



National Army Museum

www.national-army-museum.ac.uk



At A Glance:

- **Company:** National Army Museum
- **Location:** Chelsea, London (UK)
- **Industry:** Government; Non Profit
- **Challenges:**
 - Create an e-commerce solution
 - Integrate with the Mac environment
 - Integrate entire business with e-commerce and EPOS
- **Software switched from:**
 - Astra Accounts and Filemaker database
- **Other software considered:**
 - Sage
 - Access Accounts
 - Microsoft Dynamics GP (formerly Great Plains)
- **Results with NetSuite:**
 - Established a webstore
 - Real-time integration of stock levels between shop and webstore
 - Faster approvals for purchase orders inline with NAO guidelines.
 - More comprehensive customer data
- **NetSuite Partner:**
 - BlueBridge One Business Solutions Limited - www.bluebridgeone.com

“NetSuite’s e-commerce capability has enabled us to capture more comprehensive data on our customers, which means we can personalise our marketing more easily and accurately. Before NetSuite, we didn’t have the facility to collect this vital data.”

*— Phil Sharp, Systems/Project Manager
National Army Museum*

The Results:

Implementing NetSuite has not only enabled the National Army Museum to establish a significant online presence in the form of its new NetSuite Web store but, because of NetSuite’s cross-platform capabilities, it also meant the charity didn’t have to migrate from its Mac environment to PCs, which would have had prohibitive cost implications.

The full NetSuite application enables integration between the accounting function and the onsite shop in relation to stock levels and marketing campaigns and, in the near future, to accurate visitor figures. It also allowed the National Army Museum to create an e-commerce environment which they didn’t have before.

“We now have a fully integrated electronic point-of-sales (EPOS) solution and, through NetSuite, were able to create a Web store which updates our inventory stock supplied from the shop in real-time,” explains Phil Sharp, Systems/Project Manager for the National Army Museum.

The Challenges:

The National Army Museum had a static website with no e-commerce capabilities. It has always offered its exhibitions, galleries and a public events programme to the public free of charge but a business review indicated that an online presence would be vastly enhanced by a Web store.

The Museum had been using Astra Accounts as its accounting package but an upgrade was needed which would have been costly and didn’t provide the flexibility and cross-platform capabilities that were required for their Mac environment.

Participation at external events also proved difficult for the accounting system as all transactions had to be handled manually. In order to sell its collections of paintings, books, clothing, replica medals and posters, staff would have to take a float to these events, record transactions manually and do the same when they returned to the office. So an EPOS system which could integrate flexibly in real-time with NetSuite was vital.

“In essence, we needed something that would allow us to integrate all our business processes with an EPOS and an e-commerce solution,” says Phil Sharp.

“I investigated products from Sage, Microsoft and Oracle but none of them had the cross platform capabilities, the flexibility and the low maintenance I was looking for. NetSuite’s cross-browser functionality and the ability to integrate with our marketing database to track campaigns were additional attractions.”



“Real-time integration between our physical shop and the web-store assists in better managing inventory levels.”

*— Phil Sharp
Systems/Project Manager
National Army Museum*

“Because NetSuite is browser-based and works within the Mac environment, I didn’t have to install PCs—this would have been essential with any other solution,” Phil Sharp comments.

The Solution:

The e-commerce functionality had to transform a static website into a dynamic, database-driven e-commerce portal, tying together online customer acquisition efforts with back-office order fulfilment. For this, BlueBridge One recommended NetSuite together with its Advanced Site Builder module.

Tight EPOS integration to NetSuite was a key requirement. BlueBridge One evaluated a number of different EPOS options before proposing Viridian Sun’s Open Source solution. The company also provides all the hardware and delivers ongoing maintenance to the software, using the specific Open Source Code.

“The Open Source Code enables us to have a flexible system to integrate with NetSuite,” explains Phil Sharp.

The Museum has two EPOS units, one of which was predominantly purchased for use at outside events. Each unit consists of a 15” touch screen unit, a cash drawer, a thermal printer, a customer display and a barcode scanner. It works offline at the event and once staff return to the office, they then link it up to the network and then the data is synchronised (including price lists, sales transactions and stock quantities) with NetSuite.

Barcode labels had to be printed manually and were restricted in terms of size of labelling— NetSuite provides much more flexibility and enables staff to print barcodes with transaction numbers on sales orders, packing slips and invoices.

BlueBridge One implemented and completed the project in just under three months and the new website now has 30,000 hits every month. Phil Sharp says he hopes to grow this to keep in line with the two million hits the main website receives monthly once a marketing campaign is under way.

Many of the National Army Museum’s 43 users were used to paper-based transactions so training undertaken by BlueBridge One, especially on the accounting side, was an important element of the overall project, as was training in the electronic ordering system, also built into NetSuite, enabling electronic approval for purchase orders in particular.

“The single view of the real-time financial position of all our departments that we now have is excellent and is especially useful to senior management. The project reporting facility helps immensely with budgeting, and the real-time integration between our physical shop and the Web store assists with managing inventory levels,” says Phil Sharp.

“NetSuite has also enabled much easier co-ordination between our shop and the website when it comes to customers buying online tickets for our lectures, while Viridian Sun is building a visitor monitoring system into our tills so our front-of-house staff will be able to generate reports on accurate visitor figures.”

“The best thing about using NetSuite is that it can be accessed anywhere—our managers can log in remotely to sign off orders. This has helped to get rid of the paper trail and has also speeded up the approval process.”

