



Company CV

Influential Software, established in 1993, is a fast growing software house based in Maidstone, Kent comprising 15+ permanent employees backed up by a range of specialist consultants.

We have experience across the whole IT spectrum specialising in the following areas - Business Intelligence (BI), Data Warehousing, Data Integration (especially Legacy Data Migration projects), Vendor Selection, Project Management, Software Design & Build, Implementation and Support. In addition, we have considerable experience within the traditional Publishing sector (Books and Journals) where we have provided consultancy at all levels.

We are able to offer many years' experience and expertise in a wide range of technical areas such as Business Objects, COGNOS, SAP, Oracle, PHP, SQL Server, Java, Networking, Hardware Installation and Website hosting.

In any project we undertake, our work is characterised as providing an innovative approach using proven methods which are the sum-total of decades of diverse experience in the IT and Business arena.

We have successfully delivered projects within Book & Journal Publishing, Property Investment & Property Services, Financial Services, Transport & Logistics, Policing Support Systems and Satellite Communications.



Principal Staff

Andy Richardson (Founder & Managing Director)

Andy, Influential's founder, began his career in IT in 1987 and has been successful in delivering projects for major Publishing and Banking institutions and in transport and logistics ever since.

Since incorporating Influential in January 1993, Andy has concentrated his efforts primarily in the Publishing sector and has accumulated an unrivalled knowledge of the Publishing industry from all perspectives. During these years, he also developed a vast network of associates in both the Publishing and general IT industry, which has proven invaluable as Influential has expanded and required the best people to help it do so.

Andy has had a senior design, development & project management involvement in hundreds of projects, ranging from small right through to enterprise-wide system replacements for £50+m turnover businesses, for example –Warehouse Management System, SOP/POP, VISTA implementation, Data Warehousing, Royalties, system integration, Management reporting, global system replacement.

Three specific examples of projects where Andy has performed lead design and project management roles throughout the entire project life-cycle are:

- An entirely new purpose-written Warehouse Management System (WMS) for Harcourt Publishers at their facility in Sidcup, Kent. A multi-year project, delivered on time and within budget, bringing financial benefits and huge efficiency savings to the business.
- A new Data Warehouse for Taylor & Francis publishers, utilizing Oracle back-end, Business Objects reporting and bespoke browser-based enquiry tool, taking 50+ feeds from the various global entities, used by 500+users within the business. A multi-year project, delivered on time and within budget, again bringing financial benefits and productivity savings to the business
- The transition of primary transactional system supplier (and physical warehouse) from Cengage to Bookpoint for Taylor & Francis publishers, involving data conversion, reporting, training, gap analysis etc. A 9 month project, delivered on time and within budget, widely considered to be one of the smoothest system/warehouse changes in the Publishing industry



Principal Staff cntd

John Simpson (Technical Director & Partner)

John joined Influential in 2004 after a 7 year stint as a Senior IT Manager at Elsevier Ltd (formerly Harcourt Publishers), where he and Andy had worked in partnership throughout a series of major IT Projects and Strategic IT objectives. This partnership approach has continued as Influential has grown over the intervening years.

The prior period at Harcourt/Elsevier was profoundly influential for John as an IT professional in Publishing and was characterized by both massive internal change to the structure of the business and corresponding changes in Book Publishing and content delivery across the industry. All this meant that systems solutions had to adapt rapidly and effectively in accordance with these needs to enable the business to remain competitive and effective, always undertaken with a keen eye on cost control.

Specific examples of John's achievements include:

- Design, coding and delivery of a Global Inventory Management System for Taylor & Francis, monitoring stock levels, suggesting re-order quantities according to profile modeling and management/auditing of Minimum Stock Levels and ordering. Built using web-based open source technologies utilizing ORACLE, this system is already in use by the main T&F divisions and is currently being rolled out globally across the remaining divisions
- Instigation, Design and subsequent delivery of a Data-Warehouse/Reporting initiative at Harcourt Publishers, based upon Cognos BI tools and MS SQL Server, providing all data and reporting needs across the business for Finance, Editorial, Inventory Management and Sales and Marketing, fed directly by the Publisyst ERP system as well as Marketing and Financial Systems
- Designed, coordinated and managed the creation and roll-out of a successful EDI and XML communications capability for Harcourt/Elsevier, allowing the development of many new data interchanges with Customers and Suppliers, as well as the early creation of ONIX XML feeds to selected consumers in the books industry

In addition John's teams have successfully delivered a host of other projects across the breadth of the publishing spectrum, but also beyond into areas such as Transport & Logistics, Policing, Telecommunications and CRM.

John has always maintained an acute awareness of the importance of service-driven IT, underpinned by constant re-evaluation of the best use of resources and innovative solutions for business problems. All of these characteristics, combined with subsequent experience at the helm of rapidly expanding business enable John to provide a well-rounded, effective and ultimately proven approach to any IT project and characterize the Influential Approach to IT project delivery and customer satisfaction.



Clients

Influential has partnered with many top names across diverse sectors to produce first rate business-enabling applications

Current clients include “blue chip” companies such as:

- Taylor and Francis
- Informa
- Elsevier (formerly Harcourt)
- SeaCo Ltd (formerly Sea Containers)
- Reed Business Information (RBI)
- BPP
- GE Transportation

... as well as a variety of other smaller companies :

- Eurosat
- BeyonDSL
- Stanford & Green
- Hips4Everyone
- Tomlinsons



Skills

Business Intelligence

Influential has an unparalleled record of success in delivering enterprise Business Intelligence (BI) and Corporate Performance Management (CPM) solutions.

In each case, we have applied a consistent approach designed to deliver solutions providing straightforward access to company and customer information, often built upon feeds from many disparate systems, both internal and external to the organisation. Bespoke integrity check routines are intrinsic to our solutions; building user confidence in the data accuracy, which, when combined with our user-friendly presentation layer produces a first-rate business-user experience.

To develop and deploy our BI & CPM solutions we use Industry leading front-end software development environments - Business Objects & Cognos Impromptu/Powerplay sat upon a variety of back-end databases – including Oracle, MS SQL Server and My SQL.

Data Warehouse & Data Integration (including Legacy Migration)

Fundamental to Influential's approach is to build a strong business relationship with our clients in order to identify both the organisation's key information and the relationships between the data items. Proven database and archiving design provides fast business centric access to company data.

We have led and been involved in many integration projects, from relatively minor to enterprise level, and know that attention to detail and the ability to understand not just the physical structure of the data and systems being integrated but also the business process context is essential to a successful outcome.

We have vast experience in converting data into and out of various IT systems as well as data warehouse migrations (into and out of Oracle and SQL Server) and physical warehouse moves.



Skills cntd

Project Management

Influential offers a project management service that can be tailored to each client's individual needs although the main focus is always ensuring that key business drivers are met, what is wanted is delivered without unnecessary delays and ultimately the project meets the objectives laid out in its business case.

We are strong in all areas required to successfully manage project such as communication and facilitation, team leading, estimating, planning & tracking and change, risk and issue management.

All financial information is gathered and can be reported according to each client's requirements. Microsoft Project is our preferred project planning & progress monitoring tool and Prince 2 our preferred methodology.

Software Development

Influential's team is fully conversant in all aspects of the software development lifecycle and are fully equipped to deliver software using a variety of methods from Rapid Application Development (RAD) and the most relevant aspects of the "Agile" methodology for rapid prototyping to a more standard "Waterfall" Analysis, Design, Build and Test approach.

We have a wide range of technical skills from within our employee base at our disposal:

- Development expertise: ASP, .NET, PHP, Java, Javascript, HTML, XML & SOAP
- Database skills: ORACLE (pl-sql), MS SQL, MySQL, Access, ODBC etc.
- Business Intelligence: Business Objects, COGNOS Impromptu & Powerplay
- Design & Implementation: Business Analysis, Solutions Design, Relational Database design, Application Development Infrastructure Design & installation , Testing analysis & execution

Our projects are designed to be totally transparent throughout their lifecycle, ensuring that the eventual outcome is always aligned to the original brief. This approach has helped ensure the successful and timely delivery of hundreds of projects since inception.

Support Services

Influential can provide a range of support services from technical support to operational support. Currently, we provide 1st and 2nd line and out of hours support for many of our existing clients and can tailor the level of support to meet each client's exact requirements. We have our own incident management software accessed via our dedicated client portal, but equally, we can also hook into in-house support software where required.



Recent Projects

Taylor and Francis (2005 – current)

- Design, Build & Implementation of an enterprise Data Warehouse, underpinning a Global Management Reporting Solution built on Business Objects XI, Crystal Enterprise Server and Oracle 11i, interfacing with VISTA, Klopotek, Oracle Financials, CODA and SAP/R3 systems
- Creation of a bespoke enterprise web-based query and data-maintenance tool using PHP under IIS and Oracle 11i (500+ users)
- Creation of a bespoke integrated Inventory Management enquiry, planning and demand modelling tool, based on PHP under IIS and Oracle 11i (50+ users)
- Project Managed and resourced a warehouse and distribution move from Cengage to Bookpoint; complete with Author2Reader to VISTA data migration
- Business Analysis of processes and associated systems within the Journals Subscriptions side of the business, resulting in proposals for improvements etc.
- Global system review including RFQ from industry-leading vendors resulting in major project to upgrade key systems within the business
- Analysis of existing process surrounding Sales Deals functionality within T&F Journals. Requirements gathering, process flow, business analysis, eventual list of suggested improvements to be implemented
- Vendor selection for replacement of existing SAP subscription process system. Managed entire project from requirements gathering through vendor presentations and final recommendations. Considered THINK, Advantage Computer Services, Publishing Technology/VISTA and other smaller vendors

Elsevier (2002-current)

- Book Publishing System Migration from AS/400 and Publisyst into VISTA's Author2Reader
- Design and Implementation of an International Reps CRM solution based on open-source LAMP technology
- Design, Build & Implementation of Global Management Reporting Solution using Cognos Impromptu, Powerplay (OLAP) and Upfront (Web distribution), Decision Stream (ETL) and MS SQL Server Database
- Design and Build of a new enterprise web-based query and data-maintenance tool using ASP and SQL Server (750+ users)



Recent Projects cntd

SeaCo Ltd

- Design, Build and Implementation of a bespoke data-warehouse and reporting system, aggregating data from a remote SAP ERP system and presenting this as a pre-defined pack of management reports using Cognos BI tools
- Support of all legacy business applications, including Asset Management register and banking systems
- Design, build and maintenance of SeaCo Ltd corporate website

Eurosat

- Design and build of an agent's portal, allowing re-sale of BeyonDSL satellite internet access to an end-user community spread across the globe. Central to this system is a bespoke access management system controlling satellite access directly via an XML gateway
- Design and build of a dealer's website allowing registration in the FREESAT initiative
- Build, Integration and automation of internal ordering systems, managing branch credit limits and ordering of stock versus delivery times based on PHP/MS SQL
- Design and build of several web-based shopping portals with on-line credit card validation, stock supply management and user-end reporting
- Integration of various systems with Eurosat's central SAGE accounting system, utilising both direct data-access and SAGE's XML e-mail gateway

Contact details

We'd be delighted to hear from you. Our contact details are:

Influential Software Services Ltd
Kent House
Romney Place
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 6LA

Phone: +44 (0)1622 757517

Email: info@influentialsoftware.com

Web: www.influentialsoftware.com