

Weston's Executive Dashboards

Weston's founder and Chairman, Bob Weston, envisaged a solution that would provide immediate access to the latest achievements against the business Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). To realise this goal, Weston Homes commissioned COINS to create a set of dashboards that provide a view of weekly, monthly and year-to-date progress, compared against target for sales, financial and other KPIs.

The dashboards use graphical representation and the detail behind any of the indicators can be drilled into by simply clicking on the relevant dashboard graphic. The KPIs are refreshed every 15 minutes and displayed on plasma screens located in Weston's Head office, including the Chairman's office. The dashboards were developed to Weston's specific requirements by COINS consultant Yan Llamas, using the OA Report Designer.

Weston upgraded their hardware solution in order to support an implementation of COINS Open Architecture and Executive Dashboards. As a result, they became the first COINS customer to go live on a new infrastructure platform using the Linux operating system.

Stuart Thomas, Weston Homes' Finance Director, says "Weston Group purchased a COINS solution in 2002. We were attracted by the potential to deliver a single, integrated business solution that would support and serve all divisions and departments of our business. This is a key differentiator of COINS. There is no other solution provider to my knowledge that offers a complete, integrated answer to the business software requirements for the industry."

Jane Falzon, Project Manager at Weston, adds "The COINS OA Executive dashboards are now live and we are very pleased with the results. The dashboards are delivering what was promised and now that we can see what is achievable, we are using our experience to further enhance the solution."

Weston Homes Plc specialises in the development of brownfield sites throughout the South East of England. The Company delivered operating profits of over £19m in 2005 on the back of almost £100m turnover and, at the current time, has nearly 2500 units at various stages of the development cycle. The Weston Group also comprises a conference and serviced office business and an aviation business that operates The London Heliport at Battersea.



▲ Bob Weston, Chairman, Weston Group Plc



▲ Stuart Thomas, Finance Director and Jane Falzon, Project Manager, Weston Homes Plc

Scanmoor select COINS

Scanmoor has signed contracts with COINS for a 100 user system covering Financials, Commercials, Procurement, Plant Manager, COINSetc, Payroll and HR.

Scanmoor required a system that would provide more than basic accounting, one that would support company growth. Key COINS modules for Scanmoor are e-procurement, plant hire, remote access from site, labour management and HR, all being part of a single integrated system.

Iain Clifford, Head of Procurement states: "COINS has a proven track record in electronic procurement, with the COINSetc module used by many leading contractors and suppliers. The procurement system also has the security, controls and authorisation procedures for our type of business."

Rob Penman, IT Project Manager added, "Plant hire is very important for Scanmoor, as we have a substantial amount

of owned plant that requires managing; externally hired plant also needs to be managed. This is provided for by COINS Plant Manager which enables us to manage our vehicle fleet, stock and workshop."

Phase one of the project involves an initial 50 users with a planned go-live date in the first quarter of 2007. Future plans are to roll the system out to the commercial users on site.

Scanmoor commenced trading in April 1995 and has expended its business across Civil Engineering, Rail, Building, Design and Build and R C Frame Construction. For the last financial year turnover was £82.5m and further growth is forecast.



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Little Britain

The Little Britain Challenge Cup (LBCC) is now in its 19th year and is the largest corporate yachting regatta in Europe. The event is also the biggest UK gathering of senior figureheads from the construction industry.

This year, the Regatta took place from the 14th to 17th September in Cowes on the Isle of Wight. 235 companies battled over three days for the coveted Little Britain Challenge Trophy, awarded each year to the highest placed yacht. The 2006 overall winner went to Amey Love Shack (Amey).

It is the second year that COINS has entered a team and already there was a huge improvement to last year's result. Thanks to the skilled crew that took part, in the IRC Class 1 race COINS' best result was in race 3 where they came 11th (out of 30).

Congratulations to Kier Southern who finished in 2nd place overall in their class, whilst Ellmer Construction came 5th and Bluestone 8th in their respective classes.

The COINS Crew were:

Sue Jones (Connaught plc), Richard Buck (Pochins plc), Kevan Whitehouse (Makers), Terry Walker (Kier), Dale Mullins (Kier), Mike Vaughan (Vaughan Engineering), Gavin Vaughan (Vaughan Engineering), Mike James (COINS), Derek Leaver (COINS), Larry Sullivan (COINS), John Curtis (COINS)



▲ Sailing in the Solent off Bramble Bank

Unleashing the Power

The new OA Reporting solution is significantly more powerful than that provided with COINSplus. Early adopters are delivering key decision-making data to their business, literally within minutes of it becoming available. Such immediate access to information has the potential to revolutionise the way that business can be managed, but all of this power does come with a price in terms of the platform it requires.

OA Reports can be memory hungry and processor intensive. If there is a business requirement for these reports to be available during office hours, dependent on COINS usage and the size of installation, the performance of the main server could be impaired. To cost effectively support and really unleash the power of high-end COINS OA Designer Reporting solutions, COINS can now deliver a 'Split Platform' architecture: a main COINS server alongside one or more separate report servers.

Report servers are relatively low cost, so if one server is outgrown, another one can simply be added. Using clusters of servers to deliver an enterprise solution is becoming a popular answer to the problem of how to have an affordable, scalable system. The power provided by several smaller servers is much greater than can be delivered by a similarly priced, single server.

New COINS Module

COINS has released a new module: Supplier Relationship Management (SRM). SRM provides a central source of supply chain information which can dramatically raise awareness in all critical relationship areas. The new module offers a beneficial solution for a whole range of users from heads of procurement, chief buyers, category managers through to more contract-based professionals such as project managers and site buyers.

Key business and functional processes supported:

- Spend analysis.
- Procurement strategy, structured approach to supply chain partners, preferred suppliers and approved suppliers.
- Category management.
- Vetting, simple and advanced.
- Trading agreements and reporting on non-compliance.
- Extensive search capabilities.
- Continuous improvement, performance monitoring and history.
- View by project.
- View by trade and commodity.
- Performance Workbench with specific emphasis on critical areas such as Health & Safety.

SIGT value COINSetc

SIG Trading's (SIGT) strategy is to develop and grow the Group as a leading supplier of specialist products to the construction and related markets, in order to achieve sustainable long-term growth in shareholder value. Part of this strategy is the use of electronic trading to reduce costs and to speed up the response to customers.

In October 2003 SIGT started using the COINSetc service to deal with COINS users. The experience over the next couple of years proved positive:

- COINSetc was a cost-effective solution
- Integration was quick and efficient, growth of e-Business accelerated
- COINSetc uses "real time" allowing SIGT to become even more responsive
- COINSetc really did match up to the claims of being an "Open Service"

SIGT has now made the decision to run all existing EDI traffic through COINSetc.

"We are suggesting COINS because we will get information in a timely manner and this will encourage our users to use electronic methods rather than phone and fax. When we send EDI orders, it can take two to three hours from us inputting the order to it actually hitting a suppliers system, with COINS it is sent straight away and arrives at the supplier within minutes." John Whaling, SIG's Management Services Director.

SIG Trading (SIGT) is an international specialist supplier of Insulation, Roofing, Commercial Interiors and Specialist Construction & Safety Products. It employs around 8,000 people in over 500 locations with turnover more than doubling since 1999 reaching £1.6BN in 2006.

Shepherd Homes go live

In August 2006, York-based Shepherd Homes went live with a 40 user implementation of COINS Financials, Procurement and VAP. Shepherd Homes, part of the £600m Shepherd Building Group selected COINS earlier in the year, following an extensive selection process during which it became clear that the COINS option was comfortably ahead of the others being considered.

Phase II of the project will see the implementation of House Sales and Customer Care, with further modules to follow next year.

Tom Howcroft, Shepherd Group IT Coordinator comments "We were confident that we had made the right choice with COINS and the experience of implementation has confirmed this. The COINS project team has been a pleasure to work with."

Craig Smith, Shepherd Homes Finance Director adds "Having used COINS previously at Persimmon, I already had a very positive opinion of the product and the company. We are pleased with the software that is now in place and are looking forward to the next stage of the implementation."



▲ Craig Smith, Finance Director, Shepherd Homes



COINS Conference 2006

More than 180 delegates, representing 66 construction and house building clients gave the 'thumbs up' for the first combined COINS Conference for Contractors and House Builders held at the Hayley Conference Centre in Swindon. Customer satisfaction surveys indicated that the conference was good value for money and delegates would be very likely to attend again.

Delegates were able to personalise their time by selecting relevant sessions from a very full multi-track agenda, providing every opportunity to get an update on existing, new and forthcoming solutions available from COINS. Product showcases: to assess how some of the new COINS solutions could deliver business benefit to their companies, Special Interest Group meetings: forums for clients to have their say on the product direction and workshops: for training and ideas for getting the most from COINS.

The conference made it clear that many COINS clients are now getting real business benefit from COINS Open Architecture, especially the powerful reporting tools. The sessions on reporting were particularly well-received.

An enjoyable highlight for many delegates was the Comedy Night on Wednesday. The last act, the brilliant Terry Alderton, had everyone in stitches from the moment he walked on stage dressed from head to toe in construction safety gear.

COINS would like to thank guest speaker Barbara Wilson from HMRC and to panellists Lynn Cox (COINS), Sue Jones (Connaught), Terry Anderson (McInerney) and Tim Morris (CARE) who took part in a fascinating chat session, hosted by the humorous Simon Fanshawe which explored why COINS, its people and customers engage in community projects.

Comments from just a few of the delegates illustrate what a success the formula proved to be.



▲ Yan Llamas presenting at the OA Reporting Showcase

"It keeps getting better! Well worth attending."

Alan Tredgold, Project Manager, Crest Nicholson

"The COINS Conference this year was by far the best one. Because it was a combined Contractor's and House Builders conference, you could appreciate the size of COINS and also learn about how other people are using the product."

Nigel Salisbury, Business Systems Manager, Persimmon

"Excellent conference, picked up lots of new knowledge and ideas, great entertainment."

Ken Wealls, IT Project Manager, McNicholas

"The hospitality, food and general organisation were excellent. I can't wait until the next one!"

Clive Bassett, Finance Director, Beard Construction

"What an excellent job all of the COINS staff did during the conference. The event was supremely well organised and all the presentations were well delivered, with good content. I found the whole experience both useful and enjoyable, and came away with a real positive outlook about the future."

Lee Hollins, Operations Analyst, Seddon

"It was comforting to see the commitment from COINS to continually develop their products through customer feedback and inspiration from other delegates. The conference was resourceful and the opportunity to share knowledge with other COINS customers was a major benefit to me."

Charlie Appleby, IT Manager, Pochin's plc

Early Adopters

COINS House Sales Connection (HSC) is a new, innovative, yet simple solution for managing your sales content and enquiries.

"The product is going to save us huge amounts of time and effort. Currently the task of managing and delivering text and graphics is a big challenge for us. COINS House Sales Connection provides a simple, easy to use centralised solution and eliminates the need for re-keying of data." Andrea Cornwell, Business Systems Manager, Kier Residential, early adopter of COINS HSC.

Through a single interface, HSC allows users of the COINS House Sales to distribute development and property details (including photographs, graphics and other content) automatically from COINS to their own web site, potentially any third-party sales portal sites and indeed any other external database used for advertising. Furthermore, enquiries entered through any web site or other source can automatically generate an enquiry in the COINS House Sales Enquiries Workbench.

The solution therefore helps to improve sales and reduce costs by allowing interaction with multiple sources of enquiry through web services, without any duplication of data or effort. In addition, clients will benefit from improved quality and accuracy in their advertising.

"COINS web services are an elegant and flexible solution to the headache of distributing data to multiple destinations in multiple formats. Tests have gone well and we are looking forward to implementing the product in all our regional businesses," says Alan Tredgold, Project Manager at Crest Nicholson, development partner for COINS HSC.

The early adopter sites are already linking to their own sales web sites. Links to the **rightmove** and **smartnewhomes** sales portal sites will shortly become available and COINS are also in discussion with several other portal sites who wish to come on board. COINS HSC uses industry standard, open technology allowing the integration of all your sales interfaces with the minimum of fuss.





First 'Premier Team'

Geoffrey Osborne have signed up as the first ever 'Premier Entry' to the COINS 3 Peaks Challenge 2007. Paul McCulloch says, "We are very proud to have the first Premier Team, completely committed to raising £15,000 for CARE International and we are confident this is achievable." As last year's highest fundraisers and winners of a place on the trip to visit Tsunami reconstruction projects in India this year, they are well placed for success. "The team will certainly enjoy the privileges that premier entry attracts, not least of all an early start time on Ben Nevis!" adds Paul.

Aid agency CARE International can provide plenty of fundraising support, so if anyone would like to become a 'Premier Team' and help ensure that the £1million barrier of funds raised is broken, please get in touch with COINS. Over 30 teams have now applied for the 2007 event with only 10 places remaining.

For more information and to apply online, please visit www.coins3peakschallenge.com or call Pauline Sargent: 01753 501078.

The event takes place on 12-13 May 2007, and is open to anyone working in the construction industry.

Thank you to all the teams signed up at time of going to press:

Alfred McAlpine	BIW	Bovis Lend Lease
Bullock	COINS x2	Contract Journal
Costain	David Wilson Homes x2	Geoffrey Osborne x2
H W Martin	Haden Young x2	John Sisk
Mackely Construction	Ringway Group Ltd x2	Robinson Design
Show House	Sovereign Group x2	Tamdown Group
VHE Construction	Weston Homes x2	WSP Buildings



▲ Geoffrey Osborne team.

Pochin's plc implementation

Pochin's plc has recently undertaken a combined implementation of Contracting and House Building solutions. Pochin's has implemented the full range of COINS modules except Facilities Management and Marketing, making it one of the most diverse implementation projects. The group, albeit varied, is now operating and therefore also reporting from one single solution.

New servers were installed late 2005 with a phased implementation of COINS software modules from early 2006. It was a great team effort, a number of COINS consultants were involved in the configuration of the system whilst key users from Pochin's worked hard to realign processes to meet with best practice.

"We reviewed project plans and documentation, including test scripts and reconciliations. No issues were identified and the system has been well implemented with no major issues or problems," concluded Charlie Appleby, IT Manager for Pochin's. "We are looking forward to working with COINS in the second phase to implement e-commerce and e-procurement."

Tim Drake, Project Manager at COINS commented "All major divisions are now running on one set of ledgers which means that Pochin's requirements to standardise and reduce costs have been met. The solution also provides complete visibility of the business since they can now report at both group and divisional levels."

Pochin's plc is among the North West's leading construction and development groups undertaking design and build projects and traditional contracting together with industrial, commercial and residential property development. In addition, Pochin's supply services to the construction industry and was founded on concrete pumping.



▲ Charlie Appleby, IT Manager, Pochin's plc.

Shift to Linux

COINS is now ratified to run on the Linux operating system. Linux is an open source version of UNIX that has become increasingly popular, particularly because of its dominance as a web server platform.

Weston Homes were the first customer to go live on a Linux platform in August 2006. COINS anticipate that Linux will gradually replace SCO Unix as the platform of choice for SME installations using Intel servers. For more information on running SCO Unix and moving to Linux, please contact COINS.

CIS Recognition

On 7th September COINS demonstrated market leadership in Construction Software once again by becoming one of the first industry applications to receive official Internet Recognition from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for new CIS.

COINS clients will receive the new CIS software as part of a standard upgrade. The CIS functionality is fully integrated into COINS and includes automated conversion of details for existing subcontractors.

COINS is now working with HMRC and with the Business Application Software Developers Association (BASDA) on plans for further joint testing of the new electronic CIS submissions during late November.

COINS Clients should have already received briefing documents, copies are also available on request. Included with this was a response form to help COINS plan how they can best work together with their clients in preparation for new CIS.

Welcome New House Builders



Mactaggart & Mickel, well renowned Scottish company based in Glasgow that provides quality

homes throughout the Central Belt and Ayrshire will implement a 36 user COINS system including access from all of their current developments to assist the growth of the business.

Ed Monaghan, Managing Director at Mactaggart & Mickel comments: "Following extensive research Mactaggart & Mickel selected COINS due to it being the most integrated package, tailored to the specific needs of the house building industry. COINS will be utilised by every department, increasing communication and reducing the duplication and re-keying of data. We see COINS forming an important foundation for our ambitious growth strategy over the coming years."



Campbell Buchanan, based in St Neot's, builders of beautiful and unique homes throughout the

area, will initially implement a 7 user system to support business growth. Campbell Buchanan has joined a growing number of clients taking advantage of the COINS hosting service, enabling them to use COINS without having to concern themselves with the ownership of a server.



Premier Homes, part of the Gladedale Group, based in Norfolk and established in the

residential market across East Anglia building over 100 homes per annum. Premier Homes will implement a 5 user COINS system.



Manor Kingdom (Southern), a new company

based in Waltham, share common owners with Premier Homes and recently began their implementation of COINS. Their Finance Director, Carole Brown has used the COINS system previously and was very keen to introduce it to the business.

Carole Brown, Finance Director at Manor Kingdom Southern, states: "Having used COINS previously, I was very keen to introduce it to both businesses. I feel that it will give us a totally integrated system that will enable us to manage the business more effectively and give us far better management reporting."



▲ Roger Vaux, Business Development Manager, COINS and Ed Monaghan, Managing Director, Mactaggart & Mickel