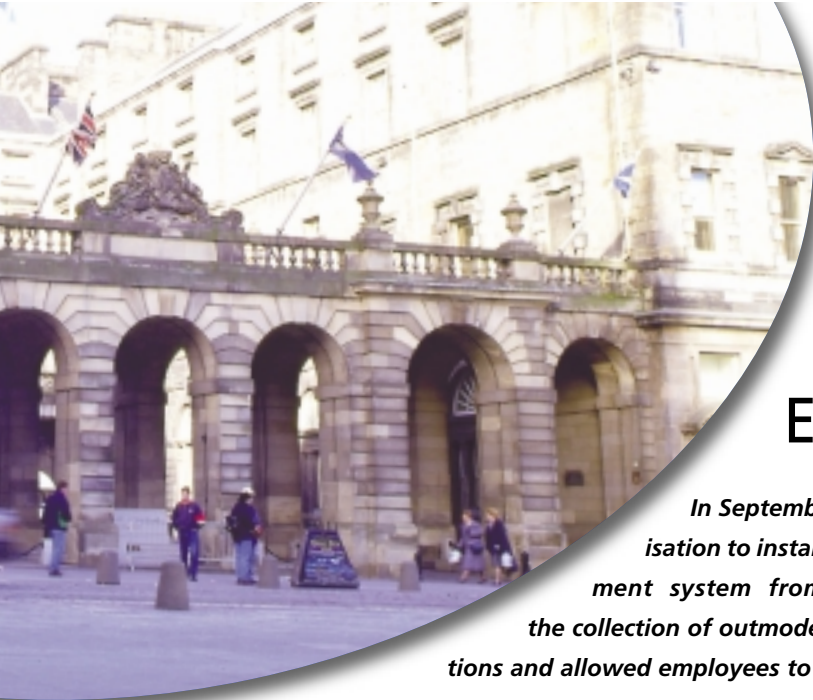


keeping time

Employee Management News
- Issue One

*The Optimum
Employee
Management
Solution for
Client/Server is here...*



Crowning Glory At Edinburgh City Council

In September 1998, City of Edinburgh Council was the first organisation to install the newly launched Open Options employee management system from Crown Computing Ltd. Open Options replaced the collection of outmoded time clocks being used around the Council's 20 locations and allowed employees to register their attendance at any building.

Problem

When Lothian Regional Council and Edinburgh District Council merged in April 1996, to form the City of Edinburgh Council, the variety of electronic and manual clocking systems in use could not cope with the movement of people following merging of departments. Continual failure of the ageing equipment, resulting in increased manual adjustments and escalating maintenance costs, prompted the Council to rationalise its T and A systems.

"With around 2,500 council employees based at 20 plus buildings spread around Edinburgh and surrounding districts, all using their own clocking system, a centralised Employee Management system was essential," recalls Kehler Kuhbor, Project Manager IT Services & Finance. "We looked for a single supplier whose system allowed staff to register at any terminal, not only their base-office clock, as this would eliminate the need to raise a manual exception report everytime they went to another building on council business.

Solution

Essentially the T and A system had to monitor and control the Council's flexible working hours scheme, with the ability to produce absence statistics and other management enabling information. It also

needed to be compatible with the Council's corporate personnel, payroll and T and A systems, transferring information and updating other packages automatically.

"Our main technical criteria was that the database and platform had to be OPEN for future enhancement," stresses Kehler Kuhbor.

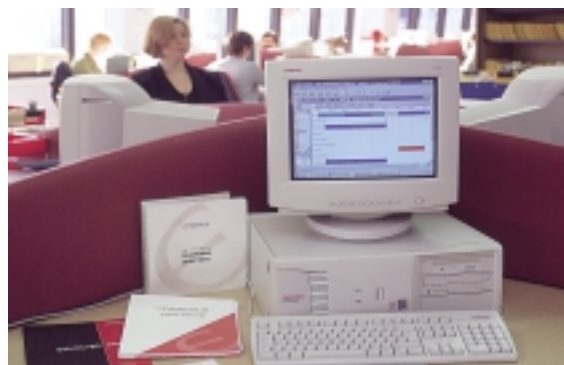
Although essentially a BETA test site for its new Open Options product, Crown Computing won the contract against stiff competition from six other suppliers. Assessment was made by a panel of evaluators including Kehler Kuhbor, Lindsey Gallanders, Senior Employee Relations Officer, Personnel & Management Services Division of Corporate Services, and four departmental administrators. "Our raft of parameters were prioritised in the order of technical ability, including year 2000 compliance, use ability and friendliness, flexibility, reliability and finally value for money," recalls Lindsey Gallanders.

Kehler continues, "A true Client/Server system, operating on Windows NT, fed by a MS-SQL server, Open Options allows us to tie-in with, and make better use of, our other software tools e.g. Powerplay, GQL, Excel etc.

"We were impressed by Crown's previous expertise on the AS/400 platform which

was bought to bear on the functionality built in to the new Open Systems package," recalls Kehler Kuhbor. "Written in 32-bit Visual C++, the latest industry standard, Open Options is a user-friendly, state-of-the-art, Employee Management software package. We took an early decision to opt for a WAN Client/Server solution as it minimised traffic on the network by processing data at the central server/database and passing only the requested information to the user's PC."

"Although not the cheapest to purchase, the Crown Open Options system was selected because it represented the best long term package value for money. When fully installed maintenance costs will be reduced drastically, with the total bill being less than half what we pay now for only six departments," said Kehler.



Armitage Bros Choose Crown

Armitage Bros one of the UK's leading suppliers of pet products has chosen Crown's FM&C Time and Attendance system.

The company with its headquarters in Nottingham employs over 250 people and is well known for its "Good Boy"

and "Good Girl" range of products.

Phase 1 of the new system will interface into payroll, it will also ensure compliance with the EU Working Time Directive, improve control over sickness and absenteeism, overtime authorisation, and provide man-

agement information on holiday entitlements etc.

The system is fully millennium compliant and additional modules are planned, including Activity Management to assist bonus calculation and payment.

News in Brief

Mitsui Babcock

The international heavy engineering specialist Mitsui Babcock has ordered Crown's **Open Options** Time & Attendance system for its manufacturing operation in Renfrew, near Glasgow. The company employs around 600 staff and will implement on a Microsoft NT Client / Server system using the Oracle database management system.

Tyco Electronics

Tyco Electronics is part of the ADT Security group and manufactures electronic components and assemblies for security alarm systems in Walthamstow, north London. With an increased emphasis on cost control and productivity, the company is introducing Crown's AS/400 based Time & Attendance and Activity Management systems, to monitor the efficiency of its manufacturing process. The system will provide up-to-the-minute details of Work-In-Progress and Process-Line efficiency.

VJS Foods

Leading food manufacturer VJS Foods, well known for its various Plumrose brands, has selected the Crown's **Open Options** Time & Attendance system, to manage the 300 or so employees at its Kings Lynn site. The company will extend the system to include additional manufacturing sites in Leicestershire in due course. VJS will implement on an NT Client/Server platform, using the SQL Server database management system.

Potter & Soar

Potter & Soar, part of the Soar Engineering Group based in Banbury has selected Crown's FM&C Time and Attendance system.

The company supplies wire mesh products mainly to the automotive and building industries. The new system replaces an existing one and will give greater control over sickness and absenteeism and associated issues. An additional module for Job Recording is also planned.

More Power to Scotland

As part of a significant 'Year 2000 make-ready' project ScottishPower recently reviewed the performance of clocking systems, primarily used for monitoring the safety and attendance of personnel on site, at three of its major power stations.

ScottishPower became operational in 1991 when its predecessor the South of Scotland Electricity Board was privatised. The company has 15 power stations utilising a variety of generating sources including coal, gas and renewables. It serves three-quarters of Scotland's population, nearly four million people, plus a small part of north-east England. With a turnover of three billion pounds its activities include electricity and gas sales, telecommunications, generation, transmission, water and waste water services. ScottishPower owns the Chester based electricity company Manweb and Southern Water which serves the South East of England.

Problem

"We had been dissatisfied with the efficiency of our existing safety monitoring and data manipulation systems for some time," recalls Michael Miller, Finance Manager based at Longannet power station. "Comprising a collection of bought-in, and in-house generated software packages, they were definitely not 'year 2000' compliant and as we had little confidence in the accuracy of data they provided we backed them up with manual systems. These factors, combined with the need to comply with the new Working Time Regulations, acted as a catalyst for us to look for a more reliable replacement."

Apart from full-time staff, ScottishPower employs a large number of contractors on a cyclical basis. During a major 'outage' overhaul project numbers can vary from a few regular maintenance teams, up to an additional 1000 contractors, on any one site. For Health and Safety purposes it is essential that we keep track of all these extra people.

Solution

"Primarily, therefore we required a software package to register the whereabouts of employees and contractors for safety reasons, but we also wanted to validate hours worked for manpower planning

and invoice checking purposes." "Learning from our past mistakes, of adding different elements to an off-the-shelf base package, we decided to opt for a supplier who could provide a complete system which included not only the expertise in Time and Attendance monitoring but also a comprehensive support and future growth package."

Crown Computing Limited was selected through recommendation and for its ability to supply, not only a Windows based T and A software package, but also an efficient shift management system, which ScottishPower had already considered tagging onto its old system.



"Crown's new Open Options T and A module, operating on Windows '95 NT and Oracle goes further than a mere monitoring tool," continues Michael Miller. "It provides us with a number of solid advantages, such as the ability to write our own manpower planning reports, and provide statistical information on, sickness, holidays, training courses etc."





The Winning Team!

This year will see Crown Computing going from strength to strength with increased market share for its Employee Management software business. Crown's flagship Client/Server product "Open Options" in particular will see substantial growth.

The Crown sales and marketing team are here to help you !!, if there are any questions about the articles in this newsletter or you have queries about any aspect of our Employee Management products and services please contact us.

(Left to right: Paul Close - Regional Sales Manager, Liz McElroy - Sales Secretary, John Moody - Sales Manager, Mike Hawkesford - Managing Director, David Hughes - Marketing Manager, Joanne Coley - Marketing Co-ordinator.

It won't go away...

The Government laid the Working Time Regulations before Parliament on 30 July 1998. These regulations came into force on 1 October 1998.

Do The Regulations Apply To My Workforce ?

The regulations apply to workers over the minimum school leaving age. The definition of worker covers those with a contract of employment plus a wider group who undertake work under other forms of contract (eg: agency and temporary workers, freelancers etc) but does not cover the self-employed. The regulations exclude from scope workers involved in the following activities or sectors of activity: transport, sea fishing, other work at sea, and doctors in training. It also excludes certain activities of the "civil protection services."

There are some special provisions which relate to adolescent workers, these are workers who are over the minimum school leaving age but are under 18.

How Can Crown Help My Organisation Comply ?

Crown Computing have extended the functions of the Time & Attendance module of its Employee Management Software to help our new and existing customers comply with these regulations.

The new functions highlight when an employee has worked or is planned to work hours above the regulation hours. The functions include the following features:

- Weekly working hours limit
- Measures relating to night time working

- Recording Workers Agreements and associated details
- Maintaining Averaging Period
- Adult/Adolescent rules
- Extending reference periods to allow for excluded days
- Recording exclusions
- Recording Opted out employees and associated details
- Start date of individual Agreements
- Both Historical and Future Analysis of hours
- Recording of special cases and associated details

What Should I Do Now ?

If you would like more information or to find out how a Crown Computing Employee Management system would benefit your company please contact:

Joanne Coley at Crown on **01827 64111** or Email: sales@crowncomputing.co.uk

Dates For Your Diary

Crown's Employee Management and Data Capture Seminars

13-29th April 1999

Bristol Posthouse Hotel	Tuesday 13th April
South Mimms Posthouse Hotel	Wednesday 14th April
Slough/Windsor Marriott Hotel	Tuesday 20th April
Birmingham National Motorcycle Museum	Thursday 22nd April
Manchester Airport Posthouse Hotel	Wednesday 28th April
Leeds/Bradford Posthouse Hotel	Thursday 29th April

To book on-line www.crowncomputing.co.uk Also see us at: Computers in Personnel, Barbican, London 23-24th June 1999

