but they are far outweighed by the benefits, even at this early stage, of having an integrated solution with one version of the truth."

## Web

One of the first priorities after implementing the HR database has been to introduce manager self service, starting with enabling Haymarket's 400 or so business managers to have access to all their own staff's information on line through HR web reports and, soon, HR web forms.

"Haymarket's culture is to let the business managers drive the business," explains Macdonald "so giving them the opportunity to view, update information, analyse and report on their people, as well as their budgets and commercial performance, constitutes a major step forward."

Central to delivering this are the HR web pages which Haymarket's database administrators have created in AGRESSO, adding functionality, for example, to handle the joiners, movers and leavers and the company's complex HR authorisation chains.

Macdonald gives an example: "Any change, in an employee's title, job, salary or location, has to be notified and authorised on a staff movement form. We have taken a huge amount of paperwork and administration effort away from HR by enabling the relevant business manager to do those staff movements electronically - by retrieving the information from AGRESSO, altering the data, using workflow to route it through the levels of authorisation, to automatically updating the records back in AGRESSO."

Haymarket's freelance contributors, who are important suppliers to the company, invoice for their work, with payment authorised and processed through AGRESSO's purchasing module after the magazine has been published. Custom web pages have been created to set them up in AGRESSO as suppliers, with controls to prevent duplication. The end result is that they are being paid more quickly.

## IntellAgent

Haymarket is also making good early use of Agresso's IntellAgent functionality which monitors time critical events in AGRESSO and alerts the relevant user to take action.

Macdonald explains: "It's a very useful chaser tool which we use for reminding people they need to do something and the alerts escalate if they don't act. It reminds about authorising invoices to make sure we pay on time and we also starting to use it for HR for staff appraisal dates and salary reviews."

"Flexibility and scalability is key for us and the fact that we can change AGRESSO quickly and easily is a very valid benefit of the system."

## Next

Haymarket hasn't long been live on the HR and payroll modules of AGRESSO Business World and has wide ranging plans to make greater use of the functionality. Some specific steps will be to configure employee self service to allow staff to update their personal details and submit holiday forms online.

In purchasing, a web requisition and purchase order for each contributor will be raised prior to publication rather than post event, as currently happens, to follow the standard POP process. The focus will also shift more to building on the HR reporting, to enable business managers to drill down to the right level of detail.

## Results

Haymarket produced a business case for moving to AGRESSO Business World and reviews its performance against its quantifiable KPIs quarterly. Despite the fact the first phase implementation hasn't long been completed, the company is already reporting early success in key areas – better use of headcount and reduced cost of payroll.

As well as greater efficiency, Haymarket is also seeing a culture change emerging with a move towards taking collective responsibility for HR. In addition, payroll, in particular, no longer exists in a vacuum but is much more a part of the organisation, an unexpected but important benefit for a company which prides itself on its closeness and family values.

## Dynamic

Haymarket is a very dynamic business and, as it continues to expand, needs its core business management system to change and grow with it quickly and easily. Macdonald summed up: "Flexibility and scalability is key for us and the fact that we can change AGRESSO quickly and easily is a very valid benefit of the system."

Her final comment: "There is no doubt that AGRESSO is very powerful in what it delivers as an integrated system and the efficiency benefits will be enormous as we move forward and make more use of it in all areas of the company."

### Haymarket technical information

- **Server Operating System:** Windows
- **Server architectures used to host RDBMS:** Windows
- **Thin client solution:** Windows Terminal Services and Citrix
- **RDBMS:** SQL Server 2000
- **Client Operating System environments:** Windows XP, 2000 and Mac OS9/OS10
- **Network Operating System:** Windows Active Directory



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