



Top Gear Recruitment drives £22 million business, helped by Draycir product suite

Top Gear Recruitment Ltd specialises in the recruitment and management of temporary and permanent workers, for leading UK supply chain, transport and logistics companies.

Our Customer

Established in April 1999 with the opening of an office in Manchester, the recruitment agency now also has eight other branches across the North West. Over the years, the agency has become the preferred supplier to some of the country's best known businesses, including Argos, DHL, and Proctor & Gamble.

Their challenge

From a turnover of £1.4 million in its first year, the business has grown dramatically, and Top Gear's projected turnover for 2010 is £22 million.

That in itself is an impressive statistic, but Credit Controller Sarah Whewell has more numbers at her fingertips, that indicate the complexities involved in managing a business on this scale, "Every week, we send out some 1,800 payslips. At the same time, we could have £3-£4 million of outstanding debt. Balancing our cash flow and ensuring our profitability, means we must ensure that our customers meet their payment commitments."

The Developer solution

As the Top Gear business grew, its Sage Business Partner, Rocket Software, recommended products from Draycir, to extend the functionality provided by its core Sage 50 Accounts Professional

and Sage 50 Payroll Professional systems.

Danny Steel, Director of Rocket Software, explains, "We felt it was a no-brainer. With Draycir, Top Gear Recruitment would have a 'full house' of products that would pay for themselves very quickly: Spindle Professional, which increases efficiency and reduces costs by automating the distribution and archiving of documents; Credit Hound, Draycir's credit management system, which helps keep a close watch on debtors; and Credit Guardian, which provides business intelligence and monitoring on customers and prospects, to avert the problems caused by defaulting customers."

Having been trained by Draycir, Rocket Software could provide smooth, expert implementation, and today delivers first-line support to Top Gear, with the ability to escalate to Draycir if necessary.

Rocket Software has Sage Developer status, like Draycir, for its development of recruitment software. Danny comments, "We know at

first-hand the value which the Sage Developers Programme adds in integrating third-party products with core Sage software. So, for us, Draycir being a Sage Developer – and a 'Developer of the Year' at that – gave us additional comfort and confidence in the products we were recommending to Top Gear Recruitment."

The benefits

Top Gear's administration is centralised at the Manchester head office, where, as one of the main users, Sarah is well placed to discuss the benefits of the Draycir suite, "We handle up to 80% of our documents electronically by email using Spindle Professional. It has brought immense cost-savings in eliminating the cost of postage and paper. We reckon it's saved us the equivalent to a salary, and it's also made us more efficient; all the information is stored on the computer, so we avoid wasting time trawling through filing cabinets."

The hundreds of weekly payslips generated on the Sage 50 Payroll are sent out through Spindle Professional, as well as customer

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documents such as letters, invoices and statements.

Spindle Professional also handles documents generated within Credit Hound, the award-winning Draycir product for automating day-to-day credit control. Credit Hound helps users to implement best practice by providing a staged series of letters and reminders up to final demand, to escalate the pressure on them for payment. However, as Sarah points out, “We can easily adjust the standard communications provided according to our relationship with the customer, so we can decide whether to send out a pointed reminder, or adopt a more softly, softly approach.”

Automation is key here, as Sarah explains, “With around 350 active customers on the ledger at any one time, it would be impossible to keep the records completely up to date using manual processes and spreadsheets. Running an automatic chase program in the background, Credit Hound links with the Microsoft Outlook calendar and prompts us to take the appropriate action, without us having to remember what is due when.”

She adds, “It’s very easy to use; I’ve just trained a new junior on it and she ‘got it’ immediately.”

Credit Hound generates management reports, so that Top Gear managers can oversee cash collection and gain financial insight into the customer base.

Sarah also has high praise for Credit Guardian, saying, “Credit Guardian is by far the best product I’ve ever come across in eight years’ experience as a credit controller. It’s fantastic and can’t be beaten. It’s even happened that we’ve known before the banks about a potential problem and have been able to warn them. It’s that quick.”

Credit Guardian is powered by credit risk information from Experian. Rather than just providing static reports that can be quickly undermined as the customer’s circumstances change, Credit Guardian sends constant alerts and updates. Sarah comments, “Once again, this means we can focus on the job in hand knowing that Credit Guardian is keeping a watch in the background on our behalf for anything that might damage our profitability.”

As with Credit Hound, Top Gear directors and operations managers can extract management reports to help them exert firm control of the business. “While problems are fortunately rare, when Credit Guardian alerts us to a potential issue with a company’s ability to pay, we can take preemptive action to avoid further damage, such as by withdrawing staff,” says Sarah.

Interestingly, Sarah echoes Danny’s phrase, also describing the adoption of Draycir products as a ‘no-brainer’, “I’ve personally recommended them to other credit control professionals.”

Solution summary

- A suite of products that integrates closely with core Sage accounting and payroll systems
- Improved credit control and reduced risk
- Increased efficiency through automation
- Quality assurance and continuous development through the Sage Developers Programme

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Danny Steel, Managing Director & Owner, Rocket Software



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