Penlaw
Material Motion

Sage 1000 &
IT Services
Case Study

PINNACLE

Leading UK distributor Penlaw
relies on Pinnacle to keep its IT in peak condition

About Penlaw.

Established in 1977, Penlaw is a family business that has grown to become the UK's #1 independent distributor of drywall and associated products, with an annual turnover approaching £75 million.

The company's branch network extends to London, East Anglia, the North West and the North East, serving customers who are typically subcontractors to large construction firms.

A few numbers show the size of the challenge facing Penlaw managers in running a business dedicated to providing fast, quality service: from 7 depots across the country, a fleet of 43 trucks makes twice-daily deliveries to customer sites. At any one time, the business holds £4 million of stock. A trade counter service offering a 15-minute turnaround to smaller businesses and the public accounts for 4% of sales.
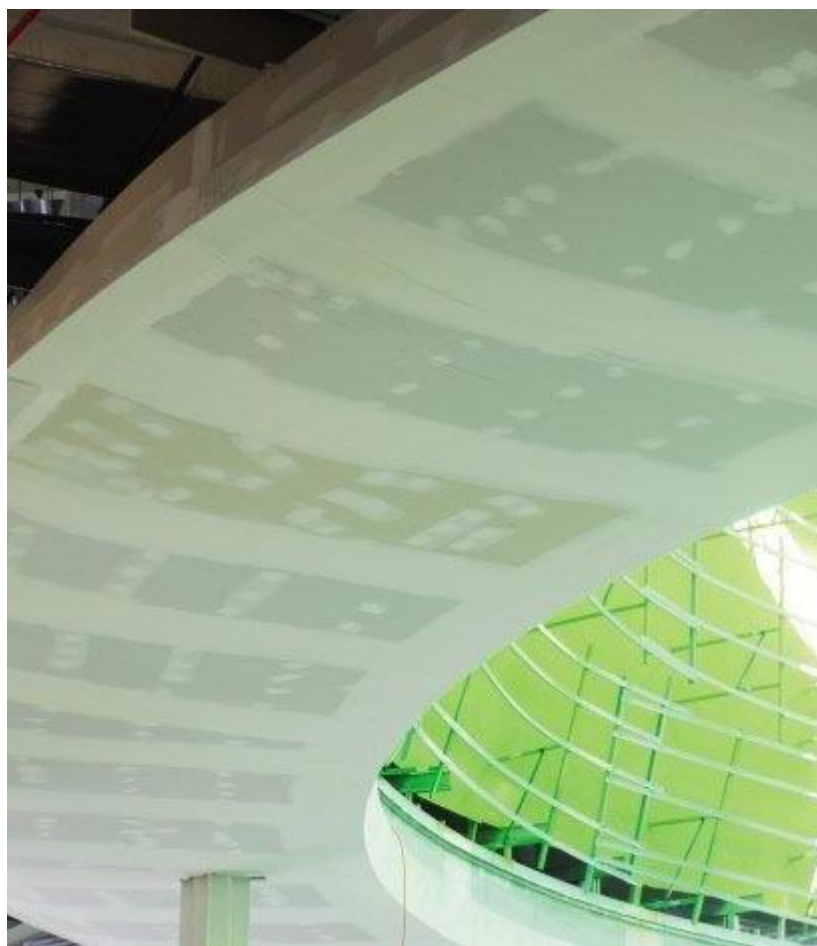
> "Our depots absolutely depend on it, so every minute our infrastructure is out of action means lost business and lost revenue, both for Penlaw and our customers. Time is money! That's why we would never cut corners on support."

Meeting demand country-wide

Penlaw has been a Sage user for around twelve years and a customer of Pinnacle for support on Sage and the company's IT infrastructure for the last eight.

It's no exaggeration to say that Sage 1000 is the lifeblood of the business. Roland Alexander, Systems Manager at Penlaw, explains, "Except for delivery route planning, our Sage 1000 business management system supports every business function – the whole works. Our depots absolutely depend on it, so every minute our infrastructure is out of action means lost business and lost revenue, both for

Penlaw and our customers. Time is money! That's why we would never cut corners on support."

Pinnacle managed the migration to Sage 1000 when previous Sage solution reached end of life, a major move that entailed a widescale hardware upgrade but proved straightforward under Pinnacle's management.

Pinnacle has also supplied, installed and supported security products to safeguard the company's business systems and the valuable data stored on them, as well as supplying and supporting Microsoft Office 365.

Support for Penlaw's growing user base

The critical nature of Penlaw's IT infrastructure makes professional support essential. So in addition to managing migrations and upgrades, Pinnacle provides day-to-day technical support to users across the business.

Roland filters calls for support and then relies on the Pinnacle support team to respond to queries and resolve them remotely, whether the user has asked for help with running a report, solving a performance issue or unblocking a login problem.

He praises the responsive support received from the Pinnacle team,

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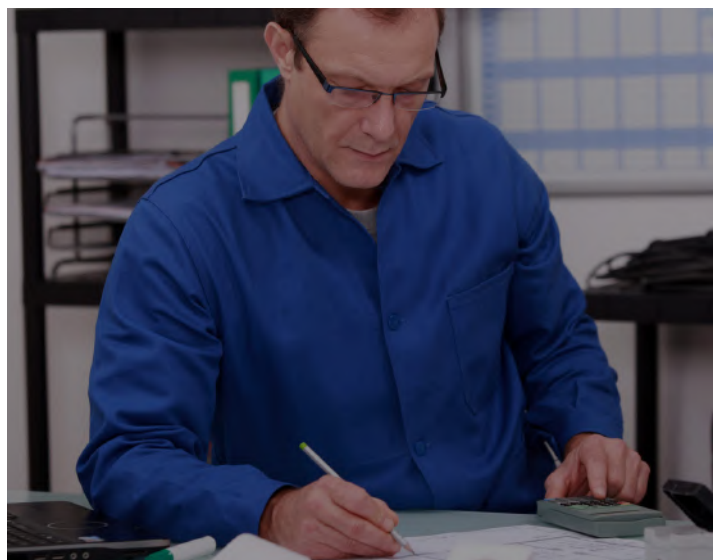
Whether it's a hardware or software issue, Pinnacle assigns the task to the person best placed to provide a fast resolution. They're always good and always quick. If it's a trickier problem, they persevere till they find a resolution.

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Penlaw Material Motion   PINNACLE   sage Platinum Reseller   Silver Microsoft Partner

Non-stop expansion

For Roland, it makes sense to have a one-stop shop for IT support in working with Pinnacle. It frees him to take a more strategic approach to the company's IT, rather than firefighting user issues.

As he points out, having support for hardware and software, IT security products and the network infrastructure all under one roof means Pinnacle is accountable for everything: "I have just one backside to kick, should it ever be necessary!"

The relationship is not only about reactive problem-solving: regular reviews ensure Penlaw continues to get the most out of its Sage system, with Pinnacle advising on improvements to ensure there is sufficient processing power, RAM and storage to meet current business needs and known future requirements.

This proactive approach is essential in such a rapidly expanding business: 12 years ago the original Sage system supported just two depots. Today there are seven depots and over 60 heavy users of the system in functions ranging from sales to accounting to stock ordering. Another system upgrade is currently under way and, at the current rate of expansion, another will be required within a few years.

Cutting out paper

The company is on a mission to reduce reliance on paper-based processes across the business. There are several objectives for this initiative: to minimise the associated costs of purchasing, storing and filing paper; to work more efficiently; and to improve customer service. Pinnacle has supported this development, with the recent integration of document-scanning software for proof of delivery and purchase invoices.

Roland says, "When you consider that any business has to store seven years' worth of records, this consumes a lot of resources. In our case, with 43 trucks out on the road throughout the working week, we generate huge numbers of delivery notes."

The business and its customers are already experiencing the benefits. Ready access to electronic copies enables a fast response if a customer queries a delivery on the invoice. "Rather than trawling through filing-cabinets, we can to call up the delivery note and email it straight from the system, saving a lot of time and effort in the process," says Roland.
He sums up,

> Trust is a huge part of the relationship and we trust Pinnacle implicitly. They're like an extension of our team, in supporting our day-to-day operation and helping us to stay out in front in our application of technology to support the business.

PINNACLE

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