

## Case Study - Weston's Cider

### Successful outsourcing of IT aids business development

#### Background

H Weston & Sons Limited is a highly respected and reputable family firm of cider makers based in the village of Much Marcle, Herefordshire where they have been producing top quality cider for over 125 years.

The tradition of cider and perry making in Herefordshire has a long and illustrious history. When Henry Weston arrived in Much Marcle in 1878, he decided to continue the tradition and eventually turn what had been a hobby into a commercial venture.

Such was the high quality of his product, Henry Weston's cider making business flourished and today the business continues to go from strength to strength ably lead by Helen Thomas, the current Managing Director and the great grand-daughter of Henry Weston himself.

Quiss Technology first met with Westons in March 2004 when the firm's users were supported internally by staff whose primary role was non-IT, together with external support where necessary. Although this method sustained them to a point, there were issues surrounding these members of staff spending too much time looking after the desktop environment. Also, there was no plan in place to deal with the ongoing development of the infrastructure and systems, giving rise to major company-wide concerns.

The proposal put forward by Quiss Technology provided a comprehensive solution covering all aspects of IT support. Westons accepted that this approach was what the business required, however the decision was taken that this may be a step too far and also budgetary considerations were a factor. As a result, Westons opted for an alternative, less expensive solution from another supplier.

From Weston's perspective, the chosen contract still required a fairly high level of commitment from key internal members of staff on a day to day basis. With

**“IT is a fundamental part of our business and we could not have achieved what we have without outsourcing such a specialist function, which clearly allows us to get on with doing what we do best.”**

**Helen Thomas - Managing Director**

the costs escalating, the decision was taken to re-open negotiations with Quiss culminating in both parties agreeing to undertake an outsourcing agreement commencing in October 2004.

#### Solution

One of the key issues highlighted in the original Quiss proposal was Weston's existing infrastructure; this comprised a variety of operating systems and in some cases outdated hardware. Companies are increasingly finding that, as new software is introduced, there is a requirement for the latest technology in order for the upgrade to function at peak efficiency.



Helen Thomas, MD H Weston & Sons and Andy Michael, MD Quiss Technology plc

Businesses repeatedly put off developing applications because of the significant investment required in the server and desktop estates. The inimitable approach that Quiss offers means the provision and installation costs of new hardware and software are initially underwritten by them. Thereafter, the customer is charged a fixed monthly fee for the duration of the contract along with all the services. This was the case with Westons, who benefited from the financial certainty, whilst utilising the efficiencies of new and upgraded equipment.

All the work was carried out over a single weekend which ensured that the users were not inconvenienced.

Westons have access to support for all levels of the business. This ranges from server and desktop hardware and software support provided both remotely and on-site, through to extended hours helpdesk facilities, bespoke and general user training, project management and consultancy. These facilities are all delivered with no limit on the amount of times any of them are used.

Quiss Technology and Westons have worked closely on projects to expand key areas of the business that have IT as a core function. These include a new state of the art bottling plant, revision of stock control procedures designed to reduce human error and new on-site offices.

Helen Thomas commented that "IT is a fundamental part of our business and we could not have achieved what we have without outsourcing such a specialist function, which clearly allows us to get on with doing what we do best. The benefits of outsourcing certainly outweigh the cost".



[www.westons-cider.co.uk](http://www.westons-cider.co.uk)

## Benefits

The working relationship between Quiss Technology and Westons has proved to be so successful that Westons have signed a new four year agreement which is due to commence in April 2008.

Helen went on to add that "we still have other key projects in the pipeline where the experience that Quiss can provide will be vital to their and our success".



Since our launch as a specialist IT service provider in 1988, we have strived to deliver only the best solutions. To find out more about any of our services, please contact us and we will be delighted to discuss your requirement further.

---

### Quiss Technology plc

#### Office Contact Numbers

London T: 020 8427 6738  
Midlands T: 01827 265000

E: [enquiries@quiss.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@quiss.co.uk)  
W: [www.quiss.co.uk](http://www.quiss.co.uk)