



# PINNACLE

*Computing Solutions*

## SAGE 200 CASE STUDY: BIOBEST LABORATORIES LTD

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# BIOBEST LABORATORIES PUTS SAGE 200 UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

## ■ CLIENT PROFILE

Biobest Laboratories Ltd is a specialist veterinary virology, serology and DNA diagnostics company. There are three main strands to Biobest's wide-ranging business: Biobest Diagnostics, which provides testing services for a wide range of animal species; Biobest Herdcare, a cattle health scheme; and Biobest Research, which supplies specialist contract research and laboratory support services in infectious diseases and cell culture.

Biobest has an impressively diverse customer base. Users of its services range from a veterinary practice checking a single animal for infectious disease, to a farmer testing a large herd or a major pharmaceutical company requiring help to complete a research study.

Biobest started trading in 1995. Since then, the company's sustained growth has been fostered through a combination of academic and technical expertise and an enterprising approach to business. Today, the business employs 37 people and has a turnover of £2.1 million. Biobest operates from purpose-built facilities at the Edinburgh Technopole, The University of Edinburgh's world-class science and technology park.

## ■ THE CHALLENGE

Since the early days of company formation, Biobest had used Sage 50 Accounts to manage its business finances. This proved a good work-horse and had stood the test of time. However, over the years, business growth put increased pressure on the system.

According to David Ferrier, Finance Manager at Biobest, "We'd pushed Sage 50 Accounts beyond the limit and it had done very well to cope for so long. But by 2008, the system had begun to strain under the weight of exponentially increasing transaction volumes. The problems of lengthening response times, growing instability and data corruption became more and more pressing."

## ■ THE SOLUTION

Having received good service from Sage 50 Accounts and looking for a similarly tried and tested solution, Biobest turned to Sage for advice. This led to the involvement of Sage Business Partner Pinnacle, who undertook an exploration of how best to resolve the immediate issues and accommodate Biobest's future requirements.

As a result, plans were put in place for an upgrade to Sage 200 Commercial, part of the Sage 200 suite, with the migration going ahead during the summer of 2008.

## ■ THE BENEFITS

Today, Biobest has a much faster system that can easily handle larger numbers of transactions. The migration also presented the perfect opportunity for integrating Biobest's IT systems more closely.

David explains, "In addition to our core requirement for a more powerful system, we wanted to eliminate the 'bridging software' between our laboratory testing system and finance software. We had a good response from Pinnacle, who embarked on all the necessary preparatory work to link the two systems directly."

Previously, files had to be imported from the laboratory system in a format that could be accepted by Sage 50 Accounts with each line then being selected manually in order to bill customers for the correct amount. In some cases, testing a large herd, for example, a Biobest invoice may cover many individual items, and so consequent delays in invoicing had an obvious knock-on effect on profitability.

Now, with a SQL database in place, it is easier and quicker to import data directly. David quantifies the impact on Biobest's billing processes: "By eliminating this extra step for us, Pinnacle has cut the time taken to produce our invoices considerably, from a three or four-day exercise to just one day, which is critical in this day and age. We can make more productive use of the time we're saving on reducing manual processes, too."

The solution has created other major efficiencies. The finance team at Biobest had previously taken on responsibility for a sister company, Integrin Advanced Biosystems, which has a special focus on marine biotoxins and microbiology. They used to have to run two separate versions of Sage 50 Accounts, which involved recovering from a set of backup data each time it was necessary to switch between companies; this requirement has since been eliminated by Sage 200's multi-company functionality.

Fixed asset software is also tightly integrated. This helps to save valuable time by automating many of the routine but important administrative tasks required to manage the company's assets.

Reassuringly for a company where turnover continues to increase, Sage 200 gives Biobest ample room to grow over the next five years. David recognises that opportunities remain to exploit the system more fully: "It's only once a system is in use every day that you begin to realise its full potential. At present, we're still scratching the surface. Still, it's good to know that the functionality will be there when the business need arises."

## ■ THE FUTURE

One likely future project will be activating the customer relationship management module within Sage 200. Business development teams will be provided with access to a single unified record of the customer and their buying history with the company.

"Over time, we have accumulated a lot of information held in different databases. It will be very helpful to draw them together and integrate important information into a shared 360-degree view of the customer and our business," says David.

Biobest takes great pride in providing excellent service and, while this development will undoubtedly increase efficiency by saving time on data entry, it will also improve customer service by providing users with accurate, up-to-date information on the customer's requirements and preferences.

David praises Pinnacle's continued support, both in helping Biobest to use the system effectively day to day and in planning for the future: "From the initial scoping meeting to the present day, we've always found the Pinnacle team extremely helpful. We still meet to discuss our changing requirements and how Sage 200 can fulfil them."

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*David Ferrier, Finance Manager,  
Biobest Laboratories Ltd*

## ■ SOLUTION OVERVIEW:

- A system that improves cash flow by dramatically shortening invoice production times
- Increased efficiency by eliminating time-consuming manual processes
- Room to grow over the next five years, in transaction volumes and functionality
- Expert planning, implementation and support from Sage Business Partner Pinnacle

## ■ ABOUT PINNACLE

Pinnacle Computing is a Sage business partner providing the full range of Sage Accounting, ERP & CRM solutions. Pinnacle Computing is based throughout the UK & Ireland with offices in Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow, Hull, Maidstone, Nottingham, Portsmouth, Warrington and Worcester. Sage is a global provider of end-to-end business management applications for mid-sized businesses. Look to Sage for fully integrated software that delivers high performance, advanced functionality, cross-product integration and unmatched freedom of choice. Integrating powerful front-office web and wireless capabilities with back-office accounting and operations. Sage provides companies with the solutions they need to enhance competitive advantage and increase profitability.

### Talk to us!

t: UK: 0845 120 0064 / ROI: 01 419 8990

e: [sage@pinnacle-online.com](mailto:sage@pinnacle-online.com)

w: [www.pinnacle-online.com](http://www.pinnacle-online.com)

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