

Greenacres Direct

(MOMS)
mail order management system



Greenacres Direct are a UK based mail order supplier of fertilisers, feeds and pest controls for lawns, gardens and roses. Based in Buckinghamshire Greenacres specialises in providing solutions to common gardening problems and has been supplying horticultural supplies to gardeners and enthusiasts for the last eighteen years.

The Challenge

Ivor Ludford, Managing Director of Greenacres Direct contacted Solweb in February 2003 to discuss the development of a system to streamline the mail order process from the point of order right through to the point of despatch.

Ivor states: "We had been surviving for years using a traditional paper based system, to some extent we had been oblivious to the technological revolution going on around us. However with the advent of the internet and affordable computing we felt it was time to drag Greenacres into the 21st century, we needed to put systems in place in order to increase efficiency and allow the business to grow."

Looking at the existing system we quickly

identified the areas where time and cost savings could be made and set about devising the workflow for the system.

The Solution

The day to day operations of a mail order business can be very complex and diverse, with orders being taken by mail, phone, fax and web. Entering, processing and despatching orders whilst dealing with customer enquiries and managing stock and inventory all add to the pressures.

"Finding orders using paperwork was proving impossible, taking far too long to locate the right documents, and increasingly difficult to keep track of stock levels and deliveries", comments Ivor

Generally it falls to the warehouse staff to

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receive goods from suppliers and as they are also responsible for the very busy task of despatching goods to customers it is critical they don't spend too much time receiving goods from suppliers. The Mail Order Management system allows stock to be booked on with just a few clicks of the mouse.

The horticultural industry can be a very volatile one, with the price of products varying dependant on the weather and stock holding. "If the weather conspires against us

sometimes we have to offer discounts in order to reduce our stock holding", comments Ivor. Greenacres old paper based system lent itself well to this flexible approach, something which we strived to replicate in the Sales Order Module of the software.

Offering numerous discount, carriage and payment options all of which can be overridden if needed.

The software was also designed to provide tight integration between the Sales Order Management and Warehouse Despatch System. As soon as an order is completed all of the relevant paper work is automatically generated and printed, including invoices

and despatch labels. Ivor comments, "Automating these processes has eliminated errors and streamlined the processes providing us with more time and cost saving benefits."

The system also features a full suite of reports all designed to save time and increase productivity. These include sales analysis and stock reports as well a mailing label report, which is utilised in the regular distribution of catalogues and marketing literature.

"I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Solweb the whole experience was very positive and the solution they provided us with far exceeded our expectations."

Ivor Ludford
Managing Director - Greenacres Direct

Conclusion

Using the Mail Order Management System, Greenacres is now able to quickly organise their orders and stay on top of the stock levels. The system has streamlined the business allowing them to process a greater volume of orders in a far shorter time.

"We've been using the Mail Order Management System for over 4 years now, its worked very well for us and definitely improved the business. The system is fast, simple and has been very reliable", states Ivor.

"Approaching software companies we were fearful they would baffle us with jargon, however Solweb have been a pleasure to work with. They took the time

to understand our business, speaking to us in plain English, explaining all of the options and offering advice where appropriate", he adds.

Summing up Ivor concludes: "I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Solweb the whole experience was very positive and the solution they provided us with far exceeded our expectations."

Main Benefits:

- > Reduced operating costs
- > Improved accuracy and efficiency
- > Tight integration of all internal systems
- > Enhanced credibility with large purchasers

