



Sage 200 Financials and Commercials* supports **INTERIGHTS** in the cause of operational excellence.

Client profile

INTERIGHTS, the International Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights, has a challenging mission: to defend human rights and freedoms worldwide by promoting the effective use of law. It does this by providing legal expertise in areas where there is potential for human rights standards to be developed – such as improving people's right to education, or to decent healthcare – or in cases where rights are under threat. From its office in Islington, London, INTERIGHTS works in partnership with many organisations, lawyers and the judiciary across the world, particularly in Africa, Europe, South Asia and the Commonwealth.

INTERIGHTS' main focus is on strategic litigation: bringing cases to regional, domestic or international courts, which, if successful, can have far-reaching consequences. These can include not only justice for individual victims of human rights violations but changes in national law in the country concerned or in international standards for the protection of human rights. INTERIGHTS also provides targeted legal human rights training programmes and a range of authoritative legal publications.

Founded in 1982, INTERIGHTS' turnover today is in the region of £1.5 million, with the main streams of funding coming from UK and overseas trusts and foundations,

as well as a number of private donations. INTERIGHTS currently employs 21 people, along with hosting interns and visiting lawyers.

The challenge

By 2005, lack of integration of accounting information had become a very significant issue at INTERIGHTS. Management and financial information was not available in the right format or in a timely manner, making it very difficult for the organisation to keep track of its performance.

At that time, INTERIGHTS was at risk due to funding pressures, as well as the absence of both an executive director

“ Without Sage 200 Financials and Commercials, we wouldn’t have had the tools to manage what had become quite a critical situation. It’s been a leap in terms of the quality of our financial management and information systems. We have progressed from being uncertain about our financial position at any given time to having accurate information readily available to help us make good quality decisions.”

Joe Curran, Resources Director, INTERIGHTS

and a dedicated fundraising arm. Without the necessary systems in place, it was proving virtually impossible to begin to address the situation.

Resources Director Joe Curran joined INTERIGHTS in early 2005. He recalls the situation at that time: “The organisation was going through a tough spell. We lacked the management structure, processes and systems to operate efficiently. Our decision-making capability was seriously impaired and we were struggling to comply fully with the statutory requirements on charities. Radical change on all fronts became an urgent necessity.”

The solution

Having outgrown the capacity provided by its previous Sage Line 50 system, INTERIGHTS approached Sage for an alternative solution.

Looking back, Joe says, “Sage Line 50 had been a good workhorse, but we needed to move fast in finding a replacement. We knew we couldn’t do it alone. Sage was our first port of call and when we presented our criteria, they were able to advise us on a suitable solution – Sage 200 Financials and Commercials – and a Sage Business Partner with a good reputation and strong track record in the charity sector. After further research into the market and meeting with Intelligent Solutions Consultancy Ltd, we were confident that the proposed solution did indeed align with our needs and that

Intelligent Solutions’ sector experience would provide the right levels of expertise and support.”

INTERIGHTS upgraded to Sage 200 Financials and Commercials, running under Microsoft Windows on its existing Dell hardware. Its Sage Payroll software continued to run. Joe Curran and his team worked closely with Intelligent Solutions to go forward with the transition.

He explains, “Due to the urgent need for financial and management information, we went live before the project was fully completed. This, of course, created some difficulties as we were still finalising our design and accounting structures whilst using the product. However, in conjunction with Intelligent Solutions we made it work. They were on site for around six days during the project to provide set-up and training. Any initial issues encountered when first implementing the system were resolved and dealt with swiftly and effectively.”

The benefits

Through the increased functionality of Sage 200 Financials and Commercials, the charity is now supported in operating much more efficiently, with improved financial control and tighter management control.

According to Joe Curran: “Without Sage 200 Financials and Commercials, we wouldn’t have had the tools to manage

what had become quite a critical situation. It’s been a leap in terms of the quality of our financial management and information systems. We have progressed from being uncertain about our financial position at any given time to having accurate information readily available to help us make good quality decisions. Again, whereas previously we had difficulty producing management accounts, we have just delivered our first set of nine-month accounts, covering our activities and funding. We also have the insight to forecast and decide how to make best use of our limited funds.”

With a restricted budget, INTERIGHTS’ choice of system has turned out to be a wise one, representing excellent value for money. Joe says, “Sage 200 Financials and Commercials has proved to be the bedrock of our work. We feel we chose the right product to help us revolutionise INTERIGHTS’ financial management and planning systems. We can go forward as a visibly far more secure and effective organisation.”

Joe comments, “We have moved from a position where medium and long-term planning was difficult because our financial information could be uncertain, to one where we can take important decisions, confident that we have accurate and up-to-date financial information at our fingertips. Our funders and other stakeholders can be certain that they are committed to an organisation not only with a reputation for



Solution Overview

- Timely, accurate and better quality financial and management information enabling more effective control.
- Greater transparency of information to increase stakeholder confidence.
- Improved reporting to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.
- Ability to devolve budgets to give managers greater ownership and accountability.
- Strong support from Sage Business Partner Intelligent Solutions Consultancy Ltd.

legal excellence, but one which is well placed to manage and spend their donations effectively.”

The future

INTERIGHTS has achieved major improvements in its financial management, but Joe is keen to introduce further efficiencies, saying: “We know there is further to go. Microsoft SQL Server is about to be installed to refine our management of reporting functions and ensure faster, more efficient access to data. Our budget-holders will be equipped to take greater ownership of their projects as we devolve greater financial responsibility to them. We are upgrading to the latest version of Sage 200 Financials and Commercials and reviewing our other systems to explore the scope for further improvement and integration.”

The close working partnership with Intelligent Solutions continues to this day. Joe sums up, “Intelligent Solutions has an intuitive understanding of the needs of the not-for-profit sector.”

“ Sage 200 Financials and Commercials has proved to be the bedrock of our work. We feel we chose the right product to help us revolutionise INTERIGHTS’ financial planning and management systems. We have moved from a position where medium and long-term planning was difficult because our financial information could be uncertain, to one where we can take important decisions, confident that we have accurate and up-to-date financial information at our fingertips.”

Joe Curran, Resources Director, INTERIGHTS

*At the time of print INTERIGHTS operated the Sage MMS software. This software has since been rebranded to Sage 200 Financials and Commercials.

Sage is a global provider of end-to-end business management applications for small to mid-size businesses. Look to Sage for fully integrated software that delivers high performance, advanced functionality, cross-product integration and unmatched freedom of choice. Sage provides companies with the solutions they need to enhance competitive advantage and increase profitability. For more information, visit www.sage.co.uk or contact us on **0845 111 9988**.

The Sage logo, consisting of the word "sage" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, centered within a dark green square.