Solutions

www.solutionsforaccounting.co.uk

Solutions
for Accounting
bluebird**CRM**

IS YOUR BUSINESS GROWING?

IT MAY BE TIME TO REVIEW THE SYSTEMS THAT ARE CRITICAL TO SUPPORTING YOUR EXPANSION.

It is a common characteristic of organisational growth that the early euphoria associated with success gives way to pain as infrastructure that was efficient in the early days struggles to cope with a burgeoning workload.

Business growth typically means a greater volume of transactions, customers and employees together with more complex reporting and management needs. For these reasons, business management systems are usually among the first to feel the heat!

Sage 50 users seek to upgrade their software in order to meet the growing demands upon their business systems. Migration to the Sage 200 Extra Suite is the next natural step for users that have outgrown Sage 50 and require a more powerful and flexible solution.

Sage 200 Extra extends the power of Sage 50, increasing capacity, extending capability and integrating back office systems to provide a 360-degree view of the organisation.

The right time to upgrade?

If you are an existing Sage 50 user and your business is growing, it's often a good idea to (at least) explore the options and prepare for the inevitable. Upgrading from Sage 50 to Sage 200 Extra may seem like a daunting task. However, at Solutions for Accounting we have the expertise and resources to streamline the process, making it painless and positive for your business.

Sage 200 Extra is the next generation of Sage financial software for growing businesses but is it the right solution for your business?

The Sage 200 Extra Suite is an industry leading software solution that is customisable to suit your specific requirements. It has been designed to help you easily share data across your enterprise. The system helps you ensure maximum efficiency, reduce operational costs and provide your customers with excellent service as standard.

To explore your options and discuss how we can assist as your business expands, please get in touch for a friendly chat with one of our consultants on **0115 840 5075.**

WELCOME...

As economic conditions improve, for many organisations the struggle to grow revenue is replaced by the challenge of managing growth. In this issue, we explore solutions that support expanding businesses by creating capacity for growth. This includes the upgrading of existing systems and also the enhancement of Sage software through the introduction of additional integrated components.

At Solutions, we've developed an understanding of the challenges that growth can bring through the experience of providing finance and business management systems since 1998. We're ready to share that experience by offering advice and guidance to help UK businesses maximise the opportunities that a developing market can present.

Our main feature discusses the migration from Sage 50 to the Sage 200 Suite. This is an ever popular pathway and the Solutions team is now better resourced than ever to help make it a smooth transition for those businesses that would benefit from expanded capacity and greater control.

Whether you are considering an upgrade from Sage 50 to Sage 200, or preparing to adopt a new business system for the first time, we want to be your partner in ensuring the investment you make delivers value. As always, we offer jargon free assistance and training provided by fully accredited consultants who are experienced not only in our product range but in resolving business problems.

During the course of this year we have strengthened the Solutions team, with a focus on expanding our Support and Implementation capabilities, and growing our CRM division. Most recently, the appointment of Jess Hallam has enabled us to provide a more responsive experience for support customers. As Support Receptionist, Jess is effectively matching inbound requests for assistance to the team member with the most appropriate skills to assist, reducing our time-to-fix.

Following our merger with BluebirdCRM earlier this year, we are delighted to bring you a case study which describes how the implementation of Act! CRM has empowered Derby based Rayburn Tours to manage their specialist group travel business more efficiently.

As the law on workplace pensions came into effect in 2012, companies have until 2018 to phase the changes in. We look at what those changes mean to you, and how we can help you prepare for auto enrolment through the adoption of flexible desktop or online payroll packages.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and if you have any feedback, please contact me directly – I'd love to hear from you!

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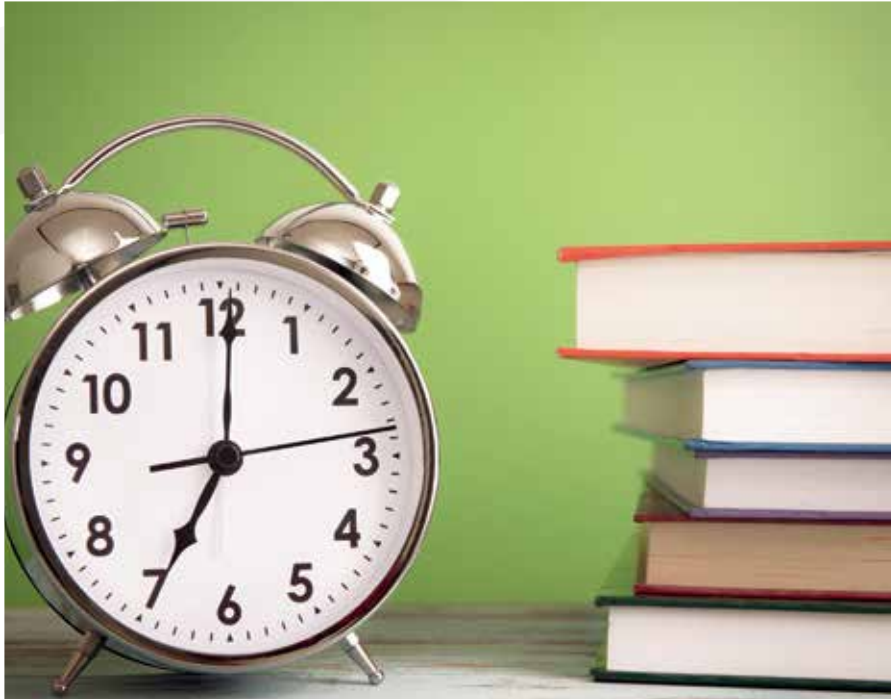
Improvements to Support

Solutions for Accounting welcome our newest recruit to the Support Department.

Jess Hallam is our new Support Receptionist and will play a key role in helping to improve the experience for our support contract customers. Jess will ensure that all support requests are immediately logged in our system to enable swift allocation and to provide a fast resolution.

At peak times, Jess will monitor our 'case queue' and ensure that requests for assistance are properly prioritised and assigned to the team member with the necessary skills to provide a solution as soon as they become available.

With 12 dedicated technicians supporting the Sage range of financial management products, Sage CRM and Act! CRM, we think Jess is going to be kept pretty busy. If what we've seen so far is anything to go by though, we're very confident she'll whip them in to shape!

Please join us in wishing Jess every success in her new role as we welcome her as a valued member of the Solutions team.

Save time and streamline with Sage

If your business charges the same customers on a regular basis, whether for purchases, services or maybe support, then registering with a BACS provider to become an originator of Direct Debits is one way to take control of when and how much you get paid.

As an alternative to standing orders, which are usually fixed amounts, collecting payments via Direct Debit means you have the flexibility to collect fixed or variable amounts.

Sage 50 & Sage 200 Extra Direct Debit Modules

Our Direct Debit Module (available for Sage 50 & Sage 200 Extra) provides a simple way to manage these collections as it enables you to use data already held in Sage to generate a suggested collection list. The list can be reviewed and amended if necessary before posting at which point it generates a csv file (BACS request file), which can be passed onto your BACS provider to enable collections to take place.

If you are already processing Direct Debits then you will know that the time consuming element begins once the payments are received, when you need to generate the receipts within Sage ensuring that the payments are allocated against the correct transaction.

Our module saves time by automatically generating the credits and allocating them against the relevant transactions at the point of posting (generation of the BACS request file) meaning the whole process is speeded up. All that remains is to manage any rejected entries.

Businesses who use our module report saving several hours with each collection meaning we can help you get paid on time and save you time as well!

Visit **www.solutionsadditions.co.uk** or contact Kathy on **0115 840 5075** for more details.

Meet Nicola

An Act! CRM Sales Consultant with 8 years' experience, Nicola Gibson joined the Solutions team as part of the BluebirdCRM merger in April.

What's your favourite thing about working at Solutions for Accounting?
It has to be the people... I've only been with Solutions since April and I already feel like part of the furniture! Everyone is very friendly and always willing to help when needed- it's a great team to be part of.

Tell us about yourself...
I'm 25, a self-confessed shopaholic who also enjoys pamper days at the spa, eating out with friends, occasionally visiting the gym and kickboxing. 2 years ago I set myself a challenge to renovate a house with my partner, 2 years later it's still on-going but pleased to say the end is near, and although I'm no DIY expert I've certainly learnt many new skills.

Who or what makes you laugh?
I love comedians old and new from Norman Wisdom to Peter Kay they all have me in stitches! I have some really barmy friends and family who always make me smile! My nan always told me 'Laughter is the best medicine'

What's your favourite film?
That's a really hard question, I love films and have many favourites ... The Holiday, Bridget Jones Dairy, and Taken to name a few.

What would you buy if you were given £100,000?
If I was lucky enough to be given £100,000 I'd take all my family on holiday to somewhere hot and far away like Mexico or Barbados, I'd buy myself and partner a new car each and I'd buy everything else needed to finish our house renovation. Hopefully, I'd have a little bit left over so I could treat myself to a nice new handbag too!

Other than this one, what's your ideal job?
I would love to be a nurse but I'm too squeamish.

Integration solutions designed to give your customer extra

Consumerism in the modern age dictates that businesses need to have an eCommerce solution in place to stay competitive and satisfy the demands of customers.

Although most businesses have been adept at implementing solutions, if they fail to integrate online stores with other business functions, such as accounting, inventory control and order fulfilment, challenges can arise. Customer orders hitting back-office operations could trigger out-of-stocks or backlogs, whilst sales and marketing teams may not have access to real-time data regarding availability and pricing.

Fortunately, both Sage 50 and Sage 200 Extra are extremely flexible and, with the help of TaskCentre, capable of integrating seamlessly with any eCommerce platform (Bigcommerce, Magento or Shopify), product or service.

The TaskCentre integration solution helps automate the flow of information between Sage 50/200 and any online activity. Without a solution in place, users would have to extract the data from the eCommerce platforms and rekey that information into Sage 50/200, and vice versa. This takes time, is error prone and is an unnecessary cost.

The benefits of integrating eCommerce
Integrating eCommerce solutions with Sage 50/200 can give businesses a competitive edge. Automating admin. tasks, giving employees on-demand access to critical real-time information, as well as improving workflow, and cutting costs. These new resources can then be used to develop new products and services and exploit all sales opportunities. Integration will ultimately lead towards better efficiencies and help employees make better business decisions. With

this automation in place, all departments, from accounting to the warehouse, will have real-time, correct information available, improving insight into company data and enabling them to process orders and distribute more efficiently. The business will also be able to handle many more orders, fewer mistakes will be made and transactions will be quicker and more reliable. As a result, this more streamlined process will help improve the customer experience.

The removal of many admin. tasks will also enable the business to reallocate resources to other functions – ones that can actually make a difference to the bottom line, such as sales and marketing or customer management. Data collected by the online store can also be pushed into existing CRM systems automatically to assist sales staff with cross selling and upselling. A significant sales tactic that can lead to improved cash flow and an increase in turnover and profit.

Achieving significant ROI
Automating many manual processes and streamlining efficiencies through integration can greatly enhance an organisation's chance of success. Costs can be reduced to provide valuable new working capital and resources can be reallocated to concentrate on developing and expanding the business.

With an integration solution in place, it also means that there are no restrictions for future expansion and growth. Any new business system introduced will be able to easily integrate with the eCommerce platform and vice versa.

Two Nottingham ice hockey teams Power Ahead with Solutions for Accounting

The 2015/16 ice hockey season is upon us and we can barely contain our excitement.

Autumn is now upon us and some sports fanatics are ready for temperatures to cool and the tree leaves to turn orange. This marks the beginning of the season – a time of joy accompanied by a heightened level of anticipation, where nearly every team believes they are title contenders. Ice hockey lovers can finally return to ritual, reunite with old friends and meet new ones. Our beloved GMB Nottingham Panthers have one of the largest fan bases in British ice hockey, averaging over 5,000 spectators per game during the 2014/15 season. Solutions for Accounting will once again be part of the exhilarating action as sponsors of the Panthers' home penalty box.

Additionally, we are entering our second year as the main team sponsor of Nottingham Lions. The Lions are an amateur team that plays a key role as a stepping stone for young, talented players who want to develop into future professional stars. Attracting and retaining top talent is a global challenge for many brands – and neither Solutions for Accounting nor The Lions are an exception. Both organisations are proactive in preparing for this challenge and as such, place high value in positioning tomorrow's talent for success.

For The Lions it means developing the next generation of ice hockey players to not only maintain but also extend the club's rich history and success. In their drive for improvement, they need the support of others through the provision of equipment and the opportunities to develop. We are proud to play a small part through our continued sponsorship of the team.

As far as Solutions for Accounting are concerned, we too want to create an environment that is attractive to the brightest young talent. It is an approach that has helped us firmly secure our position as thought leaders in the industry; ensuring that our company is able to continue delivering the excellent level of service with which our clients have become accustomed, in part through our own successful apprenticeship programme.

These partnerships provide the perfect platform for our organisation to build its brand, while staying true to our company values.
We would like to extend our best wishes to both teams during the forthcoming season!

Sage and Act! compatibility for Windows 10

Many of you will already be aware, Microsoft have released their latest version of the Windows operating system – Windows 10.

Earlier this year, Microsoft launched an initiative where the majority of Windows 7 and Windows 8 users could upgrade to the new software free of charge by registering for an automatic download. The free upgrade is not available to commercial organisations but some users may have their own PCs or laptops with a personal Windows licence.

At present, neither Sage or Act! software are supported on the Windows 10 operating system.

Both Sage and Swiftpage currently plan to support future versions of their software, to be released later this year.

We will keep you updated on progress with this release but stress that it is important to bear this in mind when you are upgrading or buying new computers.

If you have further questions please do not hesitate to contact us on **0115 840 5075.**

Sage 50 delivers clearer accounting

The latest version of Sage 50 Accounts includes major new functionality in the features you use on a daily basis as well as access to a growing catalogue of brand-new add-ons, so you can truly customise your accounting software to the needs of your business.

Bank Feeds powered by Yodlee*

The new Bank Feeds feature is exclusive to the latest version of Sage 50 Accounts and makes reconciling accounts and bank balances simple and error free.

Match payments and receipts quickly and easily, discard personal transactions, and spend less time on time-consuming data entry, giving a real-time view of your cash position at a glance.

Get paid faster with Invoice Payments*

Invoice Payments from Sage pay helps to manage cash flow. By adding Pay Now Buttons onto invoices, customers will be able to pay you instantly, easily and securely. You'll also be able to accept card payments over the phone from directly within Sage 50 Accounts. All payments taken are automatically posted into your accounts, saving lots of time.

Businesses who use Invoice Payments get paid at least twice as fast as those that don't. There's no additional monthly charge, simply pay a flat fee of 2.5% for the value of each payment taken.

Improved Error Corrections

You can now quickly and easily edit journals, un-allocate credits and payments from an incorrect invoice and track which users have edited transactions. Meaning it's never been easier to keep your accounts accurate and up-to-date.

Plus, you can feel comfortable knowing that you can quickly review what has been edited, by whom and when.

Surfacing information

Getting the right information when you need is crucial to running your business. The latest version of Sage 50 Accounts means it's never been easier to analyse data without the need to source it from various parts of the software or create workarounds. New columns and fields mean more efficient data analysis and reduced frustration.

Drill down on aged debtors and creditors

Get more control of who owes you money and who you owe money to, without the need to move in and out of different screens. A more streamlined process makes it easier to get an overview of your cash flow at the click of a button.

Streamlined dialogue boxes

Streamlined dialogue boxes puts the power of Sage at your fingertips. It's now easier than ever for you to find the information you need quickly, and work on it effectively, without having to learn or remember what to do. It's clearer, simpler and more intuitive than ever before.

User interface consistency

A streamlined and organised workspace is important to everyone and that shouldn't stop at your accounts software. The latest developments to Sage 50 Accounts mean you can customise exactly what you want to see when using the programme and that will be remembered when you log out. So, no more spending time re-setting your display to fit how you work.

*Only available with Sage Cover Extra and subscription contracts.

Cycle ride raises vital funds for Macmillan

Solutions for Accounting are very proud to announce we raised £2500 for cancer support having completed the Great Notts Bike Ride 2015. On 21 June, seven cyclists completed 25 miles, with a further seven completing the 50 mile route. Macmillan Cancer Support was the chosen benefactor, after Vanessa Watson, a member of the Solutions for Accounting team sadly lost a close friend to cancer last year. Vanessa was one of the seven to complete the 50 mile course, and said "Macmillan support not only those who are fighting cancer, but also their families. To raise funds and the profile of this charity through Solutions for Accounting has touched me greatly, knowing we can be a part of their continuing work."

Auto Enrolment Are you ready?

What is Auto Enrolment?

Auto Enrolment is a law that took effect in 2012, making it a legal requirement for every employer to automatically enrol their staff members on to a workplace pension scheme. Employees are eligible jobholders if they:

- Are not already on an appropriate workplace pension scheme
- Are at least 22 years of age, but under State Pension age
- Earn more than £10,000 annually
- Work in the UK

It is essential that employers fully understand their added responsibilities.

Three steps to help you prepare for Auto Enrolment. The first things you should do in preparation are:
1. Know your staging date
2. Conduct an assessment of your workforce
3. Review your pension arrangements

Auto Enrolment Payroll Software

Is your existing software manual?
Will it be compliant?
Will you have enough time?

We provide Sage 50 Payroll, which is a desktop software as well as Sage One Payroll – a cloud-based solution. Both of these will make your compliance with Automatic Enrolment as simple as possible. The supplementary Pensions Module for Sage 50 Payroll will help you to manage and analyse communications with your workforce.

Sage 50 Payroll Desktop Software

Sage 50 Payroll makes processing pension information easier and quicker:
- Record your staging date in the Pensions Centre and create your customised Action Plan based on The Pensions Regulator's best practice
- Set up your pension easily and quickly with Fast Track Pensions
- Understand the cost of auto enrolment to your business
- Set reminders to keep everyone informed about what needs to be done and export various calendars such as Outlook and iCal
- Have all of the auto enrolment information you need at your fingertips in a format that best suits you
- Administer your automatic enrolment progress

Sage One Payroll Online Solution

With Sage One Payroll your business can prepare for auto enrolment, including pre-staging functionality:
- Enter your staging date to know when the new legislation takes effect for your business
- Assign a point of contact and notify the Pensions Regulator of who this person will be
- Assess your workforce to determine workers categories
- Set-up a qualifying pension scheme with a provider that best matches your needs
- Easily communicate with staff via email or print letters to keep them up to date with auto enrolment
- Your business has access to auto enrolment help to guide you through the preparation process

To find out more about auto enrolment payroll software call **0115 840 5075.**

CASE STUDY - ACT!

Act! is making the customer journey easier for this leading travel firm.

"Act! is quick, slick and cost effective and it's taken our productivity to a whole different level."

Jamie Boyden, Commercial Director of Rayburn Tours.

Group tour specialist, Rayburn Tours, has made its name by taking the pain out of travel planning for schools, clubs and societies. The company, which celebrates its 50th anniversary next year, wanted to bring a new dimension to its customer intelligence and core CRM.

With a commitment to providing an exceptional level of customer service, Rayburn Tours was looking for a software solution that would maintain its high standards as the company developed.

Jamie Boyden, Commercial Director of Rayburn Tours, began researching CRM products and identified contact and customer management tool Act! as a potential solution. The tour company issued a tender to Act! suppliers, including BluebirdCRM - now a division of Solutions for Accounting.

"We felt more comfortable with BluebirdCRM," explained Jamie. "They understood how important quality of service was to us."

Jamie was also impressed by BluebirdCRM's commitment to providing a system with the minimum intrusion and the maximum positive impact, without adversely affecting existing customer relationships.

BluebirdCRM fulfilled its promise of a smooth implementation of Act! for Rayburn Tours and is continuing to provide the on-going support needed to customise Act! to the tour company's specific business needs.

"Act! was set up to our exact specification and the system was ready to use from the word go," said Jamie.

Act! has not only provided strategic insight for the management team at Rayburn Tours but has also built greater operational efficiencies.

"Act! is quick, slick and cost effective and it's taken our productivity to a whole different level," explained Jamie.

"It gives us robust, real-time data that we can use in our day-to-day decision making, enabling us to track individual products and address any weaknesses," he continued. "The flexibility of Act! has also enabled us to utilise it as a high level management system so that our operational team have been able to work on more tours while maintaining our quality service.

"All-in-all we are very happy with the service BluebirdCRM has provided and this is why we continue to use the company."

sage | Strategic Partner

act! PLATINUM BUSINESS PARTNER

Solutions for Accounting bluebirdCRM