

Agresso Client Case Study – Eidos Interactive

VIDEO GAMES PUBLISHER AIMS HIGH, SCORES BIG WITH AGRESSO ERP SOLUTION FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Overview

Eidos Interactive Ltd. is part of \$227 million SCI Entertainment Group, one of the world's leading developers, publishers and distributors of entertainment software. The company's hallmark video game series, Lara Croft Tomb Raider™ was originally launched in 1996 and has sold over 30 million copies. Following a merger in 2005 between video game leaders Eidos and SCI Games, the company has 1,000 employees and offices throughout the world.

Like the video game characters of its client, Eidos, the Agresso Business World installation has been challenged repeatedly by competitive software companies who appeared bigger and stronger – but ultimately, not better -- than Agresso.

Following the initial compete (challenge one) in '98, Eidos corporate offices revisited its Agresso decision with the goal of consolidating disparate back office operations at its subsidiaries in France and Germany (challenge two). In 2005, Eidos then merged with SCI, which also had its own ERP solution (challenge three).

Each time, the winner was Agresso; and each time, Agresso successfully absorbed the new operations it had won, in record time and at lower projected cost. Eidos has been able to simultaneously take on data warehousing, management reorganization and financial accounting revision projects.

"I can tell you from hands-on experience with Oracle, Peoplesoft and SAP that these projects might have taken as long as five man years to complete," said Steve Clayton, Director of Business Systems for Eidos. "Using Agresso, the projects were completed in approximately nine months and we easily saved hundreds of thousands of dollars on IT staff and consultant salaries."

Agresso is the ERP market's definition of agility and the leader in a new multi-billion-dollar cross-vertical niche that Agresso calls "BLINC" –

Businesses Living IN Change. These post-millennium businesses, like Eidos, are characterized by almost frenetic levels of dynamic business change --- *requiring post-installation agility that cannot be accommodated by the perennial ERP solution giants.*

Today, Agresso's unique underpinning architecture is being enjoyed by Eidos, as well as thousands of BLINC businesses with over 1,100,000 users worldwide. Agresso is focused on correcting the assumption of technology buyers that they must continually face expensive ERP rearchitecting.

The Need

Eidos executives say that the company is focused on an aggressive business plan that is best served by one underlying back office solution. As the company grows and circumstances change, it has found a partner in Agresso that is competent in rising to the company's changing circumstances.

Following the initial Eidos decision to select Agresso, Microsoft Navision was three years ago one of the challengers Agresso bested when the decision was made to unify on one platform provider. Then, in 2005, when Eidos was acquired by SCI Entertainment Group, SCI was running its operations on Microsoft Great Plains, where again, Agresso prevailed in a face-off.

"We have a Microsoft-based infrastructure, so naturally there had been a strong desire to consider Microsoft solutions," Clayton said. "The thinking was that it was hard to go against Microsoft because we were generally satisfied elsewhere with their products. "But at each turn the decision to go with Agresso was two-fold: we had sampled Agresso and knew of its change-oriented capabilities. Conversely, we could not get comfortable with Microsoft's answers to an upgrade path – they were heading into what looks like a major re-architecting which would have put us potentially into a major conversion."

The multiple ERP product consolidations undertaken by Oracle, Peoplesoft and Microsoft

are a source of concern for both former and potentially future customers. "We're all wondering about that big gamble we might have to take four years down the road...and I don't think many forward-thinking businesses want to risk it."

Of additional concern was steadfast knowledge that a deployment on Microsoft or any other of the ERP leaders left you with a rigid set of templates that would make it hard for Eidos to continually change its operations as it entered new countries and took on additional acquisitions.

Today, Eidos is using a growing list of Agresso financial management solutions, based soundly on Agresso's tight coupling of an information warehouse, business processes and analytic/reporting capabilities. Eidos' general ledger, accounts payables and accounts receivables are integrated worldwide, and each new office deployment can be managed in less than 60 days.

"I'd like to know how many other ERP solutions can claim they can do a full, complex operation deployment in less than two months," Clayton said. "As a matter of fact, we could have implemented Agresso in just two to three months – and that includes new servers, a new database, converting historical data and training, as well. To put a new system in within six months is considered pretty good – let's be blunt, from an IT perspective if you can pull off an ERP deployment for a complex company in six months you are considered 'top of the heap.' But with Agresso, accommodating change quickly is commonplace."

The Benefit

Eidos uses Agresso's database to go directly at market/sales data from a wide variety of internal and external sources, then invokes Agresso's embedded analytics capability to produce secure, role-based reports for management.

For example, the company can pull existing and trailing Eidos sales data, compare that data against other computer games launching within the industry and overlay projected trends from industry analysts. This combination provides sound and timely indicators on the relative success of any given video game, allowing the company to make nimble marketing, pricing and

distribution decisions that will impact quarterly earnings.

"We continually merge data from our sales database against competitors' data that we can view from the NPD Group (the leading provider of consumer and retail market research)," Clayton said. "So, let's say in one example that our goal is to sell one million units of a game, and NPD shows that last week we were at 500,000 units moved through distribution channels. Our quarter is closing and we can play what-if scenarios on whether to discount, change our channel or run the financials on what the downside is of getting those units back. Agresso allows us to manage and converge data in a number of ways to meet our objectives."

Eidos' IT staff provides itself on a solid understanding of both its business and the technology surrounding its business. "My primary training was as a database administrator, and I can look at data and the database and tell you without hesitation which solutions are going to be easier and harder to work with," Clayton said. "Agresso's data is consistent across every single installation, everywhere in the world, across every table. It doesn't matter if you merge, consolidate, add three extra pieces or 1,000 – the core data is always going to be consistent. Without a lot of additional tools and third-party intervention, I can't say the same of Oracle, Navision, Great Plains or SAP."

About Agresso

Agresso (www.agresso.com/USA) is an enterprise resource planning (ERP) subsidiary of Netherlands-based Unit 4 Agresso (Dutch Stock Exchange Euronet-U4AGR), a \$450 million provider of business software. Positioned among enterprise solution providers as "The ERP Market's Definition of Agility," Agresso offers a fully-integrated suite of ERP solutions for companies in the professional services and public sector. Over 2,400 companies and organizations in 100 countries deploy Agresso Business World for both operational support and strategic management. The company's role-based, Web Services and Services-Oriented Architecture (SOA) enabled solutions include: Financial Management, Human Resources and Payroll, Procurement Management, Project Costing and Billing, Reporting and Analytics and Business Process Automation.



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