Online 50: International Made Local for Artaius

Artaius Limited is a Stevenage based business processing outsourcing specialist that provides a 'one stop shop' solution for UK businesses and for inward investment companies. Working closely with East of England International and the UK Trade & Industry offices world-wide, Artaius enables overseas companies to establish in the UK by providing a complete back-office function.

Like most of its peers, Artaius faces a generally long and difficult recruitment process in the UK. As a growing business with an increasing pipeline of work, Artaius had to address increasing resource constraints. That's when they looked at off-shoring. The benefits of a larger pool of resources that could be scaled according to workload were clear; but there were also a number of challenges that this presented, in terms of both process and technology.

Initially, Artaius partnered with Online50 to provide back office processing for one particular client. The client was already using Sage Line 50 and needed access to their accounts from up to eight locations. While they wanted Artaius to do most of their back office accounts processing, management also needed to have access to run reports.

Because they processed over 12,000 transactions a month, their data file was too big to email and too slow to run on a local

(from left): Robin Berry; Alfred Levy and Melanie Troiano of Artaius

network and attempts to use a VPN had also failed. Artaius turned to Online50 to provide the solution.

Even before off-shoring, Artaius, like most others in the accounting profession, had to email back-up files to and from clients in order to exchange data. If working on site they needed to copy data onto a laptop and restore it back to the firm's network for further analysis or reporting. If the client was responsible for data entry themselves, they would be unable to work while Artaius had the master file. Apart from the inherent inefficiency in this process, there was also the risk of data corruption and possible issues with version control. Consequently Artaius extended the use of Online50 to include more clients for whom they did the data processing onsite. This streamlined processes and allowed them to offer clients a wider and more flexible range of service options.

After two more years, when it came to incorporating offshore data processing into their business model, Online50 was already a proven solution with the capability to allow Artaius, their clients and an offshore data processing team in India real time access to accounts data.

However, because clients often need more sophisticated management accounts Artaius use the MS Query link into Excel which is also hosted on the Online50 platform. "It enables us to produce working papers files, including full lead schedules for year end accounts and audit, online using a live link to the Sage data" says Melanie Troiano, Client Relationship Director.

"We had to invest significantly in staff training in this area in order to relieve some of the burden experienced at director level.

"Using the Screen2Screen remote support tool we were then able to extend this training to our counterparts in India by conference call and by taking control of their online desktop."

"The result is an extremely efficient system of flexible overnight processing to deadlines determined by us. All work is then reviewed and delivered to our clients by our UK team, who, as with clients, are entirely focussed on the success of their business. In addition, our clients have access to this information in realtime so that wherever they are, Hong Kong, New Zealand or Canada, time is immaterial."

Melanie Troiano, Client Relationship Director

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