

Avis Europe

Unit4 provides Avis Europe with the core software solutions used in its Shared Services Center in Budapest to serve operations across Europe.

The situation

Avis Europe is a leading car rental company in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, serving customers via the Avis and Budget brands in over 3,900 locations. The Avis brand operates across four continents via a network of over 2,800 locations in 110 countries, through wholly-owned subsidiaries in 13 corporate countries, complemented by license arrangements in a further 97 countries.

The needs

Before selecting Unit4, Avis Europe used OLAS, which was a traditional mainframe system. However, the support costs were becoming prohibitively high and extracting crucial financial data from OLAS was time consuming and ineffective.

Adrian Steventon, P2P Stream Lead at Avis Europe, commented: “Not only were our support costs rising but also generating reporting data was proving an enormous task – taking up lots of time and resource that could be better employed analyzing and interpreting our data.

“We evaluated a number of the leading market ERP solutions but found the solutions on offer too prescriptive and the project management costs were high. Conversely, when we looked at Unit4 we were impressed with the rich functionality and the ease with which data could be extracted. Unit4 recommended a light touch with only 1 or 2 of their consultants being involved in the project and the rest of the team being Avis Europe staff. Unit4 also had a proven track record in the commercial sector both in the UK and across Europe which was important to us. In addition, it came highly recommended by analyst house Gartner.

The solution

Avis Europe selected the whole suite of Unit4’s best-in-class financial management solutions, including: accounting, purchasing, billing, fixed assets, reporting, process management and finance automation.

Avis Europe deployed the solution centrally in its Budapest Shared Services Center and provided access to its European operations via the web.

The pan-European implementation began in earnest with a series of workshops, followed by user testing





and pilot programs before the system finally went live. Germany and Portugal were the first of the Avis Europe teams to go live with the solution in October 2007, closely followed by the UK and several other European countries in January 2008.

Adrian explained: “We implemented the system using a dedicated Avis Europe project team supported by a small team of Unit4 Consultants. The methodical approach we took with each country ensured that we knew what we needed the Unit4 systems to do in each country and that our teams had experience of the solution prior to go live.

“Because it is such an intuitive solution, we really did not need a huge amount of support from Unit4 consultants, which obviously saved us money, but we knew they were there if we needed them. In addition, the speed with which we could roll out the solution meant that by the end of the implementation program, smaller countries were going live within a month and we were maximizing the return on our investment.

“All in all, Unit4’s flexible approach, its rich functionality and ease of use, combined with its ability to handle the different currency and legal requirements of our European operations, helped in successfully delivering this project.”

The benefits

Today, the accounting software is used by some 40-50 people within Avis’ European operations and around 150 in its administration center in Budapest, while 2,000 plus have access to the purchasing module.

Delivering the results

Adrian commented: “This is our core financial system and it holds all of our financial data. We feel it offers many benefits but the speed and accuracy with which we can input, extract, analyze and report key financial and business data are among the key strengths of the solution. The data we have on all of our operations is available in real-time so we know we are looking at the up-to-date information and we can drill down into any aspect of the data quickly and efficiently.

“On the purchasing side, the workflow system enables us to approve Purchase Orders online and we have been able to move away from a paper-based system. It is so much easier to see where a purchase order is in the system and we can raise purchase orders and pay invoices in multi-currency, which we could not do with our previous system.”

Transaction processing power

Invoice Matching adds to the impressive transaction processing power of the Unit4 solution and it provides enhanced online purchase invoice matching and

processing facilities. Matched invoices can be posted to Financials quickly and easily. To enhance this process further, Avis Europe has implemented background matching, whereby invoices are automatically checked and posted to Financials without manual intervention.

Seamless integration

Avis Europe uses its own reporting solution but pulls information from the finance system. Adrian reveals: "One of the additional benefits we derive from the Unit4 solution is that it integrates seamlessly with several of our core business applications, including our reporting system. In addition, we automatically upload Vehicle Rental data from our Revenue Distribution System directly in to Financials which gives us a comprehensive view of our financial position.

"It also links with our document imaging system which enables us to view supplier invoices from within the same system. This provides quick, paperless and efficient access to all relevant data when dealing with supplier inquiries."

Adrian concluded: "We believe that Unit4 has delivered an easy-to-use product that has demonstrated its ability to grow and adapt with our business. It gives us the information we need, in the right format and at the right time.

Avis Europe would recommend Unit4 for this best-in-class financial management solution that is functionally rich and has the ability to seamlessly integrate with other business applications."

The logo for Avis Europe, featuring the word "AVIS" in a bold, red, sans-serif font, followed by "Europe" in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font.

About Unit4

Unit4 is a leading provider of enterprise applications empowering people in service organizations. With annual revenue north of 500M Euro and more than 4000 employees world-wide, Unit4 delivers ERP, industry-focused and best-in-class applications. Thousands of organizations from sectors including professional services, education, public services, not-for-profit, real estate, wholesale, and financial services benefit from Unit4 solutions. Unit4 is in business for people.

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