



Rowlinson Timber logs on to RAM

One of Europe's leading timber merchants selects RAM's specialist fixed asset management solution after recommendation from Rebus Financials.

Rowlinson Group, the specialist timber trader, manufacturer and distributor, has selected RAM's Fixed Asset Management system as part of its new best-of-breed financial solution.

Rowlinson, a family run business established in 1926, consists of nine companies with activities ranging from the import of timber from Russia and the Baltic states to the manufacture of garden furniture and wooden packaging. The group employs over 500 staff and supplies timber goods to retail outlets such as Homebase, Focus DIY and Wyevale Garden Centres, as well as major UK manufacturers like Land Rover, Ford and JCB.

As part of a comprehensive review of its group-wide IT systems, the finance team recently replaced the existing in-house accounting system with a Rebus Financial solution.

"We liked the functionality that Rebus offered and the flexibility the software gave us. Given that we were replacing a system that had been designed specifically for us, it was an easy system to adopt," said Keith Douglas, financial director at Rowlinson.

"Similarly, when it came to looking at our Fixed Asset Management requirements," added Douglas, "I wanted a system that could be tailored to meet the diverse needs of individual business units within the group. It needed to be an up to date solution to facilitate the process of group-wide accounting and provide a more accurate set of figures. The main problem we encountered with our old system was the length of time it took to access any detailed information, so I had to be sure that the new solution had a powerful reporting tool."

"Looking for a suitable system was simple. I asked the team at Rebus for its suggestion and it recommended RAM. One of the benefits we saw in Rebus was its partnership with other best-of-breed suppliers and, in particular, its compatibility with other leading business tools.

"During the evaluation process it was clear that RAM would easily satisfy all our requirements,

especially with regard to reporting," said Douglas. "I was delighted with the response times and accessibility of detailed asset information through the asset tree viewer."

Rowlinson's finance team had previously prepared fixed asset reports by manually calculating figures across cost centres. "In the old system I could only produce total figures for certain categories," said Douglas. "Within RAM, detailed asset reports are literally produced at the touch of a button and can be sorted, sequenced and sub-totalled across any cost centre, division or asset type."

The RAM system, which went live at three Rowlinson sites in 2001, is being rolled out to the other six UK and European divisions in 2002. The group has up to five separate projects to manage at any one time as it manufactures some of its own machinery and manages its own construction schemes. It plans to implement RAM's Capital Project Control

module to provide an integrated system for budgeting, costing and monitoring all capital expenditure.



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