

CASE STUDY

SAGE 200

► BINN GROUP

Sage Business Partner



WITH PINNACLE SUPPORT, SAGE 200 HELPS BINN GROUP ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS GROWTH



ABOUT BINN GROUP

Binn Group began life over twenty years ago as a land diversification project for a farming business. Today it remains a family business but has evolved beyond the original landfill site provision and skip hire business to become Scotland's largest independent provider of integrated recycling and waste management services. The original farm remains one of the company's three sites.

The group directly employs more than 120 people, delivering services ranging from supplying and emptying skips, to restoring event and festival sites to pristine condition, to safely handling industrial and trade waste to supplying a fertiliser derived from anaerobic digestion of food waste.

The business is on a mission to drive waste management forward towards a more sustainable, environmentally friendly future, replacing landfill with recycling wherever possible.





THE CHALLENGE

The restructuring of Binn Skips Ltd and Binn Waste Management Ltd into Binn Group in 2014 was a watershed in the group's use of business IT systems.

Up to that point, accounts were run on a Sage Accounts 50 package. It was clear that the new group would need a much more powerful system to support the business going forward, one that could report on subsidiary companies and also perform group-wide consolidation.

Group Finance Manager Ruth Fraser had overseen a similar move once before and set her sights on Sage 200: **"Business growth is exciting but we have to ensure it is sustainable. We felt Sage 200 would give us the necessary tight financial control."**

Ruth's experience of working with Pinnacle on the Sage 200 implementation in her previous company made them an obvious choice of Sage Partner to manage what would be a major undertaking.

She comments, **"Our selection of Pinnacle was a no-brainer. We did, of course, benchmark what they could offer us against other providers on the market, but I could be confident that they would make the whole process of migrating to Sage 200 as smooth as possible, with minimal disruption to the business."**

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A MAJOR TRANSITION

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ANALYSING THE BUSINESS FROM THE GROUND UP

Ruth's expectations of a smooth migration were borne out and the Sage 200 system went live in 2015. She has subsequently gained the greater financial control that was the main trigger for the move. In addition, through automation and efficiencies on Sage 200, the size of the finance team has not grown significantly while the business has grown and changed beyond recognition.

As was the plan, the core Sage 200 system generates in-depth information that enables greater insight into the business at a deeper, granular level. Each 'cost centre' on the system represents a type of vehicle, such as a skip, a RoRo (roll-on/roll-off) or a refuse collection vehicle. A 'department' is an individual vehicle, of which the company owns over fifty, with its associated income and expenditure.

Ruth explains, **"Using Pinnacle Data Analytics, I can drill down to analyse the profitability on each vehicle and interrogate the data. If it isn't bringing in the expected return, this raises questions. What are the numbers telling us? Is the route planning wrong? Are collections in the area falling? Should we increase our sales efforts and/or amend our pricing structure?"**

Ruth says that having this ability to analyse the business makes her own role rewarding. **"Being able to drill down to the nitty-gritty takes financial management beyond number-crunching – and makes the job more interesting, too."**



ADD-ONS FOR ADDED VALUE

Ruth gives three examples from Pinnacle's range of complementary products that have added value to the system. First, electronic document management:

"The integration of a Sicon product for document management was a revelation. It's very cheap, yet it's changed our lives! There's no need to go rifling through filing-cabinets for a file. Everyone has a desktop scanner and captures the information in electronic format. We can give our auditors read only access to Sage, rather than collating a pile of paper documents for them to work through."

Binn Group recycles enough paper to print 60 million newspapers every year and is committed to environmentally friendly practices within its own business. Working electronically helps to reduce paper consumption and the related costs of managing paper records.

Next, Ruth highlights how Sicon WAP for authorisation over the web, has accelerated the purchase order process when integrated with Sage 200. **"Managers working remotely out in the business can enter their purchase orders anywhere with web access. Purchase orders are then approved at that stage, saving delays further down the line."**

The document management system works well with Sicon WAP in making electronic copies available to the person authorising the expenditure: **"The end-to-end purchasing process has become much more streamlined – especially as we used to have to pay by cheque on our old system, but are now on Bacs with Sage 200."**

Finally, the Codis Accelerator Excel add-on validates and updates data to Sage 200 with speed and accuracy. Ruth comments, **"It helped immensely when we wanted to do a mass update of our sales ledger accounts. We have around 2,000 customers and our sales commission structure is quite complex. Accelerator reduced the time and effort to load it into Sage, rather than having to key in the information."**



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KEEPING THE SYSTEM ALIGNED WITH THE BUSINESS

Pinnacle continues to support the company as it undergoes further expansion in response to the increasing national focus on the waste management sector. In addition to helping to shape the group's Sage 200 strategy as the business and its processes change, Pinnacle also provides day-to-day technical support.

As she expected in selecting Pinnacle, Ruth has been very pleased with the consistently high standard of support: **"It works remarkably well. They respond swiftly and any issues are resolved quickly."**

Ruth says, **"I have only good things to say about Pinnacle and their contribution. We are constantly looking to evolve and Pinnacle helps us to do things better. Our Group Finance Director is keen for us to keep the system up to date and, with Pinnacle's support, we're now looking forward to having the newest release of Sage 200 in place and live for the next financial year."**

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