

Press Release

October 2009



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**- Debbie Sanderson
Deputy Director of Finance
Blackburn College**

Advanced Business Solutions Pioneers Collaborative Approach to College Software Upgrades

Advanced Business Solutions and four North West of England colleges have pioneered a collaborative approach to financial management system (FMS) upgrades, saving on project management costs. The upgrade of Advanced Business Solutions' eFinancials FMS from version 3.2.1 to version 3.4 involved close collaboration between Advanced Business Solutions and the colleges of Blackburn, Burnley, Nelson and Colne and Accrington and Rossendale. This innovative project, understood to be the first of its kind within the education sector, was completed in just three months with all four upgraded eFinancials systems going live in June 2009.

The FMS software upgrades were required so that the colleges could take advantage of the improved functionality of Advanced Business Solutions' latest eFinancials system, which includes enhanced reporting capabilities. To ensure the upgrade project ran smoothly, a project manager was assigned from Blackburn College to represent all four educational institutions. The project manager worked closely with the Advanced Business Solutions team to coordinate a suitable project plan with phased go-live dates.

Debbie Sanderson, Deputy Director of Finance at Blackburn College, comments, "This is the first time we have undertaken a collaborative approach to upgrading our financial management system and it has been a resounding success. With budgets tight, it is important for us to think of new ways to keep costs at a minimum and Advanced Business Solutions recognised this, turning the idea of four colleges collaborating on an FMS upgrade into reality."

By sharing project management and training resources, each college cut its upgrade costs by half, resulting in a combined saving of over £40,000.

Sanderson explains, "By combining all four colleges' project management meetings and training sessions, we only had to pay a quarter of the total costs incurred. This collaborative approach also ensured swift and smooth upgrades and has further strengthened our relationships with the other three North West colleges."

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Graham Withers, Education Business Manager at Advanced Business Solutions, says, "We recognise the difficulties educational institutions face as they strive to maintain high standards on very tight budgets. A collaborative approach to software upgrades is the common sense answer to this problem, ensuring that these institutions continue to have quality systems without breaking their budgets. We look forward to rolling-out this collaborative approach across the public sector."

About Business Solutions

Advanced Business Solutions, an Advanced Computer Software Group plc company, provides leading integrated business applications and services that enable public, private and third sector organisations to retain control, improve visibility and gain efficiencies whilst continually improving corporate performance. It's award-winning software systems comprise core financial management, procurement, human resource and payroll systems, integrated with a range of collaborative, document management and business intelligence solutions . It also provides managed and bureau service options.

Advanced Computer Software Group plc is the UK's leading supplier of software and IT services to the health, care and commercial sectors. It comprises 3 main divisions and has 7000 customers and 800 staff worldwide.

For more information

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