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Merlin Unwin Books implements the AVATAR publishing management system

Following its decision to select the AVATAR publishing management system, Merlin Unwin Books has completed a rapid and successful implementation of the system to cover its title management, financial management, sales order processing, invoicing, stock control, contact management, sales reporting, and rights and royalties requirements.

Joanne Potter, Merlin Unwin's Marketing Manager, said: "We are confident that investing in AVATAR will enable us to manage our business much more efficiently in the future. Even though we are still a small organisation, we feel that we have made a wise decision to invest in an integrated back office system, particularly given the recent changes in the economic climate. We need to maximise our selling opportunities and with AVATAR we can minimise the amount of time we spend on non income-producing activities. We will be able to increase our turnover without increasing our overheads – in other words grow as a business without needing more staff.

AVATAR is so much more than an accounts package. We now have eight years of consolidated data going back to 2000 available to us in the one system and so are able to look back over several years of activities to see how our business has performed in different markets and across different products. This wealth of information will help us focus better on our trade as well our individual customers. AVATAR will give us better indicators on re-prints and we will be able to see which books are more profitable and which books less, over the lifecycle of each book. We will no longer have to export data in order to create budgets as this can all be done in AVATAR.

Learning a new system can be a disruptive process, especially in a small business, but after just one training session I was very re-assured at how easy it was to learn how to use the system. Everybody we have been involved with in the AVATAR support team has been as helpful as they possibly could be."

Ian Singer, the IT partner at Littlejohn LLP responsible for the development and management of the AVATAR system, said:

"It has been a pleasure working with a company so passionate about its published products and also one so responsive on project management issues. The project timescale was very short – 3 months from initiation to go live, with minimal business disruption. I am pleased we are able to provide even small companies like Merlin Unwin with immediate and measurable business process improvements from applying best practice in fulfillment and accounting. This successful implementation demonstrates that you don't need to be an expert to derive business benefits from AVATAR's management reporting."

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Notes to editors:

About Merlin Unwin Books (www.merlinunwin.co.uk)

Merlin Unwin Books is a dynamic UK company established in 1990 and dedicated to publishing high quality countryside, wildlife, fieldsports and fishing books, written by leaders in their fields.

About AVATAR (www.avatar-software.com)

AVATAR is a complete business management system for book and journal publishers, book packagers and distributors. Functionally rich, AVATAR's modules are seamlessly integrated yet flexible enough to meet publishers' individual business needs.

AVATAR is also able to integrate seamlessly with existing systems, and protects investment through the use of industry standards like Oracle database compatibility. Partnerships with leading technology providers such as IBM, ensure a 'best of breed' approach to all aspects of the software's design. The system has been used by publishers for more than 10 years and is constantly being refined and enhanced. It is currently used by publishers with between 4 and 400 users.

AVATAR is supported by Littlejohn LLP, one of the UK's top 30 firms of chartered accountants.

About Littlejohn LLP (www.littlejohnllp.com)

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