# Normans

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

Established in 1959, Normans Musical Instruments is the UK's leading supplier of musical instruments to a wide range of customers, including Local Authorities, schools, orchestras, bands, the armed forces and professional players all over the world.

## THE CHALLENGE

Over the last five years, Normans has transformed from a chain of small specialist stores to a mail order company with one large distribution facility, supported by a successful website, mail order catalogue and regionally-based sales managers.

Having embraced new technological advances to take advantage of the changing retail market, Normans required a financial and business solution that could satisfy their current and changing business requirements.

The new structure of Normans as a web and mail order company inevitably led them to trade world-wide, therefore a financial package capable of handling foreign currency was a must-have. This, together with an excellent stock control system, the ability to import orders directly from the web and utilise e-mail was of paramount importance.

Repositioning the customer-face of the company to appeal to a wider audience and offer new and improved services, Normans wanted to streamline the company internally and ensure that they were achieving the best results possible by using the most up to date software. They felt that improving their reporting practice would deliver the biggest efficiency savings; having spent countless hours on timely and cumbersome management reports, Normans were seeking simpler and less time consuming procedures.

## THE SOLUTION OF CHOICE

Impressed with the level of functionality and intelligence, together with the promise of easy migration and the ability to accommodate future company growth and change, Opera II was the obvious solution for Normans.

Gareth Haines, Company Director explains: "We have experienced much growth and change here at Normans over the last few years and we needed a business solution capable of growing and changing with us. What struck me initially about Opera II was that it not only allows us to keep track of our accounts; it keeps tabs on our stock control, provides us with integration to the web and e-mail, and even produces reports without us having to do anymore than click the mouse."

Opera II Stock Control has simplified the way Normans manage their stock requirements. Gareth comments: "As a specialist mail order business, having the right level of stock for immediate delivery is essential." Opera II Stock and Purchase modules and their associated reports enable Normans to set re-order levels and quantities to ensure that appropriate levels of the right stock are always available for immediate despatch.

**Number of Users:** 30

**Modules**: System Manager, Sales ledger, Purchase Ledger, Nominal Ledger, Invoicing, Sales Order Processing, Stock Control, Payroll, Toolkit, Reporter, Purchase Order Processing, Cashbook, Multi-Currency, XRL

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As Normans have international customers and suppliers, connectivity via e-mail is vital. Opera II allows Normans to e-mail sales orders, invoices, purchase orders and BACS remittances in PDF format, which is a money, time and storage saving function. The Multi-Currency module made selling internationally simple. Unlimited currencies, exchange rates per transaction type, and calculation and recording of exchange rate differences all mean that dealing with online customers in Australia is as easy as in the UK over the counter sales.

Opera II can be tailored to meet specific business needs and Normans solution included the integration of a bespoke invoice routine. This allows web orders to be imported into the system, automatically producing invoices and web-sales reports. Gareth comments: "Internet orders account for an ever-increasing proportion of the business, making this a very valuable asset, which has eliminated the need to re-key orders, saving time and preventing human error."

Ultimately, the primary selling point of Opera II was XRL, the eXcel Reporting Layer, which allows Microsoft Excel access to live Opera II data at the click of a mouse; eliminating the need to copy and paste, re-key or work out formulas. Gareth comments: "We clocked up many hours of staff re-keying data into reports, but now all that wasted time, and the inevitable mistakes are a thing of the past. We can deploy our staff far more effectively."

### RESULTS

Normans was particularly impressed by the ease of migration; Opera II is designed to integrate with existing systems and technology, so it can be deployed quickly and easily. Gareth continues: "We were concerned that introducing new software and changing core business practices could slow down procedures during the transition period; however, the move from Opera to Opera II was faultless: we were up and running within a very short time

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**Pegasus Software was established in 1982 and our core business has always been developing PC-based accounting and business software solutions for small and medium-sized businesses. We have been a market leading supplier of modular software for over 20 years, and we have an in-depth understanding of the small and medium-sized market. This enables us to produce innovative software solutions that add real business benefits and value to our customers.**

**All Pegasus products are sold and supported through our highly skilled network of Certified Partners. This is because we believe that our customers are best served by a channel of dedicated, independent specialists who can provide top quality local Pegasus support. Our Partners provide a complete service, from pre-sales consultation to installation, training and after-sales support; ensuring that our customers buy the Pegasus product that is right for their business.**

frame. As we were all already familiar with the typical Windows layout, look and feel of the system, the training we needed was minimal and we were all soon using the Opera II system to our advantage."

Normans has reaped an immediate return on its investment; saving a considerable amount of time and money. Gareth commented: "We used to have a team of seven part-time employees producing the accounts, but now this function is completed by the equivalent of one full-time employee. This has ultimately allowed us to invest more in our employees, providing more proactive and progressive roles. In doing so we have increased the levels of both staff and customer satisfaction."

Normans has witnessed significant results from XRL. Gareth enthuses: "The most significant advantage of Opera II Enterprise is XRL; it's a clever and valuable business tool which has been adopted throughout the company."

Himself a chartered accountant, Gareth takes pride in the speed and accuracy of the company's financial reporting: "Since using Opera II and XRL, monthly Management accounts are produced within a few hours of the end of trading on the last day of the month. Even more impressive, is that the full annual financial statements have been available on the evening of the last night of the year and have subsequently been audited without alteration."

As well as accurate and timely financial reporting with XRL, Opera II enables Normans to run additional real-time reports that bring immediate benefits to other areas of the business; the advantage of which has been noticed at both company and individual level. Gareth explains: "The geographically-based sales team is especially pleased with the gross profit and margin reports which can be analysed by territory; each Sales Manager has the ability to run reports on their exact profitability at any time, as often as they want, and subsequently review this in relation to targets. As you can imagine, this is quite appealing to commission-motivated staff, especially as the Sales Managers are paid on gross profit."

Overall, Gareth and his team are extremely impressed with the impact Opera II has had on their business. He concludes: "By taking the small step to migrate, Opera II has helped us take a giant leap forward in improving productivity."

### THE PARTNER CONNECTION

Pegasus delivers Opera II through a network of Certified Partners. Normans chose Davidson Richards Ltd, a Gold Certified Partner, who has supplied Pegasus solutions since the early 1980s.

Normans has a long-standing relationship with their Pegasus Partner. Gareth comments: "We have every confidence with the advice offered by Davidson Richards and are particularly impressed by their level of service and expertise."

For details of your local Pegasus Partner and more information on the advantages Opera II Enterprise could bring to your business, contact the Pegasus Team on 0800 9197045; alternatively e-mail info@pegasus.co.uk or visit www.pegasus.co.uk/findapartner.