

Finance Department Integrates Data from Two Financial Systems

**Realizes immediate savings of over \$100,000
and puts customer data at managers' fingertips**

Company

Whitbread Beer Company (WBC) is one of the UK's leading beverage companies. WBC is organized into two finance departments: a supplier side and a sales side.

Challenge

WBC's goal was to improve support to their sales force and gain access to both sets of their financial data to make more informed business decisions.

Solution

Paul Smith, purchasing projects manager, evaluated three systems and decided upon the Alchemy solution from IMR and a complementary service bureau strategy, all furnished by IMR distributor Micro-Image Business Solutions Ltd. (MBS). IMR's DataGrabber software is used to parse and index WBC's reports, furnished in ASCII line data mode. The processed data is stored in the Alchemy repository on CDs and accessed by employees using the Alchemy Search program.

According to Smith, "We needed a solution which could operate at great speed, continuously, without the need for specialist staff on two demanding levels: the supplier finance department, dealing with expense vouchers and supplier invoices, and the sales invoicing and data management department, whose correspondence contains customer history, sales reports and retrospective discounting information."

WBC recognized immediate, quantifiable savings as WBC staff gained quick and easy access to all of their data for phone inquiries and payment tracking. The results were increased efficiency and an improved corporate image.

WBC executives also have customer history, sales reports and discounting information at their fingertips for informed, timely business decisions.

Return on Investment

"We have realized immediate, quantifiable savings of at least £60,000 (\$100,000) and indeterminate, but substantial, operational gains in terms of manpower, time and customer relations development," Smith said. "It has been a very cost effective investment and we look forward to expanding the system to three other departments. Alchemy -- indeed, a very special chemistry!"

