



The Borealis Press Gains OSAS, Keeps Macs

Mention the state of Maine, and most people envision things like lobsters, lighthouses, and lumber mills; “Publishing shop” probably wouldn’t spring to mind. Yet in the sleepy hamlet of Surry, along a picturesque inlet not far from Bar Harbor, The Borealis Press greeting card and gift business thrives.

Content to be far removed from the publishing centers of New York and other metropolises, The Borealis Press produces unique and humorous cards for holidays and special events as well as related journals, refrigerator magnets, note cards, and other specialty gift items. The company’s products are found in numerous bookstores, gift shops, stationery stores, and boutiques around North America and beyond. It operates from a former general store built in the 1890s, with overflow storage in off-site warehouses.

Like many businesses with strong graphics and desktop publishing requirements, The Borealis Press is very fond of—and highly dependent on—the Apple Macintosh computing platform; however, like any business, they still have a need for basic accounting, inventory control, order processing, payroll, and other business management tasks that require financial software. Because Macintosh has a limited market share in the general computer world, Borealis found themselves with fewer software choices that met their needs. Like many Apple-centric enterprises, they had to compromise on what they’d like to use to run their operations.

While they were a small outfit, Borealis utilized a more “personal” small business accounting package that was one of the few available for the Macintosh environment, but as they saw their sales and needs expanding rapidly, the software started to be a large bottleneck in their operations.

“We had some processes that would take what seemed to be an hour to

run” said Borealis Operations Manager Aimi Baldwin. “The package used the Mac standard beach ball that would spin around on the screen to show that it was processing. When we needed a report from history, it would be ‘beach ball time’ and we would leave for lunch.”

As they shopped for alternatives, Borealis employees kept in mind a unique requirement for their industry: royalties. Like many publishers, they license images and text from various photographers, artists, and authors, and they needed to track these for payment and recovery of advances. Their search led them to OSAS reseller and integration specialists TBC International (TBC). TBC and business partner Mike Scully had successfully automated several other greeting card publishers with an add-on royalty processing suite for OSAS.

Since Borealis needed to transition off of their Mac-based system quickly, TBC initially chose to deploy the previous version of

OSAS on a Linux server, using the Macs as character terminals. But in November 2005, Borealis transitioned to the fully graphical, multi-platform, Java-powered OSAS 7.0. OSAS 7.0 runs graphically on their six Macintosh desktops, two Windows PCs, and the Linux server—and it retains the characteristic look and feel of each platform that it's running on.

Despite the focus on Macs, Borealis had other requirements that necessitated the inclusion of Windows PCs. One was their UPS shipping computer. The other was SalesCTRL™, a CRM package from Milwaukee-based Advanced Concepts, another OSAS partner and software publisher. Both PCs needed access to data from OSAS, and the built-in ODBC/JDBC data access of OSAS 7.0 allows easy export to these other systems. And, the Windows PCs are equal peers at running OSAS 7.0 for the daily order processing and other accounting operations.

Because “Open Systems” is more than just a name, OSAS comes with complete source code, which allows experienced developers to customize the product further for the unique needs of any business. It also makes it easy for third party modules to be added to extend the functionality of the business management suite. The Borealis Press has a road map of upcoming automation projects, which includes automatically faxing or emailing shipment notices



Borealis Operations Manager Aimi Baldwin.



and invoices, processing and validating credit card transactions, and printing custom display accessories for their card shipments as they process orders.

The flexibility gained from working with Open Systems and their integration partners gives a growing business like The Borealis Press a chance to operate like a

large enterprise—with the budget of a small, home-grown operation.

For additional information on OSAS, call Open Systems, Inc. at (800) 328-2276

- or visit -

www.osas.com.