

# A Lindenhouse Case Study

Desira Group Plc,  
Diss



Founded in Norfolk in 1972 by Managing Director John Desira, the Desira Group Plc is now a key player in the UK Motor Industry. From its 10 branches - covering Norfolk, Suffolk and NW London – the Group sells **Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Nissan, and Citroen** models. As at the end of 2004, the Desira Group employed 350 members of staff had an annual turnover of £65 million.

As at the end of 2002, however, the company's strong sales success was creating problems for its busy Accounts Department.

Justine Johnston, Desira's Head of Accounts described the problem:

**"The trouble was that purchase invoices could be addressed to any one of our ten branch offices. The process of logging these at Head Office, getting them authorised back at the branches and returning them to Head Office for payment and filing meant a lot of to-ing and fro-ing between our sites via our internal van courier system. It was an absolute nightmare trying to keep track of where everything was and which payments were outstanding. The system was so prone to error that overhauling it became a business priority."**

Desira has always been a 'technology-receptive' company – constantly on the look-out for innovations that can improve customer service, workflows or bring other benefits. To solve the problem in the Accounts Office, Desira decided that they needed an information management and workflow system which would enable managers to authorise invoices without the need for a physical invoice having to leave Head Office.

**Lindenhouse – Expert providers of document management solutions** Desira took on a consultant to research the market for a software provider who could provide a solution to the Accounts Department's headache. He identified five systems that he felt would work and all the providers were invited to Diss to make presentations to Desira. The two overriding selection criteria that led Desira to choose Lindenhouse to supply INVU software were **reasonable cost, simplicity and training and support.**

## A Change for the Better

Thanks to expert help from Lindenhouse, the accounting system at Desira has been vastly improved.

**"The level of support that we received from Lindenhouse during the set-up period was exceptional,"** remembers Justine Johnston. **"Even when I was coming into the office at 7am, Ben from Lindenhouse would be in the office at the same time to help me get to grips with it quickly."**

**"Lindenhouse didn't just install the INVU software and leave. They went beyond the call of duty to ensure that the system was tailored to Desira, and all its individual users, and they**

**remained on hand to ensure that it worked for us once it went live. I really appreciated the extra help."**

An ongoing educational campaign is now in place at Desira to encourage all suppliers to send invoices to Head Office rather than to Sales Branches. When invoices come in, they are immediately scanned to INVU and – through the workflow system set up by Lindenhouse – an email automatically goes to the manager to alert him that there is an invoice in his inbox awaiting authorisation. When the manager opens the email, he is prompted to indicate where in the Company Accounts the invoice should be allocated. Each Manager has his own password and security profile which determines his permitted level of access to the system.

**"Lindenhouse has given us a system that works fantastically well and is so simple that we've all taken to it like ducks to water,"** says Justine Johnston. **"I really can't imagine how we coped before – our stress levels were sky high and we were surrounded by paper. I used to work in a little bolt-hole but we've now been able to get rid of so much paperwork that we've managed to carve out two spacious offices from the area we've freed up – one of which is now mine!"**

## Extra Office Space

In fact, the office space freed up since Lindenhouse installed INVU at Desira amounts to some 110 square feet. But there's more to come because Desira is currently in the process of adding all its HR records to INVU. This means that those Managers with appropriate security clearance will be able to see personnel files at the click of a button.

## Extra Time

The other benefit of the new document management system, according to Justine Johnston, is the amount of time that it has saved her:

**"I no longer have to chase all around the houses in search of missing invoices and I no longer have to spend large parts of my working day dealing with irate phone calls from suppliers whose payments are overdue."**

**Accounts staff training was carried out by Lindenhouse who also produced a system manual specifically for Desira and tailored to all users. The simplicity of the system, coupled with the thoroughness of the manual, means that staff recruited in future can be trained in-house. Desira now need to call the Lindenhouse Help Desk only about once per month.**

**"All in all it's a tremendous improvement,"** says Justine Johnston. **"At the outset, none of could have imagined just how good it was going to be but now, when I think back to how we used to work, it almost makes me cringe. I can't thank Lindenhouse enough, they were fantastic."**

## About Lindenhouse

Lindenhouse provides quality IT products and services to a wide range of clients. The company is focused on document management solution provision and develops bespoke software to provide integration to all insurance and financial services back-office systems and to practice management systems in both the Accountancy and Legal sectors. Lindenhouse have installed 1700 document management systems to date and are rightly proud that it retains 95% of its support contracts – a testimony to the dedication and professionalism of the company's technical staff and help desk.

For more information, please contact Mark Woolley at Lindenhouse.

Telephone: 01223 492266 Email: [info@lindenhouse.co.uk](mailto:info@lindenhouse.co.uk) Or visit: [www.lindenhouse.co.uk](http://www.lindenhouse.co.uk)

INVU