



LGO

It's good to talk – LGO prepares for the future and chooses TouchstoneFMS for its easy-to-access support.

SOLUTION SNAPSHOT

Solution:

- IUpgraded Infor SunSystems to v4.4
- Upgraded iPOS to version 5.8
- Unified support provider.

Benefits:

- Up to date systems
- More user-friendly experience
- Prepared for future integration
- One point of accountability for support
- Both email and telephone support options

The client

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) looks at complaints about councils and some other authorities and organisations, including education admissions appeal panels and adult social care providers (such as care homes and home care providers).

It is a free service. Its job is to investigate complaints in a fair and independent way – it does not take sides.

A publicly declared aim of LGO is to provide a fair service and spend public money effectively.

The challenge

LGO needed to upgrade its core Infor SunSystems finance system as well as its iPOS procurement software.

As well as bringing them up to date with the latest functionality, LGO wanted to bring its systems in line with another ombudsman with a view to sharing resources and potentially a shared finance function in order to reduce costs.

This was all on a tight timescale, and LGO needed to finish the project and ensure the systems were operating properly before year end.

Additionally, LGO had encountered some issues in using two support partners for their finance and procurement systems. As a result LGO was seeking a partner who could support both systems and provide a single point of accountability.

The **smarter** way

The solution

TouchstoneFMS was chosen by LGO to carry out the system upgrades of both Infor SunSystems and iPOS software.

TouchstoneFMS was also selected for the ongoing support for both systems, so that LGO had a single point of contact for any issues relating to the solutions.

The outcome

TouchstoneFMS worked with LGO to successfully upgrade its systems and transition its support services.

The new systems bring the latest updates to LGO and an easier and friendlier experience for users.

A key aim of the project was aligning LGO's finance function with that of another ombudsman service to allow for potential integration, a process greatly simplified by working on the same systems. In addition to providing an improved and joined-up service, there are potential financial benefits to be reaped.

Against a backdrop of reduced expenditure due to public sector budget restraints, iPOS continues to give vital visibility on spend to LGO.

"Most of our income is a government grant," explains David Benson, LGO's Head of Finance. "iPOS gives us control to review all spending ensuring the right authorisations have been gained. The extra control ensures we're watching every penny carefully."

TouchstoneFMS's project plan gave LGO peace of mind that the project would be delivered before year end.

"It was project managed very well," says Benson. "We had regular updates, we didn't have massive half day meetings that were over the top, we just had regular telephone conference calls of less than an hour reminding each of us what we were going to do and when we were going to do it by."

The project plan had a go-live date in February. In doing so this provided a month of operation to resolve any issues before the year end process began at the end of March. Some issues were found in the acceptance testing, which were resolved in advance of the year end period. "It's proof the system works," says Benson.

A key aim for LGO was having one partner to support both solutions; this was achieved by moving the support contracts to TouchstoneFMS.

"Having separate providers for support can cause problems with both blaming the other and sometimes it takes extra time to get things resolved as you're trying to communicate between two support desks," explains Benson. "The biggest advantage out of the upgrade is one support provider for both systems."

Benson has since found TouchstoneFMS's support approach has made resolving any issues much simpler. "Looking back on it twelve months ago, under the old system, the biggest frustration I used to get was that we could only log problems online. It was quite difficult to actually get to speak to somebody, which I personally find is a much better way of resolving a problem than bouncing messages backwards and forwards.

"The thing we like about Touchstone is we can log a problem but if we want to phone up and speak to somebody it's easy to do."

LGO like any public sector organisation needs to make every penny count. Through its upgrades it has ensured it can continue to manage and monitor its finances while preparing for future changes.

Meanwhile the unified helpdesk provider allows its finance team to more easily access support and resolve any issues faster, saving valuable time.

Reflecting on the benefits of using TouchstoneFMS, Benson concludes:

"With some other providers you sometimes feel like they're almost trying to avoid having a conversation with you; it feels like a like last resort. I like Touchstone's approach where I can just speak to somebody."

FIND OUT MORE:

Touchstone FMS empowers you to make informed financial decisions.

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