

Customer case studies

Euro Garages

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Tracey Simpson
Payroll Manager



Industry	Retail
Geographic	North England & Midlands
Employees	Approx 1,000
Turnover	£275m
Solution	Access Dimensions Access SelectPay
Modules	Finance ledgers Access Office Integration Executive Desktop Alerts Transaction Broker

Company overview

Euro Garages is the UK's fastest-growing forecourt operator and one of the sector's largest independents, employing nearly 1,000 staff across 84 sites in the North of England and Midlands. Working closely with corporate partners including Burger King, Spar and Starbucks, the company is driven to provide quality, convenience and customer service.

Fast growth

Euro Garages was founded in 2001 by the Issa family with the acquisition of a single forecourt site in Bury, Lancashire. Since then, it has acquired an average of 10 sites each year, making it one of the UK's fastest growing operators. The group's rapid success has been driven by its innovative approach to forecourt trading.

It acquires and redevelops under-performing sites in high density locations, optimising fuel volumes and driving additional revenue by offering convenience retail and ancillary services.

The payroll challenge

Rapid growth has seen staff numbers increase significantly, with the majority of employees working in the forecourt's retail stores and fast-food outlets such as Burger King, Starbucks and Greggs.

As is typical for the retail sector, staff turnover is above average with around 30 new starters and leavers each month. Routine tasks are also made more complex by the need to gather timesheet information from staff across 84 different sites.

With additional site acquisitions in the pipeline, company directors Zuber and Mohsin Issa wanted to be sure they had the systems in place to easily accommodate Euro Garage's future growth.

Control & flexibility

Users of a payroll bureau since formation, the company sought greater control and flexibility through an integrated system. "The logic was that by moving the payroll in-house, we would be able to manage increasing transactions more easily and cost-effectively" says Payroll Manager Tracey Simpson. "For example, we wanted the flexibility to make changes to information without involving a third party, and have a process for maintaining the smooth flow of information between the payroll and the finance ledgers."

The next logical step

Already long-time users of Access Dimensions, Euro Garages made an appointment to view Access' integrated payroll solution, Access SelectPay. Being Microsoft SQL Server-based, the solution offers high-performance processing regardless of the number of employees supported. "SelectPay was definitely the logical step for us" says Tracey. "We already have a relationship with Access and we were attracted by the ease by which SelectPay could be integrated with our existing Dimensions solution. It was clearly a very powerful system and we knew it would easily keep up with our future growth." Following a "very professional product demonstration" Euro Garages' stakeholders decided that Access SelectPay would be a sound investment.

Personal support & training

Following careful planning between Tracey and the Access consultant, Access SelectPay was implemented on time (four days) and in budget.

During this time, we were on site to guide Tracey through the learning process, something she describes as 'absolutely brilliant'.

"Your consultant was very patient, showing me what exactly needed to be done and then let me try it without interfering." Tracey added.

Although newly implemented, with the right guidance, Tracey felt confident enough to carry out the all-important Christmas payroll run without any problems. Since implementation, Euro Garages has experienced a number of key benefits:

More accurate information

Tight integration between the existing Access Dimensions system and Access SelectPay means that payroll data updates the nominal ledger without re-keying. This not only saves time but reduces errors. "Already, the level of system satisfaction is higher. We have greater visibility of information which has built confidence in the quality of our management reporting" says Tracey.

Straightforward import of pay data

In order to gather accurate information from the retail side of the business, it was essential that Access SelectPay could integrate with Microsoft Office. We created powerful two-way links with Excel so that all timesheets submitted in this way can pass into SelectPay into a consistent format without re-keying. In this process, we excelled. "Your consultant's knowledge of Excel was second-to-none; gathering information from multiple sites is very straightforward."

Smooth process for new starters

Access SelectPay covers all statutory requirements and is capable of handling any number of pay types and frequencies.

Our software makes it very easy for Euro Garages to administer the process of managing pay for new starters, who are initially paid weekly and then monthly after 6 weeks. All processing requirements, e.g. basic, holiday, fuel allowances etc., are handled as standard alongside all pensions and deductions.

Reduced costs

Euro Garages was also keen to utilise the e-payslips function. With almost 1,000 employees based across its estate and head office in Lancashire, payslip preparation not only takes up valuable time but is costly in terms of print and postage. This function enables Tracey to deliver payslips direct from the system and securely into the inbox of every member of staff, password-protected for security. "Our staff find it a lot easier to access and retrieve their pay information now and it's certainly saved me a couple of hours' manual processing each month," says Tracey.

Continued support

Now fully confident in standard payroll duties, Tracey is keen to extend her knowledge of the system. "I know I'm only scratching the surface, so it's good to know that I have a support team on-hand when I need it. Everyone I've spoken to at Access has been exceedingly helpful. You come across as a company that works closely together; I've not once been made to feel silly, however small my enquiry!"

Concluding

Tracey concludes "We are very pleased with Access SelectPay. We got a great system, delivered on time and on budget. At Euro Garages it's vital that our passion for quality and customer service is shared by our employees and a reliable, efficient payroll system plays a key part in that."

Further information

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