

About Neopost:

Neopost is the fastest growing supplier of mailroom, document and logistics solutions in the UK, and the No.1 supplier in Europe with some 800,000 customers in the corporate, public and professional sectors. Neopost have a direct presence in 15 countries, with more than 5,500 employees and annual sales of €918.5m in 2008. The company's growth in the UK over the past five years has been singularly impressive, with UK revenues of £102 million, more than double that of 1999.



To help support the company's ambitious growth trajectory the business implemented an SAP solution which, here in the UK comprises, financials, sales & distribution, materials management, HR and payroll. The UK system is used by nearly 300 people across 10 regional sites.

Mike Tonkiss is Neopost's IT Director and an industry veteran in a career that spans some 17 years. Mike is responsible for strategic IT management within the UK operation and heads a team of people whose role is to support the business' IT requirements.

In 2007, Neopost UK launched their SAP system. To secure some continuity of service, the team at Neopost selected their original implementation partner to provide the ongoing support for the new SAP system. However, shortly after the implementation process concluded, Neopost started to experience a sharp decline in service quality. Mike says "Post go-live, the relationship with our support partner deteriorated very rapidly. It appeared that the partner had seriously underestimated the scale of the effort needed to effectively support the system during the crucial early stages. Because of their miscalculation, the partner was unable to provide adequate coverage - which culminated in delayed response times, a continually increasing backlog of change requests and some serious knowledge gaps which became apparent in a number of the consultants placed on the job."

In October 2008, and just 12 months after going live, Neopost found themselves with the prospect of instructing a new support partner to take over the project. Mike said "because our support partner failed to step up and make good on the concerns that we had, we lost confidence in them as a strategic partner who could support our requirements going forward."

In the summer of 2008, Invenio were introduced to Neopost to take care of some system issues that had, until previously, gone unresolved by the incumbent partner. Mike said "Invenio's team quickly identified the problem and suggested a resolution for us - something that our support

partner had been unable to do. This gave us confidence in their expertise and we began discussions to use their support services going forward."



Because Invenio had already had involvement with Neopost's system, the transfer of support proved to be a very straightforward affair. Mike said: "when we began working with Invenio, the cut-over went very well. The previous supplier hadn't been onsite for quite some time, whereas Invenio had taken the initiative to familiarise themselves with the system as early as possible so the handover could happen with minimal disruption".

During the early days, the team of Invenio consultants worked tremendously hard to ensure that Neopost's negative SAP support experiences were laid to rest. Mike says "we were pleased when our initial system issue was resolved - on time and working as expected. We noticed a number of performance improvements immediately and it made a refreshing change to never have to chase for updates, ask for replacement personnel, or question any outstanding actions."

So now that the relationship is established, does Mike feel that the change was worth the effort? "Absolutely" says Mike. "The feedback from my team on Invenio's capabilities has been excellent. Invenio's staff turnover has been very low, affording us continuity and familiarity... and the consultants' experience in their field is first rate."

We asked Mike about what advice he would give to other businesses considering a support transfer to another partner. He says "If you have the opportunity, then you should 'try before you buy'. You also need to be really clear about your expectations and priorities and you should ensure that your definitions of what you want are clear and precise. Be sure to take up reference sites - it sounds obvious, but you'd be surprised at the number of organisa-

tions that don't. I think it is also important that you should be prepared to travel to any offshore location so you can meet the team so they can talk directly with you thus understanding your business from a personal level which is highly valued by offshore partners and makes them feel part of your team."

When asked if he would recommend Invenio Mike replied "Absolutely. The expertise of the consultant personnel combined with their activity rate has meant a service that's been delivered professionally, seamlessly and transparently - which is absolutely what you want from your SAP support partner."

With Neopost now about to renew their contract with Invenio for a further term Mike concluded "I am looking forward to continuing our relationship with Invenio. Overall, I find them an easy organisation to deal with. The account management is responsive, the consultants are knowledgeable and we can be confident of a proactive support offering that ensures any system issues or change requests are dealt with promptly and efficiently."

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