



ACAL Technology

www.acaltechnology.com



At A Glance:

- **Company:**
ACAL Technology is a leading value-added distributor providing specialist design-in, sales and marketing services for international suppliers in the fields of semiconductors, RF and wireless, power management and board level systems.
- **Location:** UK, plus European subsidiaries in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Belgium, Holland
- **Industry:** Distribution; Electronic components
- **Company size:** 500+ employees
- **Challenges:**
 - Siloed operations with inconsistent processes
 - Limited access to critical customer information
 - Time-consuming reporting processes
- **Software switched from:**
Various local package and spreadsheet solutions
- **Other software considered:**
Salesforce.com, Sage, Vecta
- **Software integrated with:**
JD Edwards
- **NetSuite Solution:**
NetSuite OneWorld
- **Results with NetSuite:**
 - Enhanced information sharing between regional operations
 - Consistent processes and a single, consolidated view of the customer
 - Unified view of sales pipeline across the business
 - Improved workflow through email and calendar integration
 - Increased overall sales team efficiency

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ACAL Plc

The Results:

Using NetSuite OneWorld, electronics distributor ACAL has created a unified view of its previously separate sales and customer systems across its UK and European operations. "NetSuite is now the front-end for all our sales activities," explains Simon Rush, Divisional Sales and Marketing Information Manager. "All of our customer-facing teams — telesales, customer service, direct field sales engineers and application engineers — use NetSuite to do their daily jobs."

NetSuite is integrated via a web service with ACAL's JD Edwards system which manages the company's financial, operational ("pick-pack-ship") and sales ("book and bill") transactions. The NetSuite system is updated nightly, reflecting the previous day's trading and giving the sales teams a consolidated view of customer transactions.

"Before NetSuite, we used a variety of applications to manage our sales divisions; now our entire sales operation runs through NetSuite, providing us with a unified view of our sales activity and pipeline," says Rush. Being able to share information more easily has improved the performance of the sales teams. "What we have now goes beyond anything we could do before. It allows our sales teams to see what's selling well or if they've lost business and to analyse customer buying patterns." Using NetSuite's Advanced Analytics module, it's now much easier to view reports showing the status of the entire business. "It is a definite plus for the management team to have access to a consolidated view of the business from wherever they are," adds Rush.

NetSuite has increased the overall efficiency of the sales teams by saving time and effort on previously cumbersome tasks. "We've improved our overall pipeline management and how we follow through on projects," says Rush. "There's no paper piling up on desks anymore. We've definitely been more successful winning business because of this." These results are all the more impressive given the fact ACAL was also consolidating its operations and operating in a sector facing negative growth. "It's difficult for any company to increase revenue when undergoing such a massive consolidation of operations,

 Find out more: contact NetSuite, Inc. at 1 877 NETSUITE or visit www.netsuite.com



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Information Manager
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but NetSuite enabled us to maintain business at consistent levels which was a significant achievement for us," adds Rush.

"ACAL Technology operates in a market that is experiencing tough economic conditions, but we are out performing the market and that, in part, is due to NetSuite," says Nick Rudge, CIO, ACAL Plc. "NetSuite has also helped Acal Technology execute its business re-engineering strategy and now places them well to compete in today's tough market."

The Challenges:

ACAL's European operation evolved through a series of acquisitions, resulting in a number of siloed business operations, all totally independent and autonomous. Realising this model wasn't sustainable, ACAL began the process of streamlining its business operations and IT infrastructure. "With limited IT resources, we wanted a CRM solution that was hosted offshore. NetSuite was a natural fit to our IT strategy," says Rudge.

The NetSuite project was initially driven by the need to consolidate four separate UK operations, and pull all CRM functions into a single platform. "Before NetSuite, two of our UK locations ran separate Lotus Notes systems," explains Rush. "With both locations selling to the same customers, our sales teams had to check both systems to get a full view of the customer's history. But they could only update one of the systems themselves, resulting in a lot of time-wasting and duplication of effort."

Getting information about customer activity was a laborious task. Top-level reports were sent out on a nightly, weekly or monthly basis. The sales teams then had to plough through the reports to get the latest information about their clients. With over 25,000 customers across Europe, this was no mean feat. ACAL needed a system that would unite its customer-facing teams across the UK and provide a single, easily accessible view of customer data. While considering the potential of its incumbent systems from Vecta and a Lotus Notes-based system, ACAL's board recommended a more thorough evaluation of the market. The search yielded three new contenders: Sage, Salesforce.com and NetSuite.

The decision was then made at the group level to find a system that would also support the other ten European operations. With multiple geographic locations and sales teams on the road, an online system that could be accessed irrespective of location was key to ACAL, who also wanted to avoid adding resources to maintain the system internally.

This narrowed the field down to Salesforce.com and NetSuite. Following a week-long pilot at one of ACAL's smaller UK operations, ACAL selected NetSuite. The NetSuite team moved in and set up the system so that all the users could do their day-to-day jobs using the system. The support and service provided by NetSuite during the pilot helped clinch the deal. "Relationships are important to us," says Rush. "We were looking for a business partner who would enable us to have a very 'hands on' experience of the system before we made our final decision. NetSuite proved beyond doubt they could achieve this for us."



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The Solution:

The NetSuite system was first rolled out to 100 users at ACAL's primary UK location in Wokingham. A year later the system was extended to users in the company's other UK operations in preparation for the consolidation of those operations into the main company. "Because the various parts of our business work with the same customers, it was critical that the teams could see each other's transactions," explains Rush. "Working from one system meant we could now work together as a single team."

After the UK, ACAL began its European roll out, a phased approach that started with Germany. ACAL decided to delay the implementation in Europe until NetSuite's OneWorld system was fully released, so it could take advantage of a single solution that would manage its multiple subsidiaries and multiple currencies in a consolidated view. ACAL was one of the first customers to go live with NetSuite OneWorld, and is proud to have pioneered it in the UK and across Europe. "We knew we were breaking new ground with NetSuite, and were prepared to delay our European rollout to enable this," says Rush.

Once Germany went live, the team completed a rapid release across its remaining European operations, finishing with Italy and bringing the total number of users to just under 300. "The roll-out process became a finely honed model, and by the time we reached our final regions, we were able to complete full implementation from start to finish in less than 4 days!" says Rush. Despite having so many different groups of users, Rush was keen to maintain as much consistency as possible. "We had a large number of operations running several different processes. We needed to pull them together. NetSuite is very customisable, so we were able to blend the NetSuite best practices with the ACAL specific requirements to get the best fit for ACAL as a group."

Even though the implementation is complete, Rush isn't content to stand still and is still looking at ways to get the most out of NetSuite. "Up until now we've had to manually process leads that come through our web site," he says. "In the future we'll be automating this so they go straight into the NetSuite system. We'd also like to integrate our email marketing campaigns and enhance our analytical capabilities. We're also looking at how we can share our quotations and opportunity pipeline with our franchise partners so they can better monitor future sales performance. In the future everything to do with sales force automation will go through NetSuite."



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