

86% OF UK COMPANIES REGARD LEGACY SYSTEMS AS CRITICAL TO CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY

Submitted by: Pleon
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Survey Highlights Ongoing Importance of Legacy Systems for UK Industry Growth

London, May 10, 2004 - New research released today underlines the ongoing importance of legacy systems for UK organisations, especially in attracting and retaining customers. The survey found that 86 per cent of UK companies view legacy systems as critical to customer service delivery, whilst over two thirds (69 per cent) see the value of integrating legacy systems with customer service applications. According to WRQ, the integration software company that commissioned the research, any business strategy that involves bypassing legacy systems is potentially harmful to a company's relationship with its customers and its overall reputation.

Legacy applications and data are those that have been inherited from languages, platforms and techniques used before the introduction of current technology. As such, these systems represent the lifeblood of a company and many have been in existence for more than 20 years.

"In today's competitive market, how a business treats its customers can directly impact its reputation and brand success, and for an organisation not to treat this as a priority is sheer madness," said Bob Stream, head of WRQ UK. "Legacy systems hold a great deal of critical business information, including customer details, so it's essential for companies to be able to unlock this data quickly and easily. With the right strategy and software this information can be integrated with newer applications, enabling a company to build its business for the future without having to spend out on new IT infrastructure."

The survey also examined the barriers to integrating legacy systems with business applications. It found the myth prevails that legacy system management is expensive, with nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of respondents regarding cost as a preventative factor. Lack of in-house expertise was cited by one third (34 per cent) and lack of buy-in from management by one quarter (25 per cent). Respondents were given the opportunity to name several barriers and WRQ is concerned by the findings, believing that education is required to illustrate the cost-effectiveness and business value of integrating legacy systems.

"Unfortunately, legacy systems have unfairly earned a reputation for being inflexible and expensive, as well as something best left to the 'techies' - but in reality the complete opposite is true," said Bob Stream. "The business case for integrating legacy systems is actually very strong, as it can open up many new opportunities for companies without incurring huge expense or the need for specialist skills. Businesses need to be aware that competitive tools such as customer service excellence are largely dependent on legacy systems, so to ignore them is a very dangerous strategy."

Legacy systems can and should be tied to everything from CRM front-end applications to Web services, and software such as the WRQ product portfolio is available to make it a reality. By identifying existing business processes, turning them into reusable components and storing them in a repository that can be accessed as required, organisations can change elements of their business within a matter of minutes, rather than weeks or months. This is a critical requirement for organisations dealing with the

ever-changing and 24/7 demands of customers today.

WRQ also announced today the worldwide availability of the latest release of WRQ Reflection, it's highly advanced and quality products for Windows, web and PC X server host access. The new and enhanced features of Reflection 12.0 address today's primary business and IT requirements, including centralised IT management, advanced security, customisation, technology interoperability and user productivity. Please go to <http://www.brodeurnewsroom.com/public/news.asp> for more information

Summary of key survey findings:

86% of UK businesses regard legacy systems as critical to customer service delivery
(Yes = 86%, No = 10%, Don't know = 3%)

53% of UK businesses have integrated their legacy systems with customer service applications
(Yes = 53%, No = 28%, Plan to integrate all systems in the near future = 16%, Don't know = 4%)

Barriers to integrating legacy systems:

Too expensive = 63%

Lack of in-house expertise = 34%

Lack of buy-in from management = 25%

Limited in-house staff numbers = 23%

No barriers = 14%

Security concerns = 9%

Don't know = 4%

Other = 7%

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About the survey

This survey was conducted for WRQ in April 2004 by market research firm, Vanson Bourne. The survey results were based on 100 interviews with IT directors in companies based in the UK.

About WRQ

WRQ® builds software for accessing and integrating legacy applications. WRQ Reflection® software provides a broad range of terminal-emulation and PC X server solutions. WRQ Verastream® integration server provides a single platform for reusing legacy logic and data in web applications, CRM applications, or portals. Our products help companies get the most from their hosts today as they advance their long-term IT strategy.

Established in 1981, WRQ is one of the largest privately held software companies in the U.S. It has over six million users worldwide and the highest customer-support rating in the industry. Four out of five Fortune 500 companies rely on WRQ daily. Learn more at www.wrq.com.

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