

T QUALITY

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T Quality – the number one supplier to fish and chip shops and fast food outlets across England and Wales

T Quality benefits from *Accord*

Foodservice wholesaler, T Quality, is reporting significant performance improvements across a range of activities, following its £235,000 investment in an 80 user *Accord* system. With the system now fully bedded in the company is looking to build on these improvements through the implementation of additional *Accord* functionality, including Web Ordering and Warehouse Management.

The Company

Founded in the Hull Docks in the 1920s, T Quality is now a national food service operation with its headquarters in Swindon and 10 fully integrated distribution depots across the country. A subsidiary of the Prosper de Mulder Group, one of the UK's largest privately owned companies, T Quality is the number one supplier to fish and chip shops and fast food outlets across England and Wales with a turnover exceeding £55m. The company principally offers a 'delivered service' together with a 'Cash & Collect' facility, using its own fleet of modern, dual compartment, temperature controlled vehicles to service around 5,500 customers with a range of over 1250 frozen and ambient products from more than 500 different suppliers.

The Challenge

The growth of the company from a single warehouse operation to a multi-depot, nationwide organisation necessitated continual investment in IT systems to be able to integrate and control activities across the whole business. The existing system had been in use for many years, and was effectively a generic solution with a heavily bespoke front end, and was restricting the company's growth and restraining both future sales growth and business efficiency. After evaluating the options T Quality took the strategic decision to invest in a specialist food service solution rather than try to redevelop its existing solution.

The Solution

Over a period of 6 months the company reviewed more than 10 systems. Key factors in the review, all critical to T Quality's successful operation, included Multi depot capability, Telesales and Purchasing, which had to be flexible enough to cope with the unusual aspects of purchasing associated with some of T Quality's product ranges

Following the review the company opted for BCP's multi depot, Telesales-led *Accord* Food Service solution, including financial ledgers and flexible, food specific purchasing and stock control. The main reasons for selecting *Accord* software were that it appeared to be a good functional fit, with excellent Purchasing and Telesales features, while BCP had a stable company background and a clear understanding of our market sector and business procedures said Eric Scott, Financial Director, who was principally involved in the decision making process.

Although an excellent fit to most of T Quality's requirements some bespoke work was necessary to meet some specialist requirements, within the areas of both telesales and purchasing where special features are necessary to handle the idiosyncrasies of buying and selling goods such as frozen at sea fish where availability can be more critical than forecast demand.

The system was introduced across all depots over a period of ten months, with on-site training being given by BCP staff at T Quality's Head Office and cascaded down to staff at each depot. The system went live over the course of a weekend to avoid any disruption to normal trading. To avoid dual running with the existing system and allow the company to make best use of the *Accord* system from 'day one', data was extracted from the existing system over that weekend and converted onto *Accord*.

The Results

The main benefits realised have been in three particular areas, Operations, Purchasing and Telesales:

Operations – The operations staff at each depot now have full control over the timing and production of picking/loading sheets, which has resulted in increased efficiency within each depot. The Picking and Loading functions are now completed earlier each day benefiting both the staff and the company.

Purchasing – The *Accord* purchase order processing functionality has led to greater accuracy in determining order quantities and balancing orders, and has, therefore, reduced the occurrence of products being 'Out of Stock' at the time of sale. Cost savings have also been achieved in terms of both staffing with around a 50% reduction in buyer time – and buying, where the company has been able to 'buy better' due to the availability of more accurate information.

Telesales – The *Accord* telesales software has led to increased efficiency within the two T Quality Call Centres, giving greater control over the daily management of calls, and more timely and accurate information, particularly in relation to turnover against budgeted targets. This has allowed us to grow turnover through, for example, cross selling and up-selling, and also helped us identify areas of weakness. Average order value has increased by over 10% since the introduction of *Accord*, says Eric Scott.

The Future

Having now fully settled its initial *Accord* implementation, and with the introduction of necessary enhancements to the Ledgers functionality, T Quality is looking to evaluate and take advantage of additional *Accord* modules such as Web Ordering, XML EDI Processing, Warehouse Management, Intrastat and Packaging Waste, together with the introduction of enhanced printing and document management facilities to be provided via a partnership with EFS Technology.

Eric Scott concludes: The system is now really delivering the benefits we anticipated. It has given us better control and is helping us to grow the business efficiently. We now feel confident about implementing additional modules to build on this progress, further improve our customer service and increase our market share.