

ROUSE & CO. INTERNATIONAL AND LOMBARD

"We now have less to worry about as payments are fixed and over a set period of time. This means our cash is freed up and, being a fast growing business, cash flow is important to us."

Background

Rouse & Co. International is a leading intellectual property (IP) consultancy with its headquarters in the UK and offices around the world. It advises clients, including leading multinational IP owners, on their IP strategies and assists in the protection, exploitation and enforcement of intellectual property rights worldwide. Staff include lawyers, patent and trademark agents and information professionals, all linked by a global intranet.

Its client list is a 'Who's Who' of global brands – including adidas, BP, Diageo, GlaxoSmithKline, Harley-Davidson, Intel, Motion Picture Association, Nokia, Orange, Shell, Sony Ericsson, Toshiba Corporation and Woolworths.

Challenge

Rouse & Co. needed to centralise and consolidate its systems, with a key business objective of easy access to a central source of information for its 500 staff worldwide, working across 16 offices. Rupert Ross-Macdonald, CEO of Rouse explains: "Our goal was to be able to deal seamlessly with our clients, wherever they are (and whoever they are speaking to in our organisation) and to have one central repository of data so there would be no duplication of work or systems."

As a medium sized and fast growing organisation, the company did not want to tie up its capital and limit its cash flow.

Rouse & Co. looked at a number of alternatives but quickly dismissed most as too expensive or too rigid. "We looked at a number of options including bank loans but that sort of facility tied up a lot of funding."



Solution

The solution was a Lease Loan deal with Lombard Technology Services, utilising a new product that Lombard launched in summer 2004. "This deal made sense for our business. It offered us financial flexibility and meant our cash flow was still healthy, whilst allowing us to fix our costs over a period of time," says Ross-Macdonald.

Hardware made up about 20 per cent of the cost of the project, the software about 50 per cent and the consultancy about 30 per cent. Ross-Macdonald continues "The cost was sizable and Lombard Technology Services offered us an all in one sale and lease back package that covered services and software as well as the hardware. It meant it was a very flexible option for us."

The implementation took just over two years and is the biggest single IT project the company has ever undertaken. The system uses Elite software running on mainly Compaq hardware with a VPN in the UK and Citrix over the Internet internationally. It has been a resounding success.

"The deal with Lombard Technology Services helped with our cash flow and the implementation itself improved our account receivable balances, enabling us to manage the business more effectively. We can now identify key performance indicators and use them to manage the business globally. We have achieved our main business goal which was easy universal access to a single source of information."



Benefits

- Freed up capital and allowed a fast growing company to maintain a healthy cash flow
- Brought certainty to financial planning through fixed costs over an agreed timescale, allowing the cost of technology investment to be spread
- Allowed the company to invest in a centralised IT infrastructure that serves its offices around the world and avoids duplication of financial management
- Built a consolidated IT foundation to support continued growth

"We have a very good relationship with Lombard and of course the company has a very good track record and offered us a very competitive deal which has allowed us to concentrate on achieving our business objectives"

Contact

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