



A Case Study

- Mail Order
- e-Commerce
- Distribution
- Call Centre
- Fulfilment
- Shops
- Catalogue
- Financials
- CRM

Rapid Racking - company gains edge with IT partnership



Established in 1986, Rapid Racking specialise in the direct marketing and supply of storage, racking and shelving systems for business, commercial and industrial use. From basic multi-purpose shelving systems to extensive warehouse, pallet racking, mezzanine floors and shelving systems for retail product display.

Over the years Rapid Racking, has grown to become an award winning company supplying

businesses throughout the UK. With over 100 members of staff and 100,000sq ft of warehousing space, Rapid Racking also have their own fleet of delivery trucks, ensuring that they are in the position to supply a wide range of storage products nationwide, with many being delivered next day.

Rapid Racking's aim is to exceed customer expectations by providing low cost, easy assembly shelving and racking for all their customer needs, combined with a friendly service and guaranteed quality. *"Rapid Racking means quality products, great service and fantastic value."*

In order to meet this claim Rapid Racking needed a software system that was powerful enough to cope with the volume and the complexity of the business. In 1996, a decision was made to upgrade their IT systems in order to move the business forward. The previous system was unable to cope with the volume of orders being taken and the business was being held back by their obsolete IT infrastructure. Exact Abacus was chosen as the multi channel software provider. The 3EX software handles all business requirements within a single integrated package including financials, sales order processing, stock control, warehouse management, purchasing, marketing and payment processing.

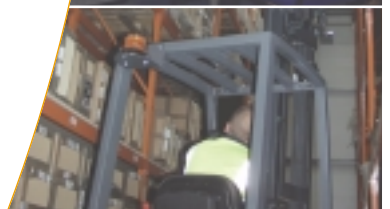
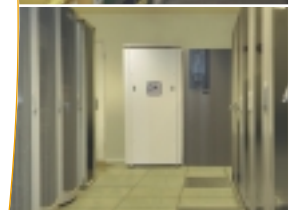
Rapid Racking installed the 3EX software at their headquarters in Cirencester in 1996 and have continued to grow since then.

John Cummings, Financial Director, *"The 3EX software has supported the growth of Rapid Racking very successfully until now. We are looking forward to*

working with Exact Abacus in the future and plan a rolling upgrade programme including the new range of 3EX.NET modules."

In June 2005, Rapid Racking launched a new transactional webstore www.rapidracking.com based on 3EX.NET technology and fully integrated with the 3EX back office system. The site was designed and built by Exact Abacus. Transactional content such as products, prices and special offers are all managed within the 3EX environment, minimising administrative overheads and ensuring consistency of data; all of which is managed by Rapid Racking in real time. Finance Director, John Cummings, believes that the integrated webstore will bring operational efficiencies to the company. Order processing costs will be kept down to a minimum as the site will eventually handle a larger volume of the business. On average Rapid Racking take 3000 orders per month with over 20% of the orders coming through the webstore. Total turnover last year amounted to 18 million pounds.

We are looking forward to working with Exact in the future and plan a rolling upgrade programme



The complex business model and ambitious growth plans demanded a pro-active IT provider



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Rapid Racking plan to invest further in their web-store ensuring that they offer their customers the latest technology and functionality. Rapid have seen a rise in e-business and they envisage that this trend will continue. Rapid Racking believe in a first class service for their customers. All products that they have stocked in their warehouse are delivered from next day to up to 5 working days. In order to meet this service level, the stock control and warehouse management system needs to be able to handle the volume of stock that is being despatched. The 3EX system is capable of ensuring that the stock holdings and warehouse are intelligently managed. Stock is allocated to sales orders upon entry and can be selected from, and dispersed into, any number of defined stores with automatic transfer of items between bin locations for replenishment or multi item despatch.

A great strength of 3EX is its ability to handle products of high complexity. 3EX also allows for an unlimited number of product groupages and the ability to access products using different dimensions is one of the key elements in the rules based flexibility of the software. The Bills of Material System can be used for simple assemblies, complicated manufacturing, or variation-on-a-theme production. Rapid Racking's products can be very complex in their make-up with a number of different BOM's making up their products. In the near future Rapid Racking plan to install Pocket 3EX to automate their warehouse operations. John continues, *"The first phase of the operation will be to introduce Pocket 3EX to Goods Inwards and Picking, where it is expected that this will lead to quicker stock receipting."*

Pocket 3EX will then be rolled out for Replenishment, Stock-taking and Packing. John adds, *"Eventually we want to move away from the twice yearly stock count and onto perpetual inventory. In addition we hope to increase efficiency and speed in the warehouse and eliminate picking errors."* Rapid Racking have built an important strategic partnership with Exact Abacus that will ensure the business is constantly improving systems and thereby retaining a competitive edge.



John concludes, *"Overall our specific software requirements were that it needed to be very flexible in operation and it was imperative that the back-end software integrated fully with our webstore. The system also needed to be able to integrate with other 3rd Party systems."*

The 3EX software has proved to be very flexible and through SQL, it integrates well with our other systems. Having already benefitted from Exact's .NET based technology; we are very excited about the release of the next tranche of 3EX.NET modules, in 2006 which will ensure even greater functionality."

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