



Unipower makes short work of it...

Who are Unipower Solutions?

Unipower are specialists in eCommerce solutions for major retailers. The company was founded in 1990 and is headquartered in the UK, with offices in the USA and Europe. Unipower has with an impressive client list that is a 'who's who' of major retailers, financial institutions and industrial giants.

The mission

- Reduce the time to produce monthly time and material invoices
- Conveniently provide project and business managers with customer and employee based profitability analysis and other business based reporting

The solution

Implement time recording, project management and reporting software from Timewatch plc.

The results

- It took less than four days to install the software and get nearly 50 people using the system
- Monthly invoicing reduced from taking up to two weeks to two days - within the first month of use

Customer Summary

"We needed to implement a solution quickly. I was given two days to plan and two days to implement the system and Timewatch provided us with installation, system setup and configuration assistance. The software was loaded on the server on the Friday, and by the following Wednesday lunchtime it was rolled out to all staff and they were recording time."

Iain McKenna, Project Manager, Unipower Solutions

TIMEWATCH CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Unipower Solutions was founded in 1990 and is headquartered in the UK, with offices in the USA and Europe. It specializes in enabling eCommerce solutions for major retailers. Unipower's client list is a 'who's who' of major supermarkets, financial institutions and industrial giants.

Unipower's solution has three elements: software license, professional services and support. Professional services projects are typically undertaken on a time and materials basis. In order to invoice clients correctly it is important to have accurate recording of the time spent on projects. This is complicated, as there are usually at least twelve projects active at any one time. A project may last from 6 weeks to several years and staff may be involved in several projects at any one time.

Software licenses and support is usually provided at a fixed price. Recording time spent on support illustrates whether the company is making a profit on its provision of this. Customers place different levels of demand on support services and the ability to identify those that are taking excessive time can help to identify a problem.

Pain

Unipower's time recording system required staff to log time into a database via their desktop systems. Remote entry was not available. The system had limited capacity for checking data. It could not, for example, ascertain whether an entry was a valid activity in an active project. The result was that project management and finance staff spent a significant time at the end of each month sorting out the invoicing. The process of correcting the time sheets was iterative and invoices were often issued two weeks into the following month.

Project managers were also keen to use the time information to provide a variety of project reports, but because a single report could take in excess of 30 minutes to produce they often had to rely on skeletal information when making decisions.

Iain McKenna, Project Manager, Unipower takes up the story, "There was agreement between the finance department and the project managers about the need to get an effective time recording system. Frankly, our technical staff ridiculed some of the systems we looked at. These systems were not designed for the Internet age. It was at this point that I was asked to identify a suitable system. It had to be easy to use, flexible enough to allow for setting up differing cost models and provide good reporting. We also wanted to link it with Microsoft Project. Following a search using the web, I identified **time®** from Timewatch."

Unipower took advantage of the evaluation program provided by Timewatch, downloaded the software and went through the examples and tutorials. As Iain McKenna explained, "Learning something new is always challenging, yet this was the least painful evaluation I have ever undertaken. The documentation was what you expect and anyway the software was intuitive to use." The trial provided the opportunity to show the system to other project managers and to finance and administration staff. All felt that **time®** was a good choice.

According to Iain McKenna, the financial justification was clear-cut. "It was a 'no brainer', the gains obtained from being able to invoice quickly at the end of each month would more than justify the cost of the system. The Unipower board decided to go ahead and implement a 50 employee **time®** system, however they had one condition,...

they wanted the savings immediately. This meant that we needed to fully implement the system in under a month."

Iain McKenna worked quickly. "I had two days to plan and two days to implement. Timewatch provided one day assistance with the system set-up and a half-day of support to load the system onto the server. It was loaded on the server on the Friday and by the Wednesday lunchtime it was rolled out to all staff and they were recording time."

By the end of the month, Unipower undertook its first invoicing based on **time®**. What used to take over two weeks was completed within 2 days.

"Everybody in Unipower, from the directors down, is using **time®**. We are now integrating with Microsoft Project and configuring reporting to achieve the full benefits of using the system." Unipower also has plans to use other Timewatch products for scheduling and web based data entry.

For Iain McKenna one of the best things in the whole exercise was when one of the professional service staff said, "I like this timesheet system, it does what it says on the box, it works".



Product Summary

Unipower Solutions implemented a **time®** Business Solution running on SQL Server, with timesheet entry via **personaltime™**, MS-Project integration via **projecttime™** and reporting with **reporttime™**.