CASE STUDY

CLIENT:	Trident
INDUSTRY:	Job & Project Based Businesses
LOCATION:	Australia
PRODUCT SUITE:	EXO Business
MYOB ENTERPRISE PARTNER:	Exoserv

MYOB EXO Business provides Trident with a fast and colourful window on how the business is performing day-to-day.

Overview

Trident Computer Services is an Australian-owned IT service provider offering a complete IT service – from supplying PCs to installing complex wide area networks incorporating high capacity, high speed storage, security and broadband web integration.

Because Trident has such a broad product range and client base, their success is dependent on high level managerial visibility and reliable cross-sector intelligence on sales and performance.

The restrictions of manual entry

Trident had been running a combination of Great Plains and Lotus Notes successfully for a number of years. However, as business grew, the set-up began to show its limitations.

For a start, running two separate systems made it necessary to enter the same information more than once. This meant staff were having to spend more and more time on administrative tasks and increased the chance of errors occurring, such as invoices not matching up with jobs.

More problematic still was that because reporting was limited, Trident had restricted visibility across the organisation. This made it harder to identify where to improve their processes and functions.

In 2006, Trident decided to look for a comprehensive, end-to-end payroll and inventory system to replace its existing system.

Weighing up the options

Trident assessed a number of possible replacement systems including SAP, before settling on MYOB's EXO Business (formerly known as Exonet).

A key factor in Trident's decision was the ability with EXO to forge a lasting relationship with a trusted service provider.

"We felt it was important to have someone help us define the architecture," says Katie McGorian, Trident's CEO. "We are in the business of IT, not ERP [enterprise resource planning], and wanted to leave this to the experts."

The right company to work with

Trident had a number of significant issues that they were seeking to resolve with this software overhaul, and specific requirements around stock selection and workflow.

"Like many people people facing a major change like this, we felt quite bewildered," says McGorian. "However, we sensed an immediate connection with MYOB partner Exoserv and knew they were the right company to work with."

According to McGorian, dealing with uncertainty from

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staff and management, and a reluctance to change, were just some of the many challenges Exoserv faced whilst working with Trident.

"Despite this, Exoserv remained professional and patient throughout the entire implementation process, and beyond," she says.

"Our ongoing relationship with Exoserv means we consider them valued members of the Trident team," adds the CEO, "so much so in fact, that they are now helping us to improve our workflow processes for many of our key product offerings".

One such offering is the School Notebook Program, where Trident processes hundreds of orders and delivers within a very short timeframe to meet the start of the school year.

Dealing with change

According to McGorian, adapting to a new system was Trident's biggest hurdle.

"The training that Exoserv gave was pretty comprehensive, and MYOB EXO is very user-friendly," she says. "It took less than a month for a core group of us to get a basic understanding of the system.

"But when it came to rolling things out across the whole organisation, we probably should have allocated more time.

"We overlooked the importance of creating training manuals, which meant that when staff were on leave or off sick, there was no document for less experienced or untrained members of staff to refer to.

"As a consequence, it took some staff much longer than others to feel confident in using the system."

That said, McGorian stresses that Trident has "such a terrific relationship with Exoserv" that issues don't go unresolved for long. Better still, she adds "they always seem more than happy to suggest alternatives or come in and develop a new workflow for us in MYOB EXO".

Increased visibility over costing

Of the additional reports Exoserv developed for Trident, McGorian says their most valued is probably the module for technician time, because of the visibility it gives them on costs.

"By recording technician time, we can calculate our fees per customer much more accurately," says McGorian, "and charge according to the actual cost to our business, rather than anything more arbitrary".

Not only that, but Trident can now see which technicians are creating the most revenue, and which aren't, and encourage or reward their staff accordingly.

Taking the pulse of the business

MYOB EXO's real strength, according to McGorian, is its "excellent" reporting.

The management report in particular provides a fast and colourful window into how the business is running per day, she says, adding, "We can now identify where we make the most profit, which areas we need to concentrate on and which are our most lucrative vertical markets.

"We had vague ideas about these things before but now we can get concrete evidence."

Trident uses the intelligence to assign staff more effectively, either moving people to parts of the business that need strengthening, or hiring people in areas where they're obtaining a higher profit.

"One such area was HP Procurve Switches," says McGorian. "We realised this product set was generating significant growth for us, so we reinforced our marketing campaign behind it."

You can't value what you can't see

Over the last year, Trident's business has become increasingly efficient and, consequently, more profitable. And McGorian attributes that, in no small part, to EXO.

"What MYOB gives us is a complete, 3D view of how our business is performing," she says. "With that information, we can make well-informed decisions for the benefit of everyone.

"We can reduce manual processes and have

administration staff doing more important and useful tasks," says McGorian. "And we can pay staff appropriately, because we know how they're performing."

Above all, she adds, MYOB EXO has "reduced management stress at Trident, which has increased staff satisfaction and helped us to become a more relaxed and efficient organisation as a whole. And that's a very welcome change."

Client and Enterprise partner details

www.trident.com.au

www.exoserv.com.au