

Sapphire Case Study: Raven Housing Trust

About Raven Housing Trust

Raven is the leading registered provider in East Surrey. In operation since 2002, Raven provides affordable housing for local people in collaboration with local authority partners. Raven is a social business, investing in homes and neighbourhoods to develop local communities where people want to live.

www.ravenht.org.uk

Business Profile

Sapphire customer since: 2002

Sector: Social Housing

Number of users: 127 in total

- ▶ 80 for requisitioning
- ▶ 33 budget holders
- ▶ 10-15 typically logged in at any one time

Number of sites: Two, with remote working available

New solutions:

- ▶ Kontrolla document management
- ▶ iPos eProcurement

Existing solutions:

- ▶ Infor FMS SunSystems
- ▶ Infor Query & Analysis



"I would recommend iPOS and Kontrolla for their scalability, flexibility and seamless integration with Infor FMS SunSystems.

In addition, the quality of support we get from Sapphire is excellent"

*Antony Green
IT Manager for Raven Housing Trust*

About iPOS eProcurement for Infor FMS SunSystems

iPOS for SunSystems is a spend control solution designed for organisations that want to minimise the cost of purchasing and deliver measurable 'bottom line' savings. Using the power of the internet, users are released from the constraints of paper-based requisitioning and approval; whilst managers have full visibility of costs from requisition to payment.

iPOS is a browser-based solution that harnesses the latest technical innovations to deliver an intuitive, easy-to-use requisitioning system. This approach is the cornerstone in delivering significant cost savings, operational efficiencies and a greater return on investment.

www.saphiresystems.com/uk/solutions/ipos.htm

About Kontrolla document management solutions

Konducta provides the facilities for an organisation to streamline business processes, especially those that require controlled approvals in a distributed organisation, such as approving invoices for payment or approving a request for petty cash. Kolecta provides the facilities for an organisation to store documents and retrieve them from an administrative system such as accounting, procurement, HR, CRM

www.saphiresystems.com/uk/solutions/document-management.htm

Why did Raven need records management software?

Objectives were set from Raven's board to improve efficiency in the area of purchasing and to become a paperless office.

The existing way of working was inflexible and labour intensive. Antony Green, IT Manager at Raven, explained: "We had a paper based system that wasn't scalable, was resource intensive, not as secure as we wanted it to be and was susceptible to human error. Additionally it was a concern that there were no active controls to ensure compliance – for example, individuals could sign off on larger amounts of money than they were authorised to."

It was not uncommon for the team at Raven to receive calls from suppliers chasing invoices, as there was no defined scheduling behind the processing of invoices and orders. There were also issues with chasing paperwork around the building - which was liable to get lost – and a large number of invoices were received without purchase orders.

Shortlisted from the supplier evaluation review process were Documotive, iSOFT and Serengeti, along with the iPOS & Kontrolla solutions from Sapphire.

Why were Sapphire's solutions chosen?

Raven Housing Trust has been a Sapphire customer since 2002, with solutions including Infor FMS SunSystems v4 implemented and supported by Sapphire. "We find Sapphire excellent and have a lot of trust in the company" stated Antony, "Nick Williams, our Account Manager at Sapphire was very good with helping us identify the right solution within our budget."

The solutions proposed by Sapphire met all Raven's requirements, including some specific needs around archiving and management of documents. "We liked the fact that iPOS and Kontrolla would integrate seamlessly with SunSystems and Vision and that Sapphire would be able to implement and manage it all - having a single source rather than working with more suppliers" commented Antony adding "The solutions were price competitive and have been successfully implemented at larger organisations than Raven with more users, so we were confident the solutions are scalable. Also, as everything is web-based, if anything happened to the building, we would be able to carry on and nothing would be lost."

The implementation and roll-out were phased and everything was ready on time - some aspects even went live two weeks early.

Business benefits:

"All the background information has been defined, expense codes have been fixed and who should have access to what is set. I'm very happy with the way things are working and it's good to have an accurate creditor list" said Antony. He also stated the following benefits:

- It is no longer possible to raise an order against the wrong code or another team, accuracy is ensured and the scope for human error is much reduced.
- Raven has been able to reduce the administrative overhead – previously time was wasted correcting codes.
- Raven used to have a couple of people just doing coding; they can now focus on quality functions within finance.
- Compliance is ensured, is measurable, demonstrable and therefore much more easily auditable.
- With a focus on quality we are driving improvements in the quality of our financial situation, budget control and expenditure control.
- Documents can be located quickly and easily – which is particularly helpful during audits.
- Time will be saved on the invoicing process, filing paperwork and chasing up late payments - without having to add headcount.

- Raven's intention is to move to a paperless office and free up space currently devoted to filing. This will enable better utilisation of space and saving money – with the potential to rent out more of the office space or grow other areas of the organisation
- Money will be saved on paper, printing and stationery.

"I would recommend iPOS and Kontrolla for their reputation, scalability and seamless integration with SunSystems and Vision Q&A" said Antony, "The solutions have a logical interface and flexibility. In addition the quality of support we receive from Sapphire is excellent."

Ease of use and team training

Antony tells us "Use of the systems is very logical and it's relatively easy to train new users. An hour or so of training is sufficient for most users, with the administrative team requiring less than a day. We produced a user guide for internal use; the solutions are very customisable, so we wanted something specific."

Working with Sapphire

"It's very easy to deal with Sapphire. We know them to be a reputable supplier and are reassured by their size and depth in support" said Antony, "Our Account Manager is great. Personality matters and everyone at Sapphire is a pleasure to work with. Sapphire's support team is excellent; IT is at the sharp end of business, working with various software solutions, and we have no hassles with SunSystems and the solutions supported by Sapphire."

Commenting on this particular implementation Antony said "I'm very impressed by Sapphire's Project Manager; he was flexible in his approach and was on my side to help adjust things as necessary. He really helped with achieving our objectives – that changed in the course of the project. I have operational day to day work to manage and Sapphire's Project Manager handled everything for us, which really took the pressure off me."

He went on to add: "Key reasons for recommending Sapphire would be flexibility, reliability and high quality of service and solutions."

Advice for others

Antony advises that others looking to implement new solutions "do your homework and work out your key objectives." He also cautioned "If you don't think secure purchasing processes and document management is applicable to your organisation, do a study of the paper trail behind your finance systems. Make sure there is no room for fraud – though not a problem for Raven, it's a lot more prevalent than you might think and one instance can have extensive implications for the business."