

Customer case studies

East Thames Group

East Thames provides nearly 14,000 homes for people in housing need. They offer rented housing and low cost home ownership, as well as care and support services and a range of community regeneration initiatives.

“I have been constantly impressed by Access and would happily recommend them to anyone who wants a truly great experience.”

Llewellyn Annandale
Client Relationship Manager



Industry	Housing sector
Geographic	East London & Essex
Employees	947
Turnover	£100m
Solution	GoldMine

CRM Project Background

Back in February 2006, Llewellyn Annandale, Client Relationship Manager, joined East Thames Group and was immediately tasked with the responsibility of sourcing a new CRM system. At this time, there was no CRM or contact management system in place, but the Group had realised the need to start looking for a solution.

The requirement was for a centralised system containing all of East Thames Group’s key external contacts (including local authorities, boards they sit on, forums they are involved in) and details of meetings, calls and other communication between them and East Thames staff. It had become evident that staff were often overlapping contact with external

contacts, unaware that there were existing relationships already in place. There was also the danger of missing out new and important contacts. So a centralised system was crucial.

The main purpose was to share information to avoid duplication of effort, whilst ensuring all key contacts were called or visited regularly and East Thames worked smarter as an organisation.

Llewellyn comments on the issues concerning East Thames before speaking to Access: “East Thames had some concerns that some of the CRM systems available in the marketplace would be aimed at sales-focused organisations, rather than housing associations, and that an in-house system may be

required. Also, we were concerned about user acceptance and adoption. A key stumbling block for many CRM implementations is the failure by staff to use the system once it has been installed and to keep it up-to-date.”

After speaking to Access, Llewellyn soon realised that their ability to tailor and hone the GoldMine Corporate Edition solution to meet their specific needs would be extremely beneficial to East Thames.

Integration requirements

Data on the server had to be up-to-date and managed by the New Business Support team and the core data had to be secure. They wanted to reduce duplication of work while supplying key East Thames staff with information about contacts / relationships outside the organisation. A further aim was to encourage regular communication with key contacts, helping to build stronger strategic relationships. Finally, they needed to supply the management with information and better reporting, to represent the Group.

Access & GoldMine

A number of other CRM solutions were considered including Salesforce.com and Sage CRM. The choice resulted from East Thames conducting a formal tender, which Access won.

Llewellyn commented: “Access won through formal tender, based on product offered, price, customer service... but for me, it was their attention to detail and their understanding of our business that swung it.

“The project planning and implementation phases went very well and we were happy with the speed and professionalism of Access. Our users are based across two buildings, and include members of the Senior Management Team, including Heads of Business and Managing Directors. The major benefits have been seen with recording the history against key contacts and establishing organisational charts, as well as mail merging, printing and using filters and groups.”

We asked Llewellyn about his experience of the services delivered by Access: “It is an all too familiar situation in business today that the customer is treated as a nuisance, a bother... and we become so used to being treated badly that we stop noticing the lack of good customer service. Access have been an absolute joy to work with. Courteous, helpful, honest, trustworthy... the list goes on. They are examples of what customer service is all about. To them, the customer is king. To them, it’s not about a 9-5 existence, it’s personal! It’s about making the customer feel like they truly matter, that the customer is important and that the ongoing relationship is as important as a successful project.

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Plans for the future

East Thames’ plans for the future include further training in the use of the system as well as rolling it out to another 50+ users across the Group.

Who we are

Access will give you the advice, tools and clarity you need to make effective decisions, quickly and with certainty. As both a business-focused consultancy and a specialist software developer, we combine our innovative software with practical experience to deliver a solution that’s exactly right for you and your business.

You can rely on us to provide you with a solution that’s simple, proven and relevant to your company. We have over fifteen years’ experience of developing software here in the UK and our regional consultants have tailored and implemented this software all over the UK and Ireland. The expertise we’ve gained gives us an unbeatable ability to accurately assess your needs and deliver maximum impact with ease and confidence.

We believe your solution must be ready for the future, as well as right for today. Because your business will constantly evolve, we provide a software solution that grows with you. Our modular software covers a complete range of business, financial and administration processes and can be flexed to give you the precise view of your business that you need at any time.

Our supportive consultants combine their first-class software expertise with in-depth industry knowledge to constantly improve and simplify your business processes so that your solution delivers maximum value and a continual return on investment.

With Access, you can be sure you’ve got the clarity you need to reach your business goals.

Further information

For further information on this, or any other Access case studies, please telephone us on 01206 322575, email case-studies@theaccessgroup.com or, alternatively, visit www.theaccessgroup.com/downloads/case-studies.aspx