



10 March 2009

Pluto Press selects the AVATAR publishing management system

Pluto Press, the UK's leading independent politics and social science publisher, has selected the modular AVATAR publishing management system to cover its financial management, integrated sales reporting, and rights and royalties requirements.

According to Anne Beech, Pluto Press Managing Director: "Pluto Press has been used to punching well above its weight for the last 21 years, and we plan to continue to do so. We publish over seventy new books each year, juggle a backlist of over 550 titles, we've diversified into web-hosted availability with the help of our partner company, AcademicLibrary, we run a well-established print on demand programme worldwide and we have extensive ebook ambitions. What we didn't have was a system that could accommodate sales data and royalty information and meet our accounting and business management needs. We were wasting time, duplicating effort and struggling to extract meaningful and usable management information.

"Months of talks with the ever-patient team at Avatar led by Ian Singer have finally convinced us that the Avatar system really does what it says on the tin – largely because it has been developed by chartered accountants specifically to cope with the vagaries of the publishing business, in all its lunatic glory. In the present crisis, we can't solve problems at a stroke, but we can ensure that we're dealing with the best real-time information, using a truly flexible management tool. For a small publishing independent, it's a significant investment, but it's one we almost certainly can't afford not to make."

Ian Singer, the IT partner at Littlejohn LLP responsible for the development and management of the AVATAR system, said: "Even a publisher with a comparatively modest turnover can be faced with significant data processing and accounting issues. The management team at Pluto Press has seen how distracting and inefficient managing increasingly complicated databases and spreadsheets manually can become. We look forward to enabling Pluto to access accurate, complete and timely management information and so understand in detail how its business is performing at any given point in time. It almost goes without saying that this is particularly important for publishers in the current economic climate.

"AVATAR offers publishers a system that has, as its core, a powerful accounting solution, integrated with flexible and publisher-specific modules including rights and royalties. Pluto has quite a diverse author base, sells its products through different distributors globally and, for a relatively small publisher, has quite complex royalty calculation and payment requirements. Their new AVATAR system will enable the Pluto management team to spend much less time collating and reconciling data and much more time analysing integrated sales data and other essential publishing business information. The time Pluto will save on managing its publishing business processes can be re-directed to growing its key business assets – its much admired books and other information products."

For further information, please contact:

Michael Collins

AVATAR

E. mcollins@littlejohnllp.com

M. 07779 602 865

Anne Beech

Pluto Press

E. beech@plutobooks.com

T. 020 8374 2193

Notes to editors:

About Pluto Press (www.plutobooks.com)

Pluto Press has a proud history of publishing the very best in progressive, critical thinking across the fields of politics, current affairs, international studies, Middle East studies, political theory, media studies, anthropology and development. Pluto commissions writing that bridges trade and academic markets, and its authors include many of the world's leading thinkers, past and present. Pluto is increasingly publishing in the area of Islamic studies -- some of it in translation -- to enable writers from outside the West to be read more widely in the English-language world. Pluto also works closely with several small independent American publishers.

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)

Littlejohn LLP 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.