



16 October 2007

Leading UK military history publisher Pen and Sword selects AVATAR as its business management system

Following a rigorous systems evaluation and comparison process, Pen and Sword Books, one of the leading UK military history publishers, has selected AVATAR to manage its future title management and estimating, sales order processing, fulfilment, stock control, rights, royalties, contact management and accounting requirements.

AVATAR will replace Pen and Sword's separate existing publishing fulfilment and accounts systems. The publisher's production activities, which are currently operated via an in-house developed application, will be incorporated into the same data processing environment.

The implementation of the new system will be undertaken in two phases, to be completed in January and May 2008.

Pen and Sword publishes over 100 titles each year and is part of the Acredula Group. The system selection process was overseen by Group Finance Director Kevin Bassinder, who said:

"My original intention was to replace our existing book publishing software and then, as a separate exercise, look at mainstream accounting systems, but when I came across AVATAR I realized I could kill two birds with one stone. Whilst AVATAR's accounting modules were clearly very robust and flexible – and one of the key features we required was the ability to generate sales analysis 'every which way we could' – we actually made the decision mainly on the basis of what the book publishing side of the product offered.

Although our company is relatively small in terms of scale, we manage most of the publishing process ourselves: we do all our own in-house design, we have our own editing staff, sales staff and we do all our own warehousing and distribution, so our requirements are quite sophisticated, particularly on rights and royalties. We were determined to find a solution that best suited these needs and the fact that, as well as generally meeting these, AVATAR is supported by an established firm of chartered accountants, was a real bonus.

Our visit to an existing AVATAR customer confirmed that support queries were also handled very quickly and efficiently, and this certainly also helped us finalize our decision. And while cost was not a factor in our original evaluations, I know with AVATAR we are getting excellent value for money."

Ian Singer, the IT partner at CLB Littlejohn Frazer who has overseen the development of the AVATAR system since its original conception as a generic distribution and financial management system said:

"I am delighted that Kevin and his colleagues at Pen and Sword feel confident about using AVATAR and working with us. We look forward to developing our relationship and I am sure that the work we undertake on this project will itself have a positive influence on the development of the system and our understanding of publishers' constantly evolving requirements."

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Notes to editors:

About Pen and Sword Books (www.pen-and-sword.co.uk)

Pen and Sword Books is a UK leading military history publisher specialising in aviation, naval and world war history together with areas of local history interest.

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 Cognos, the Canadian specialists in Business Intelligence, 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 CLB Littlejohn Frazer, one of the UK's top 30 firms of chartered accountants.

About CLB Littlejohn Frazer (www.clblf.com)

CLB Littlejohn Frazer is an independent Top 30 UK firm of chartered accountants and business advisors based in London's Canary Wharf. It is an independent member of Polaris International, a worldwide association of accounting firms.