Protect investment, scale rapidly and standardise systems with centralized Cloud finance management

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POSTMODERN ERP

CASE STUDY

Expanding Insurance Group PIB Chooses Aqilla to Support Growth.

Insurance group PIB was formed in 2014. By 2016 it had secured investment which allowed it to begin a high growth strategy, acquiring insurance businesses with niche expertise. The group now consists of 15 businesses and is still on a growth trajectory. While each subsidiary business operates its own insurance brokerage system, handling the day to day transactions, the group chose Cloud accounting software Aqilla for central finance management, primarily for its speed of deployment as new businesses join the group.

PIB's Group Finance Manager Will O'Keeffe says, "*We have a Cloud strategy at group level and having our core finance system in the Cloud means we can create a template version of Aqilla, clean of creditors and debtors, and install it within an hour for each newly acquired company. Using Aqilla's Excel Add-In, we can populate it with data quickly. At the front end, the system is so easy to use, we can be operational at subsidiary level in a very short space of time.*"

Hugh Scantlebury, Director at Aqilla adds, "*Aqilla suits PIB very well and their group model is testament to the value Cloud*

applications can bring to fast-emerging businesses; a Cloud strategy comes with a very low cost of entry, keeping overheads low while being able to scale quickly as the business grows. It allows emerging groups to seize opportunities quickly and achieve efficiencies from an early stage."

Easy data entry with detailed outputs

Aqilla's system design and user interface make it easy to bring new users on board. **Will says**, "*As our acquisition trail continues, every new user we bring on board is able to*

easily get up to speed with Aqilla. *It is very easy to use yet it is able to produce some very complicated reporting and analysis via the system's query builder, Sharperlight.*"

He continues, "*With Aqilla, data that goes in very simply, comes out in a very intelligent way.*" PIB uses Sharperlight, to produce a range of reports from monthly management packs and group consolidation to ad hoc performance monitoring. The central group system is designed to capture divisional data by line. This data is processed by the divisions but fed into Aqilla's database. This allows Aqilla's query builder to search and report on both group and divisional data. **Will comments,** "*We are working on making our inter-company controls more sophisticated – a process which grows as our group expands. Aqilla allows us to keep a good track on inter-company balances and manipulate that information into a useful inter-company matrix.*"

Integrated expense management rolled out to 500 employees

A further requirement PIB had when selecting an accounting software system was to provide integrated and automated expense management. Aqilla users can be set up to access some or all of the system which means staff in the field can simply use Aqilla from their mobile devices to upload and submit expenses at a minimal cost per head. With Aqilla, scanned images of receipts can be attached at line level to reduce paper and speed up the process. This reduces the cost of expense processing and makes the process more efficient for everyone across the business and for the central team at group HQ.

> ## "It is very easy to use yet it is able to produce some very complicated reporting and analysis…."

A vision of the future

PIB is in the early stages of standardising systems across the group's estate although plans are also in place to ensure the group benefits further from Aqilla's Cloud architecture, particularly when finding ways to integrate processes. **Will says**, "*We have naturally inherited various banking platforms and we intend to standardise these as much as possible. Then we will be able to integrate Aqilla with our banking process to make it more efficient.*"

When talking about how the group's Cloud strategy will extend into the business, **Will says**, "*As we acquire more companies, we will integrate them into our preferred brokerage systems, all of which are Cloud-based. That way, we can find more efficient ways to store and integrate data across the group with Aqilla at the core.*"

Summing up

Summarising his experience using Cloud-based Aqilla, **PIB's Group Finance Manager, Will O'Keeffe concludes**, "*As far as the customer journey is concerned, the support team at Aqilla has been extremely helpful. Aqilla as a business is of a similar profile to ours so we understand each other well. We have worked with the same support staff the whole way through and they are always attentive.*"