



MYOB Exonet - Case Study

Arcadia

Distributing with constant clarity

Employing 13 staff in the Sydney CBD, Arcadia operates both as an IT consultancy and as the exclusive distributor of the EIZO range of colour-critical LCD monitors.

EIZO monitors are used in highly-specialised applications, including forensic and geological research, medical imaging and pre-press colour matching.

Managing the marketing, distribution and support of these high-value, high-end products across many different industries and customer groups requires constant awareness of a complex network of time and cost variables. Fortunately, Arcadia is running on a well thought-through and efficient business system; but it wasn't always as easy.

After starting with two people in 1996, Arcadia experienced significant growth, resulting in a number of staff hires in 2003. By late-2005, management realised that the combined effects of an increase in turnover and SKUs (stock keeping units) was placing undue stress on the collection of automated and manual business systems then in place.

Arcadia needed a new business management system.

Long-term staff member Andrey Myasnikov project managed the assessment, selection, specification and implementation of MYOB Exonet as Arcadia's business management system of choice. He also had a solid hand in configuring many of the business's reports (of which more later).

Working with MYOB Enterprise Partners Kilimanjaro Consulting, Myasnikov defined the information management challenges being faced by the business and ushered in a whole new era of efficiency.

Identifying the stress points of growth

Back in 2005, Arcadia was running on MYOB Premier – along with a veritable galaxy of spreadsheets and 'in-the-head' guestimates.

While Myasnikov stresses that MYOB Premier was "great accounting software for smaller businesses" and a solid financial backbone, it was unable to factor-in the increasingly complex multi-variable demands of the distribution side of the business.

"Staff were being overwhelmed by the amount of information that had to be kept outside of the system," Myasnikov clarifies, with up to seven different spreadsheets being used to track various critical non-accounting variables.

What Arcadia needed was a single system that recorded and collated all of this information.

Taking the time to plan ahead

Arcadia spent about six months researching the business management software market. In the end, MYOB Exonet's ability to be customised stood out from the competition.

Arcadia selected Kilimanjaro Consulting as their systems implementation provider and, according to Myasnikov, they were suitably impressed.

"Kilimanjaro, as the service provider, were excellent," enthuses Myasnikov. "They did a very good job of working with us and managing our needs."

Here Myasnikov makes an important distinction for any business contemplating a change in management system: what the business actually needs can be significantly different from what it thinks it wants.

Through working with Kilimanjaro, Arcadia was able to define their business needs in terms of strategies, workflows and outcomes. Only then did they approach the issue of software functionality.

"We spent much more time on deciding on how things should work than on the actual implementation," Myasnikov points out.

And now that they're running the business on MYOB Exonet, all that planning and discussion would appear to have paid off.



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Completing the stock management circle



Arcadia's distribution business manages the movement of stock 'back-to-back', with each customer order triggering a series of processes that are time- and cost-dependent.

MYOB Exonet captures all of that information – previously noted on spreadsheets – for each and every customer order across the 70-plus SKUs.

MYOB Exonet is also used to manage an important area of the pre-sales cycle for the EIZO LCD monitors. Being such a specialised product, many potential customers prefer to try before they buy, and Arcadia needs to keep track of where each demo model is, how long it's been there, when it's due back, its service history and more.

Post-sale, MYOB Exonet helps with tracking warranties – an area of the business that definitely benefited from MYOB Exonet's ability to be customised.

All this and more is captured and managed from within MYOB Exonet, and Myasnikov believes that the combination of improved workflows, better-integrated functionality and ease-of-use has resulted in considerable operational cost-savings.

"Using MYOB Exonet has saved at least 15 man hours a week in paperwork per position," he estimates.

Finally – reports that make sense

Myasnikov worked particularly close with Kilimanjaro in defining the reporting functionalities of the system. While Kilimanjaro worked on the 'back end', Myasnikov worked in-house on customising the user interface and organising the presentation of data. The result?

"Now managers look at their reports," Myasnikov says with a hint of humour.

"Reports should be actionable," he adds, pointing out that MYOB Exonet's reports aren't tables of mind-boggling accounting figures – they're snapshots of meaningful business data.

Myasnikov continues to tweak with the interface and reporting functionality, and says he will be improving managerial visibility even further with the introduction of 'dashboard'-style overview reporting in the near future.

Basic training and 'super-users'

With the business now running entirely on MYOB Exonet, Myasnikov reckons it would take around a week for a new staff member to get a basic understanding of standard operations.

In terms of ongoing training, Arcadia have elected to invest in training so-called 'Exonet super-users', who can then train-up colleagues to more advanced levels of product use. It's a smart way to take advantage of the MYOB Exonet training that's available, while recognising that not everybody needs to know the system in depth.

A professional job and a satisfied client

While MYOB Exonet continues to deliver on its promise as a powerful integrated business management system, it's the method of the implementation process that continues to impress.

Myasnikov particularly applauds Kilimanjaro for their "professionalism" and "very good expectation management", so important during those phases of the project where the business is anticipating change, and perhaps even a degree of disruption.

The net result is a business that's getting maximum benefit from a well thought-through and implemented business management system – and a clear view of the critical processes that drive its success.

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