

Exchequer Software supports CPA drive for excellence

The Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) in Ireland is one of the main Irish accountancy bodies, with over 4,600 members and students working in practice and in management, both in Ireland and globally.

From its headquarters at the heart of Dublin, the CPA offers wide ranging support to members, students and non-members, and represents their interests with Government bodies. Its extensive services include an examinations framework, technical information and timely updates, while its continuing education programme keeps members at the leading edge of the profession with online courses, regular training days and conferences across the country and the UK.



John Mc Carthy IT Director and Eamonn Siggins
Chief Executive Officer CPA

A progressive approach to technology

CPA regards innovative service delivery as one of its core values. To provide optimum service to its members and to exemplify best practice, CPA has adopted a very forward-looking strategy in its use of technology. As part of an organisation-wide review of systems in 2004, CPA went out to market to replace its former accounting solution and bespoke software.



As well as any technical considerations, the solution provider needed to empathise with CPA's aims. Chief Executive Eamonn Siggins explains, "We were about to embark on maximising our use of technology to make efficiencies and enhance delivery of services to members. So, it was important to us to have the assurance that the solution would be provided by a supplier with a genuine interest in our work; the ability to involve themselves with our current and future business; and the readiness to provide a high standard of support for innovation in our systems."

Jargon-free training wins hearts and minds

Having clearly identified its requirements and investigated a number of solutions, CPA selected Exchequer Enterprise as an affordable, cost-effective solution, both at the point of entry and in terms of long-term savings and efficiencies. As IT Director John McCarthy recalls, "*It offered very good functionality, matching the way our organisation operates and **reducing the need for bespoke development, which would save costs and make it easier to maintain.** We also liked the fact that it came from a **significant player in the market**, as Exchequer Software is the fastest growing mid-range software house in Ireland.*"

CPA benefited from a full implementation, with consultancy, training and maintenance. John remembers the implementation as being 'really quite painless', with Exchequer Software providing valuable support, for example in migrating data to the new solution.

John also praises the work of the training team, saying, ***"Being trained in plain English really helped to win staff over to this major change. The training consultants also increased acceptability among our users by highlighting how the technology would make life easier for staff and save time right from the outset."***

End-to-end support for CPA and its members

Today, some months on, Exchequer is proving a reliable workhorse in managing members' accounts; processing sales for subscriptions, event bookings, examination fees and publications; and controlling CPA's own business accounting processes.

CPA operates in a highly competitive environment and must combine quality client service with value for money. Eamonn comments, ***"Our rapid growth demonstrates our ability to thrive in this climate but competition does bring pressure to operate as cost-effectively as possible. We do not have a large workforce and efficiency is a prime driver. So, a capability such as being able to email invoices from Exchequer assists enormously in improving productivity and helping us to achieve a 'paperless office'."***

Further describing the impact on business management within CPA, John says, ***"Tight accounting control, with easy access to real-time business information, is paramount and we must have absolute confidence in our IT solution – which we now do."***

In looking for efficiencies, CPA is replacing paper at every opportunity, and Exchequer Enterprise is playing a major part in this trend. In fact, its members are a very IT-savvy audience and electronic services chime with their expectations – 90% have expressed a preference for email communication and the CPA on-line bulletin has proved highly popular.

Proactive support impresses

CPA has been impressed by the outstanding service it has received over the past few months. John notes, "It's not just about solving problems; I can cite many examples of where the Exchequer Software consultants have contacted us to ensure we avoid a problem. Our experience of their admirable support and genuine interest in our work makes us view Exchequer Software as our long-term business partner."