



BACKGROUND

Údarás na Gaeltachta, the agency responsible for the economic and cultural development of the Gaeltacht, has upgraded its financial software suite, SunSystems, to SunSystems version 5. The implementation was handled by Sysco, one of Ireland's leading financial management software providers.

WHY SUNSYSTEMS

Údarás originally migrated to SunSystems in 1997 as a result of an overall review of their information systems and technology infrastructures. As Gearóid Breathnach, financial controller of an tÚdarás, explains, "We reviewed our overall information requirements and systems situation in 1996/97. We brought in external consultants and through a mixture of their advice and our own internal experience, we decided on a client-server based platform and a two point application software strategy."

"The first tenet was to buy best of breed software for all applications. Quality of product was determined to be of a higher level of importance than purchasing all our software from a single source. The second tenet was to upgrade when new versions of software were released, ensuring that all software across the enterprise was in step and was up to date. We were not going to be left exposed through product lifecycle failure."

Accordingly, the contract for financial software tools was put out to tender, with SunSystems and Sysco winning the deal.

"We choose SunSystems for three reasons," remembers Breathnach. "Sysco and its people were knowledgeable both about financials in general and their own application in particular. The software had good analytical functionality and flexibility and finally it was client server based technology which coincided with our internal technology migration policy."

UPGRADING

Upgrading to SunSystems 5 continued the principal of ensuring all software met the highest standards. Charlie Donnelly, Managing Director of Sysco, says: "The customisation available across all levels of the software is truly impressive. SunSystems 5 no longer forces users to adapt their business practices to meet system workflows but allows users to customise how they wish to view, report and use their software.

"SunSystems 5 also integrates more easily with other third party software; an important feature which supports the Údarás's strategic decision of implementing best of breed, even if that means multiple software and hardware vendors."

"In addition," says Donnelly, "SunSystems 5 requires less maintenance and therefore offers lower labour and time costs to Údarás."

THE FUTURE

Breathnach is pleased with the post implementation results. "We installed a parallel testing run prior to going live. We wanted to satisfy ourselves that we had got it right both with regard to our financial systems and how the software performed. Now that we have gone live, we expect to see many benefits and productivity improvements as a result."



Gearóid Breathnach, Financial Controller, Udaras na Gaeltachta discusses requirements with Charlie Donnelly, Managing Director, Sysco