



Overview

Business challenge

TDG prides itself on its ability to load and transport goods safely. The company realised that streamlining data-collection and improving reporting capabilities could make a major contribution to its ongoing health and safety improvement programme.

Solution

Worked with GROUP Business Software (UK) Ltd (GBS), an IBM Premier Business Partner, to implement a Web-enabled workflow solution using its GBS FastWorks Operational Health and Safety application on the IBM Lotus Domino communication platform to create a system called SHADOW.

TDG boosts safety with Web-enabled solution from GBS FastWorks and IBM

TDG is one of the leading European supply chain management companies, employing around 7,000 people across the UK and continental Europe. The company achieved turnover of £531 million in 2006.

Serving a variety of clients, from large blue chip companies to smaller local operations, TDG handles the storage, loading, transportation and delivery of a wide range of goods – from refrigerated foods to industrial supplies and hazardous chemicals. The company's 125 sites provide more than 1.1 million square metres of warehouse space and support 1,600 vehicles.

With large volumes of often dangerous goods being loaded and unloaded from TDG vehicles every day, occupational health and safety is a key concern for the company, as Peter Coghlan, TDG's Safety Director, explains:

“We are very proud of our safety record, which has seen continuous improvement over the last three years. We are committed to a long-term, ongoing programme to improve health and safety in the workplace.”

TDG realised that a major contribution to this programme could be made by optimising the company's internal processes in a number of areas. Risk assessments, incident and near-miss investigations and monthly health and safety reports all relied in part on paper-based systems and manual processing, which could be slow and cumbersome.

“Part of my job is to report on our current health and safety policies and performance to senior management,” explains Peter Coghlan. “Generating these monthly reports involved collating data from different systems at different sites across Europe, so the figures were never ready until half way through the following month. We wanted a less labour-intensive system that would enable us to respond more quickly.”



Business Benefits

- Browser-based access provides simple user interface with no need to deploy or update client software at remote sites.
 - Integrated workflow cuts paperwork and manual processing, reducing administrative costs and avoiding mistakes.
 - Customisable real-time reporting provides rapid insight for management.
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Steve Shipp, European Financial Systems Manager, adds: “We saw that introducing a new system could also resolve some inter-departmental issues. For example, the insurance department always needed to request risk assessment and staff training records from all over Europe, which could take considerable time. Centralising the health and safety systems could lead to benefits for the whole business.”

Selecting a partner

TDG created a tender document and put together a short-list of possible suppliers. On reviewing the various proposals, the company found a clear favourite in the GBS FastWorks Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) solution from GBS a global IBM Business Partner.

“The GBS FastWorks solution was just what we were looking for,” says Peter Coghlan. “We immediately saw that it could deliver most of what we needed out-of-the-box, but also that it was highly customisable and could be easily tailored to our needs.”

TDG was already using IBM Lotus Domino to serve a number of existing applications, and realised that GBS FastWorks OH&S – which is built on Lotus Domino – would extend its investment in the platform. The company uses Microsoft Exchange as its corporate email platform and does not have the Lotus Notes client deployed on most of its PCs, so GBS was asked to provide access to the system via a Web browser instead. The new Web-based solution is known within TDG as SHADOW – Safety, Health and Development of our Workforce.

“The Web access is extremely useful,” says Peter Coghlan. “It made the roll-out much easier to achieve, since all of our desktops have Internet Explorer installed as standard, and there is nothing else to deploy. Our staff find the interface very intuitive too, so retraining costs have been minimized.”

In fact, TDG was able to treat the introduction of SHADOW as more of a business process

reengineering project than a technical implementation. GBS worked closely with TDG’s internal team to map out the required workflows and train 600 direct users of the system before SHADOW actually went live.

“We were so well prepared for the launch that our sites were able to input information from day one,” says Steve Shipp. “GBS did a wonderful job to get us up to speed. They have a very flexible approach, so even if the project scope changes, they’re quick to respond. And we are more than happy with the support they have offered, from pre-sales through to post-implementation. It’s an excellent working relationship.”

Solution Components

Software

- IBM® Lotus Notes® and Domino®
- GBS FastWorks

IBM Business Partner

- GROUP Business Software (UK) Ltd
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“Building on our robust and flexible IBM Lotus Domino framework, GBS Fastworks has delivered a solution with real business value for TDG, and created a platform which offers us exciting possibilities for the future.”

— Peter Coghlan, Safety Director, TDG

Immediate results

The benefits of the GBS FastWorks and Lotus Domino solution became evident almost immediately. With a single repository for all health and safety data – from risk assessments and best practices through to incident reports – the visibility of important information throughout the company is much higher.

“Cooperation between departments is much easier now,” says Steve Shipp. “Eliminating paperwork will save time and money on administration. And with the workflows, our data is becoming much more standardized, which makes it easier to devolve responsibility for health and safety processes. We don’t have to check that people are filling out forms properly, because the workflows in GBS FastWorks guarantee it.”

Peter Coghlan adds: “If an incident is reported, it is easy to see what the next action should be, and all the relevant people are informed automatically by email. This helps us ensure that all investigations are completed and signed off correctly, which should improve our occupational health and safety figures further.

“Moreover, since the GBS FastWorks OH&S solution provides simple tools to generate reports, we are finding it much easier to monitor our health and safety performance. Instead of waiting two weeks for a monthly report to be ready, we can view figures for the whole organisation in real time.”

TDG continued working with GBS to extend this function, making it easier to create customised reports for ad-hoc analysis.

“Building on our robust and flexible IBM Lotus Domino framework, GBS has delivered a solution with real business value for TDG, and created a platform which offers us exciting possibilities for the future,” concludes Peter Coghlan.

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