



KnowledgeWorker® Case Study



KnowledgeWorker® puts the sparkle back into Beaverbrooks

Beaverbrooks the jewellers is a family business that was established almost a century ago. A familiar sight on many high streets, with more than 60 shops, Beaverbrooks is a growing concern, opening at least two new retail outlets each year.



The Challenge

Increased paperwork and administration were becoming an issue with staff at the branches and head office. "Our retail sales teams prefer to spend time with customers, rather than paperwork and it seemed that much of their time was being taken up with phone calls and admin tasks", explained Patrick Walker, Head of MIS.

As a retail jeweller, much of Beaverbrooks' business is in providing special order items - wedding and engagement rings, necklaces, engraved silverware and watches. While each shop stocks the range of these goods, it is rare that they will all be available from stock to fit all sizes. The result is that much of the Beaverbrook staff time has been taken up following the progression of orders.

"We needed a system that would manage this for us. In addition, management information demands, reading and circulating memos and corporate information all take up time too. Also, we discovered that there was a mass of email going round and round the organisation and not always reaching the appropriate person," confirms Walker.

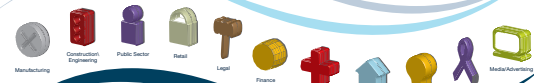
In order to identify the main issues facing staff, both at head office and in the branches, a focus group consisting of management and sales staff was set up. The focus group identified that branch staff wanted better and faster access to information, as well as a reduction in their administration workload. Too much time was taken up on the phone requesting information and updates on orders, leaving less time to spend with customers.

The Solution

Consequently Walker and his team felt that the company would benefit from using tools that included document management and workflow, with the possibility of an intranet element. **KnowledgeWorker®**, the content and business process management system from Datum International, was chosen as it demonstrated the ability to reduce administration and provide collaboration between head office and all the nationwide branches.

"**KnowledgeWorker®** was a really good fit with our business. With the emphasis on document management and workflow, we could see exactly how this would map with our existing processes to automate many of the repetitive tasks that had become so time-consuming," explains Walker.

Accessed via a browser, **KnowledgeWorker®** sits on two servers at head office and has allowed Beaverbrooks to create a framework enabling all company documentation and knowledge to be stored in the central repository. Automatic audit trailing provides accountability and the version control feature reduces duplication of work and ensures that the latest version of a document or information set is available.



Knowledge Empowerment



KnowledgeWorker® Case Study



KnowledgeWorker® enhances and replaces internal systems based on email, word processing, spreadsheets and paper based documents that were used to share information between branches and head office departments. The workflow element provided by the Business Process Management module has been implemented to track day-to-day tasks between the stores and head office.

"Workflow has removed a burden from staff, who no longer have to use the telephone or fax to find out the status of an order or piece of information. **KnowledgeWorker®** is easily accessible and instantly provides the status of every action, whether it's outstanding or completed," says Walker.

As a result of employing **KnowledgeWorker®** and changing procedures Beaverbrooks has subtly shifted some of the workload from the branches back to head office. "Our special order department has more work to do as all special orders are currently passed directly to them through **KnowledgeWorker®**", explains Walker.

This new procedure means that branch staff can now place all orders centrally with the head office department. **KnowledgeWorker®** gives instant visibility of the status of every order, removing the need for additional phone calls resulting in all staff having more time to spend on their 'proper' jobs. The special order department uses its time sourcing special orders rather than answering queries and chasing suppliers and branches and branch staff can spend more time with customers.

Following the introduction of **KnowledgeWorker®**, the feedback from branch staff has been extremely positive. Branch staff use **KnowledgeWorker®** extensively for stock enquiries, placing central special orders, sharing company information and making sure that the merchandising in each branch and in the window displays conform to the current company branding and directives.

"**KnowledgeWorker®** is so versatile that we keep finding new applications and processes to include," says Walker.

There is an on-going strategy for **KnowledgeWorker®** to be rolled out across all Beaverbrooks branches, linking them into head office systems. Additionally, a major project to incorporate HR processes into **KnowledgeWorker®** is also underway.

The Benefits

KnowledgeWorker® gives Beaverbrooks the ability to support its branch staff more effectively by providing additional central resources and support, reducing local administration and improving communication. Introducing workflow procedures has reduced the need for branch staff to carry out mundane repetitive tasks with each job flowing easily between the relevant departments, removing the need for time-consuming email communication and the risk of it not reaching the appropriate person.

For staff at Beaverbrooks, **KnowledgeWorker®** has already significantly reduced the administration load at both branches and head office, while giving staff more access to information. Fewer phone calls and less time used up chasing the status of orders is allowing branch staff to spend more time with customers, while the special orders department are able to process more requests. Increased efficiencies through the integration of business processes into **KnowledgeWorker®** have led to improved productivity throughout the organisation.

"**KnowledgeWorker®** has improved our methods of storing information and sharing knowledge between employees in order to achieve our company objective of reducing our initial administration by 50%. Furthermore, we keep finding more activities that **KnowledgeWorker®** can help us with in order to make us even more effective as a business," concludes Walker.