

The Australian Foundation for Disability

The Australian Foundation for Disability (AFFORD) is one of Australia's leading not-for-profit organisations, providing jobs, training and accommodation for over 800 people with disabilities. A progressive and very successful organisation, it was established with a core principle that values people and their differences, and encourages all to attain their best in life.

AFFORD's activities are divided into three main areas: light manufacturing and fulfillment operations for commercial businesses; services such as accommodation, training and respite care for people with disability; and an employment services arm which provides over 600 jobs within AFFORD and provides an outplacement service for suitable job seekers.

Headquartered in western Sydney, AFFORD has 20 remote offices. The organisation's commercial activities generate income to meet approximately 60% of the organisation's running costs, while State and Federal Government funding provides the remaining 40%.



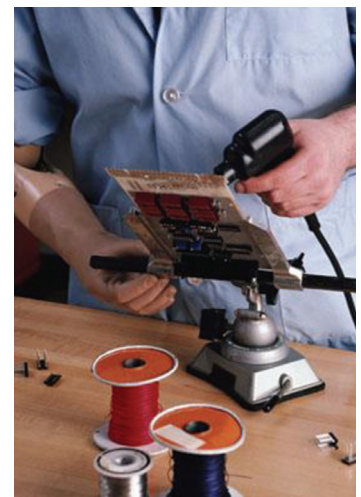
The Business Issue

In 2005 AFFORD's management realised that the organisation had outgrown its accounting system. According to IT Manager, Ms Teresa Simonka, "While we were comfortable with it, we couldn't avoid the fact that the software was outdated. The system was becoming unstable and we were beginning to find errors that were corrupting the database. Moreover it was quite painful to get any degree of flexibility in our reporting."

This latter concern became increasingly important throughout 2005 as the Federal Government introduced changes to its disability services funding. Given the difficulty of reporting with the existing software, AFFORD started to become dependent on individually created Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to generate the information required by funding authorities. At this point AFFORD's management knew it was time to find an alternative solution.

According to Simonka, AFFORD had clearly defined views on what they required. "Besides ease of reporting, we wanted something that was relatively easy for our users to implement. Up to 50 managers and administrative assistants access the financial software on a regular basis. Most of these people are not accountants, nor are they necessarily familiar with accounting software."

The organisation also wanted its accounting solution to be based on SQL. Simonka explained "We recently installed a new SQL-based payroll system and we could see the benefits of a common database. Adhering to SQL would give us another degree of flexibility."



The Solution

After looking at a number of accounting systems, AFFORD decided on JIWA Financials.

Besides meeting the main requirements, JIWA offered two important advantages. First was its ability to drill down to source documents. Second was the fact that it offered AFFORD plenty of room for growth. "JIWA was something that we could implement in a simple fashion to begin with and then expand as our staff became more comfortable with it," Simonka said. "Our staff was used to very basic accounting functionality. We needed to replicate that functionality first, before starting to take advantage of the sophistication that JIWA offers."



The Result

By the end of 2005 AFFORD's accounting had moved over to the JIWA software with creditors, stock and a number of different debtor modules in place to manage the various aspects of AFFORD's business. The second phase of the implementation, involving establishment of additional debtor modules to cover government funding and reporting, is due for completion in early 2006.

Simonka concluded, "JIWA is functioning well. Things that were a hassle with our old software are now rolling out easily. Because our people are comfortable with it we are starting to look at expanding our use of the software, for example obtaining management reports from JIWA Financials rather than relying on Excel. Our use of JIWA is likely to continue to expand as we learn to take advantage of its capabilities."

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About JIWA

Established in 1995, JIWA Financials is an Australian software house and the developer of one of Australia's most respected business financial solutions, JIWA Financials. Designed for the Australian environment, JIWA Financials is a Microsoft Windows-based financial solution servicing a client base that ranges from single user sites up to global enterprises. With an emphasis on data integrity and software performance regardless of transaction or user numbers, accurate stock costing and tracking, and efficient general ledger and cashbook functions, JIWA Financials has found a natural niche among importers, distributors, manufacturers and service repairers.

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