



Background

Ferguson Group consists of Ferguson Seacabs, Ferguson Modular and Ferguson Norge. The group was established in 1976 to service the accommodation and container needs of the North Sea oil and gas industry.

The company operates from purpose-built manufacturing premises in Inverurie, near Aberdeen, where everything from initial design work to producing the finished product is carried out in-house.

Ferguson Seacabs supplies high quality offshore containers to the oil & gas industry and has more than 8,000 containers available for hire from locations worldwide including Aberdeen, Norway, Denmark, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Malta, Trinidad and U.A.E. Ferguson Modular provides temporary accommodation requirements in onshore and offshore locations around the world.

The Challenge

Like similar sized companies Ferguson Group tracked their worldwide assets using a mix of spreadsheets, Word templates and legacy systems, which had evolved as the business expanded. The system was inefficient, time consuming, and data input was often duplicated. Ferguson wanted a fit-for-purpose asset management system which was easy to use and capable of adapting as the company enjoyed further expansion.

The initial brief was to provide an online asset tracking system for Ferguson's modular hire business in Inverurie. C-SAM presented a case to the Ferguson management team that the system should also include the container business Ferguson Seacabs and in addition to asset tracking should incorporate other business management tools. Site visits to two C-SAM clients followed and Ferguson management were able to see first hand how the system operated. Following competitive tender against four competitors, C-SAM was awarded a contract to devise a system for the company's container and modular businesses located in Inverurie, Aberdeen and Norway.

The Solution

C-SAM offers niche products which work on a standard framework with modules which can be individually tailored. This gave us an advantage over competitors because it allows us to drastically cut the time required to develop a prototype system.

Our task was to design a generic system which could be used by two different types of business (modular and container) and which could be used by any Ferguson Group employee at any of their international locations. We succeeded in devising a solution which catered for both arms of the business and which operated seamlessly between each division.



The system has the capability of integrating with other corporate functions including Personnel Management, Customer Relationship Management and Capacity Planning. The system also has the added advantage of being multi-lingual, which has greatly assisted integration at the company's Norwegian division.

Nearing the end of the assignment Ferguson Group opened a facility in Perth, Western Australia, and requested the new base was included in the project. The versatility of our system came in to its own and through a mix of online and remote desktop training, the Australian operation was quickly integrated with a minimum of disruption to the completion schedule.

Benefits

The system cuts out duplication, saving time and man hours, and channels information in to one central hub which can be extracted by management at the touch of a button. Operating in real time, instant projections of sales/cash flow/available rental units in stock and other critical data, can be produced speedily and efficiently. Consolidating complex reports prior to management meetings is no longer necessary as information is readily available through a management console which can be accessed from anywhere in the world. In-built automated tasks save time and money, each department benefits from greater visibility and the accuracy of information held in the system is greatly improved. The system is multi lingual and multi currency which will aid integration in other geographic locations as and when Ferguson Group expands in to new markets.

Ferguson Group finance director, Mike Melville, said: "The system devised by C-SAM is all encompassing and gives us a global picture of all our asset utilities across our different geographical locations. It will enable us to extract vital management information which can be used throughout the organisation both to the benefit of Ferguson Group and our clients."

The Future

As part of our ongoing client support programme, C-SAM will continue to work with Ferguson Group staff to quickly resolve any issues arising and to ensure the client enjoys the maximum benefits of our system. The company is planning further international expansion and our system can easily be rolled out to new locations as required.