

BACKGROUND

With its Head Office and Manufacturing Plant in Moira, Co. Down. McMullens are Northern Ireland's leading Design, Fabricator and Installer of architectural aluminium products serving the construction industry throughout the UK and Ireland.

Essentially an Architect will provide the overall concept design illustrating how the finished building will appear and it is the responsibility of a specialist cladding contractor, such as McMullens, to turn this external design into a working reality and then fabricate it and install it onto the finished product. By providing the entire Design, Fabrication and Installation process it is providing a full service in what is a niche industry hence offering tremendous opportunities for growth in the larger markets.

It has worked on many of the prestigious Belfast Waterside developments including Waterfront Hall, Belfast Conference Centre and Hilton Hotel as well as other major contracts such as the Royal Hospital in Belfast and has had a number of projects in the North West including Foyleside Shopping Centre. It is well established in the Greater Dublin area and in recent years has been making significant inroads into the large UK market in addition to some minor overseas projects. It employs approximately 70 at its Moira plant and up to a further 70 at its site operations.

WHY MICROSOFT DYNAMICS™ NAV

This new investment in technology will be essential in managing and controlling the operation, as it expands, as well as providing the necessary feedback on both company and individual contract performance.

According to the Finance Director, John Pentland, "the organisation has three major Direct Cost drivers emanating from materials, fabrication and site installation. The Industry is based around an Estimating and Tendering process and as a consequence will be paid a finite amount of money for each. The problem with existing Job Cost systems is that they become nothing more than a large 'dumping ground' for costs. Although they can be allocated against Job Code categories it is difficult at discreet stages of the contract to determine how costs incurred to date compare with the original tender and hence which parts of the contract are performing better than others. Looking at overall Gross Margin is too blunt an instrument especially as the company moves to the high value contracts which can have up to two year completion periods."

Hence in conjunction with the Sysco programmers the company set about configuring Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV using the original estimated tender as the base model. From this base model the build up of Turnover (Work in Progress) is measured and hence the true Budgeted Cost for that element of the work is simultaneously calculated and compared with the actual costs to date hence providing an accurate assessment of Contract performance.

The Company's recently recruited IT Manager, Frank O'Hare, believes "the in-built flexibility within Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV enables such key processes to be modelled without the excessive costs associated with Bespoke systems or the over complexity of larger ERP providers."

The Managing Director, Ted McMullen believes "the solution will also offer the company a culture change in moving the IT function away from purely Transactional Processing in a Unix character based environment, the sole responsibility of the accounts department, to instead being a proper Information Management system accessible across the company and to key managers and Directors."

Mr Pentland also sees such an integrated approach as being essential if it is to manage and co-ordinate the extensive investments in Plant, People and Systems and achieve its ambitious strategic objectives previously referred to. "The Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV product and the 'can do' attitude of Sysco personnel will provide the best solution and partnership for us to move the company onto its next stage of development."

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV and Sysco Software Solutions, visit www.sysco-software.com

THE PERFECT delivery