

Worldwide focuses on constant development

Key Features

- Sales order management
- Grower distribution management
- Real time web based grower interaction
- Grower web based packing/picking instructions
- Grower web based confirmation of dispatch
- Warehouse and Web Tesco ASN, M&S
- RFID Product Location Management
- Integrated warehouse management
- Integrated packhouse management
- Integrated packhouse traceability
- Powerful grower lot accounting
- Account sale/firm price agreed after sale deals
- Powerful grower pool/levy/commision/charge recoveries
- Grower return by original product units after packing
- Grower/Haulier self billing

Key Benefits

- Faster/cheaper product distribution
- Higher volumes at higher prices
- Lowers operating overheads
- More competitive sales prices
- Higher grower returns
- Trust in transparent returns
- Supplier base increases
- Long term market share gains

Technology

- Prophet Pr2 Client Applications
- Prophet Pr2 Mobile Hand Held Applications
- Prophet Pr2 Web Applications
- XML Electronic Data Interchange
- Crystal Reports- Microsoft SQL Server
- Windows Server Family



Worldwide Fruit has been a Prophet user since implementing Pr2 in October 2008. Version 2.5 was implemented at the end of 2011, when Pr3 was still in development, and the international fruit marketing and distribution company, based in Spalding in England, plans to move onto Pr3 in 2016.

Phil Cole has been at Worldwide Fruit for 16 years and was management accountant until April 2015, when he began his current 12-month secondment to analyse and review the company's business processes and systems. "It's a role that encompasses review and development, including the way data and reports are extracted out of Pr2.5 and how we utilise them," he explains. "One of the end goals is to get everything in line to allow us to implement Pr3 by the middle of 2016. If we can make any additional modifications to 2.5 before we make that transition, it will make the process more straightforward.

"At the time we made the move to 2.5, MRP was the big piece of functionality that drove the decision," says Phil. "One of the good things about Prophet has always been that its software is a full package in its own right; they have a great understanding of their customers and have always been willing to do bespoke modifications that aid our workflow."

In a previous case study, Worldwide Fruit told how Pr2 had added new dimensions to the business and revolutionised the depth of the data available to the operational, technical and sales teams. However, the true scope of the potential benefits of being a Pr2.5 customer became evident when the company began to integrate its functionality with other systems running within the business.

"We already worked with a solution called PM10, which we use for financial budgeting and planning," says Phil. "As soon as we'd integrated it with Pr2.5 though, we realised the power it could give us through far shorter planning terms than we'd been capable of in the past. Prophet MRP offers a purchasing model based on future sales forecasts. As we already had forecasting and planning data in PM10, we were able to extract the relevant data from that system and transfer it into Pr2.5 to build a far more accurate picture."

Curtis (Curt) Redman makes the regular updates in the system – each Tuesday and Friday – and there is now a rolling 16-weeks worth of forecasts available to the purchasing and operations teams. "They can monitor the expected stock and pinpoint any shortfalls. The system also

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Phil Cole and Kurtis Redman
Analysis and review of business processes and systems

flags up any product codes that need adding. It has really tightened up the entire process for imported apples and pears and we have recently implemented it with avocados,” says Curt.

Worldwide Fruit is 50% owned by New Zealand growers (Enza) and 50% by English growers (Fruition), and has a unique structure for a UK fruit business. “As volume differs each year dependent on crop performance, it is essential we can manage this in the most efficient and effective manner,” Phil says. “But where we are procuring fruit from outside our business, that’s where MRP really comes into its own. If we buy too much product, we might end up having to throw it away and if we buy too little, we’ll end up shorting the customer. It is crucial to our business that we find the right balance.

“The systems we are using have changed our outlook. We have a team of very intelligent people here and part of their time was being spent carrying out what are essentially low-value jobs. We are at the forefront of our industry and we can only continue to be so by giving ourselves the time to develop – keying data was not a good use of time for our sales team.

“We have been able to dramatically cut the amount of time the procurement support team have to spend on data input. If we run an MRP session, immediately we can see for instance that Granny Smiths, count 150s, are going to run out in three weeks time and we need to reorder.

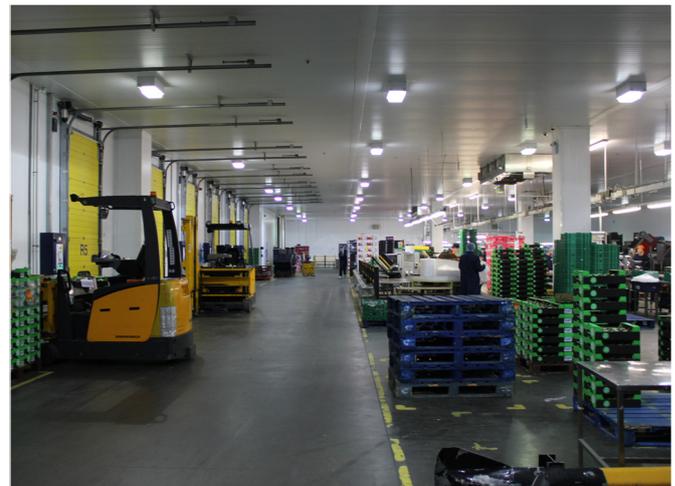
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On-site storage upgrade

Worldwide Fruit has built brand new temperature controlled storage facilities at its Pinchbeck site in the last 12 months and the six new coldstores, with around 1,500 pallets of capacity have made a dramatic difference in efficiency already. “We used to store a lot of product with third parties,” explains Phil. “Putting it simply,” he adds demonstrating with figures pulled out of Pr2.5 in seconds, “in September 13, we were holding three weeks of stock, whereas in September 2015, that had reduced to 1.9 weeks. Building the new stores was a big investment, but it will mean we can provide the customer with exactly the same service, but make cost savings and improve quality.

“Prophet’s MRP software is absolutely central to that. It also gives us greater flexibility. Two years ago, if a pallet had arrived on the packing line and it was outside our customer’s specifications, we’d have had to

make arrangements to transfer a replacement from a third-party storage facility at short notice. Now, we just have to send a forklift down to the store and it’s sorted out in minutes.”



Customer care

The firm supplies many of the major high street retailers in the UK and the precision and timeliness of the data available to Worldwide Fruit now is great news for its customers. “It makes the conversations we have with them far more informed,” says Phil. “It means the information we pass on is grounded in fact, rather than what was more of a feeling in the past, and it means the reliability of the product they receive improves.

“Our customers have recognised our achievements with lots of supplier awards in the recent past and I believe this progressive ethos makes us the types of people they want to do business with. We are one of the few produce companies with a zero to landfill waste policy and we publish an environmental report every year. Again, the precise planning that MRP allows us to implement is central to this – we want to increase efficiency every year, to deliver better services and products and reduce our carbon footprint.”

One example of making significant difference was the decision to move to punnetless flow-wrap on apples for one customer. Data extracted from Pr2.5 underpinned the ability of WFL to understand the

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full financial, practical and quality implications of removing the rigid plastic punnet and placing the newly packaged product on shelf. “There was inevitably a balance between additional labour costs and reduced packaging costs, but we were able to pinpoint what would work best for the customer,” says Curt. “It has helped us in other areas too – the amount we spend on waste packaging tumbles every year.”

Phil says that while growers probably don’t automatically attribute the Prophet system too much as being helpful them, the software has added a lot of value at that end of the supply chain too. “We are able to KPI our suppliers far more accurately now, and while what the data reveals may not always be welcomed at first, it provides the analytical detail that picks out deficiencies and makes it clear where there is room for improvement. That can only help growers – by focusing on delivering the right product, they are also focusing on improving their returns.”

Knowing what is being shipped is also very important to WFL’s environmental and CSR outlook. “If people are transporting waste, they are not only wasting money, but they are also causing environmental problems,” says Phil. “If say 8% of everything we receive is wasted, the returns will not be as good at the other end. We can now go to a growers with a scorecard and as long as they receive and use the information in the way it is intended, everyone will benefit.”

Team software

The software is also exceptionally easy-to-use, which allows a wide range of the Worldwide Fruit team to work with it. “Pretty much everyone in the business uses Prophet in some way. The guys on the line and their line leaders are being directed by the software, the forklift drivers,

stock controllers and pickers are all automated and have hand-held devices directly linked into the system. Everyone in the office uses it throughout the day. The only people who don’t necessarily use it every single day are the directors, but they receive the reports and are constantly monitoring them.”

Having said that, Phil adds that the directors do use reports extracted from Prophet most days. “We extract sales and costs reports out of Prophet into BI, a business intelligence system, so that Steve [Maxwell, CEO] can chart performance on a daily and weekly basis and they are fully drillable, by supplier, by customer etc... So if we are under-performing in any area of the business, on any given day, it is immediately evident and Steve is able to focus the right questions to the most relevant person and make sound commercial decisions based on the data.

“We could cross-check the sales data with the QC score in Prophet, for instance, to analyse where in the chain something might have occurred that has caused the results to dip below, or raise above our expectations.

“Steve would be more concentrated on that type of data, while the ops director would delve into yields, PPHs and those kinds of things, which of course Steve has a great interest in too. The data Prophet generates is also extremely useful when it comes to making capital expenditure decisions. If we have three machines running the same product, we can see immediately – and over periods of time - if one happens to be a bit slower or if there are efficiency issues. Buying new equipment is a huge investment, so the more data you have to back that decision up the better.”

Manifest Uploads

The next big step change is to fully implement the Manifest Uploads functionality in Pr2.5, which allows growers/shippers to upload shipment information directly into the Prophet system at source, to generate orders. "Until now, we have generate that ourselves," says Phil. "But we've got to the point now where as we have the connection with the grower, they can send a flat file or go onto a web portal, upload the data on what's been loaded onto the lorry and by flowing that through the system, we can then auto-allocate fruit to a sale.

"The crucial part as ever is that the data is as full and accurate as possible at the point of entry. The New Zealand season was our first test of this functionality and with up to six weeks on the water, it's pretty important that the information is accurate as there is no turning back."

Solid relationship

Curt says that the relationship with Prophet means transitioning to the next phase of development does not seem like a huge leap. "They have been very flexible and take on any new builds – it is the nature of our company that we try and keep our system as current as we can. A lot of the development work that we see in 2.5 was an improvement on what sat in Pr2 and we're now starting to see development work on Pr3 that is not being sent back down the line into 2.5."

And Phil adds that Worldwide Fruit has led the way in some of the developments already instigated. "By integrating PM10, Prophet and BI (Business Intelligence) through a IBM Cognos front end, we have built a pool of data that we can totally rely on. We were the first Prophet customer to use Cognos from CFMS, but if any other customer comes

on board with the same requirements, much of the work will already be done. It's the linkages that save the time," he explains. WFL has also integrated the Muddy Boots system into Prophet to aid with compliance and quality.

Asked whether he feels WFL is doing everything it possibly can with Prophet, Phil's eyes light up. "There is always more development we can use – I wouldn't have been put into this role for 12 months if we didn't think that. That's what this company believes in – never settle for what you've got, do it better and smarter and but keep pushing the envelope and make the improvements that keep you ahead of the game.

"I would think we're one of the biggest modification customers for Prophet – it's normally a case of us asking for new things and we have a very good relationship with Ian Bennett and Paul Walker. They are pretty hands-on with us and have an understanding of our workflows that means they can advise us where we might be a bit off track. It's a good working relationship and I also know that if necessary, I can run things by Mark Peachey first before talking it to his team. I think they have respect for Curt and I – if we're asking questions, they won't be silly questions!

"Data becomes very powerful once you have an independent system you can rely on to provide a consistently accurate set of numbers. "Prophet is helping us on our lean journey in the packhouse. for example in the management of changeovers. The seemingly small changes can make a big difference in costs and efficiency. Working with the system we had before was like walking through treacle in comparison – with Prophet you can't just see where you are now, you can see where you're going too."

Prophet's Stuart Lane comments

"In late 2007 Prophet was proud to announce Worldwide Fruit Ltd had chosen Pr2 to replace its legacy system. From the early days of the 2008 implementation with a "no mod" approach, WFL has developed into one of the industry's leading innovators.

From being a key partner of M&S for the RFID and PAV solutions to flow-wrap in the UK, in terms of value add offers to their broad customer spread and in technology requirements WFL are at the forefront of their industry.

The WFL staff are always looking for new solutions to enhance not just their own business, but those of their customers, and because of Prophet's flexible single-source code approach, that development is possible without the system being bespoke and without the need to run on old software because an upgrade is too cumbersome.

Such is the sense of partnership between Prophet and WFL, that its headquarters has become one of our key show sites, and we hope it will remain one for a long time to come.

Prophet would like to thank WFL for its kindness in allowing us access to talk about its own Prophet story."



Prophet UK

Tel: +44 (0)1676 525 555



Prophet South Africa

Tel: +27 (21) 8529521



Prophet USA

Tel: +1 (0) 661 325 4454