

Blenheim Palace is a World Heritage Site, the residence of the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough and the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. As well as attracting 600,000 visitors a year to the house and gardens, its business interests also include rental and commercial properties, fishing and farming and producing its own brand of bottled natural mineral water.

Their challenge

Blenheim Palace has to manage a diverse range of businesses that produce the income needed to maintain the Palace and its surrounding 2,000 acres of parkland. Despite Blenheim Palace and Park being one of the first World Heritage Sites designated in the UK, it is the only one that does not attract any form of public or Heritage Lottery Fund funding, this is due to it effectively being in private ownership. With property management, construction and farming as well as a visitor attraction, the company deals with 8 different VAT registrations, CIS construction industry regulations and payroll compliance for its 100 permanent and 250 seasonal staff.

Their challenge is to control all their financial information with a small financial team and make sure they comply with a multitude of regulations.

Our solution

Sage Line 500 underpins all the activity of Blenheim Palace, as Head of Finance, Frank Warn explains: "We only have five people in the financial department providing all the information in a timely and accurate manner. The reason we can do this is because Sage Line 500 is a comprehensive system and provides the control that we need."

Sage Business Partner, Datel, provided Blenheim Palace with a web entry system that helps them keep track of the number of hours that their seasonal staff work. Information entered at the palace is picked up over the web by the estate office. The time and resource saving means they've been able to reduce the number of staff in the financial department.

"Blenheim Palace has been here for over 300 years, so we've got a great history, but we're developing for the future."

Frank Warn, Head of Finance

The future

The next project will integrate Direct Debit as a way of collecting rents from various properties, taking advantage of software that adapts and grows with their business. Head of Finance, Frank Warn says; "We have been using Sage for 10 years. What we like is the ability to add on different systems to provide more efficiency and ease of control to get information in and out.

Diverse business

Blenheim Palace uses Sage Line 500 to manage its businesses including a World Heritage visitor attraction, commercial property, farming, and bottled water.



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