

FIRED EARTH INTERIORS SETS ITS STORE ON THE PERFECT TRANSACTION

Submitted by: Pleon

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... exclusive home interiors company selects Strategix OneOffice to deliver inspirational retailing

Fired Earth Interiors, the UK's leading retailer of inspirational interiors, known for its exclusive handcrafted products for the home, is to use software from Strategix to deliver the 'perfect transaction'. This £500,000 system upgrade is intended to deliver proactive, personalised and consistent customer service, from every area of the business. Strategix OneOffice will give all of Fired Earth's Interiors employees a consistent and comprehensive view of every customer order to meet and exceed the heightened expectations of consumers today.

Beverley Nielsen, managing director, Fired Earth Interiors, said: "Today's customers are both well-informed and understandably demanding. They want great choice, quality and inspiration, combined with a highly personal service. We are looking for a technology solution offering the best of both worlds by linking traditional notions of service with innovation and choice. We are looking forward to our investment in the Strategix OneOffice solution as a means of supporting our values of quality, design and service - a complete interiors package to deliver all the elements for an inspirational home.

Part of the Aga FoodService Group, Fired Earth Interiors provides unique and stylish products for the home and prides itself on its range of exclusive hand-crafted items, such as tiles, paint, flooring, fabrics, bathrooms and furniture. It is a diverse offering retailed through 60 showrooms in the UK and supplied by a network of suppliers from 26 countries. Fired Earth Interiors delivers around 1600 orders a week and has doubled its turnover and stores over the past 5 years.

The company needs to deliver highly personalised, responsive and accurate customer service that matches the quality of its products. This requires up-to-the-minute details on customers and products, which is key in the company's drive towards a new, improved customer experience. As a result, Fired Earth Interiors has chosen Strategix OneOffice to integrate its warehouse/logistics, supplier management, finance, point-of-sale and order processing into a single streamlined solution. This, coupled with Fired Earth Interior's introduction of inspirational stores and new services such as home design consultancy, is intended to ensure the company will deliver the 'perfect transaction' to its customers, every time.

Peter Lusty, chief executive of Strategix, said: "Fired Earth Interiors has always believed that customers must come first and in introducing these new IT systems customers are placed firmly at the centre of its operations. It is no longer adequate for a company to rely on information from their customers in order to process a transaction: instead, that intelligence needs to reside inside an organisation and be readily accessible to all customer-facing staff. All too often IT systems are a constraint, not an enabler. OneOffice enables companies to deliver what customers want, when they want it. We're delighted to be working with Fired Earth Interiors on their perfect transaction and look forward to jointly setting new benchmarks for service delivery in the UK."

The new software solution will boost the productivity and effectiveness of all Fired Earth Interiors staff by giving them real-time access to stock information, customer details and order status. Using the innovative workflow engine and alerting system in OneOffice, relevant information will be delivered to users in a timely and context-sensitive manner, enabling them to maximise sales opportunities, speed up

the retail process and increase customer satisfaction. With all staff having access to this same information, customers will experience the same level of service no matter who they are dealing with at Fired Earth Interiors.

This complete and accurate view of each of its customers will enable Fired Earth Interiors to offer new products to them in the most appropriate way, as well as evaluate the success of promotional campaigns and particular product lines. Rather than rely on IT staff to produce operational and management information, OneOffice will enable senior management to easily extract relevant information and create reports, without needing to be technical experts.

By implementing OneOffice, Fired Earth Interiors also aims to make its warehouse more efficient and improve its returns management process. This will enhance customer service through more timely shipments and improved visibility of available stock, as well as faster and more accurate handling of product returns via an automated system. In turn, this will improve Fired Earth Interiors overall business efficiency and drive its ambition to become the UK's most inspirational retailer.

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About OneOffice

OneOffice is a new generation of supply chain software that combines operations, finance, customer and event management in one innovative system. This seamless approach maintains a 360° real-time view of an organisation, providing information as important events occur. Human intervention is automatically sought at critical junctures or if conditions unexpectedly change. This enables businesses to respond quickly and make informed decisions.

OneOffice has a component-based design, enabling businesses to select a solution that is right for them using a single package. The OneOffice product suite includes:

- Retail Management to maximise store throughput and ensure that every customer enjoys 'the perfect transaction'
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to manage promotions and improve customer satisfaction
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) to streamline back office operations
- Supply Chain Event Management (SCEM) to detect and respond to critical events inside and outside the business
- Supply Chain Management (SCM) to reduce costs and improve customer service by automating processes with suppliers

The benefits of the OneOffice approach are many, including:

- Enhanced business efficiency, with software designed to meet the unique requirements of retail, service and distribution businesses
- Outstanding service levels, by ensuring that every business interaction is valuable for both parties
- Improved responsiveness and SLAs, by monitoring activities in real time and detecting opportunities and problems as they happen
- Feedback on business events and KPIs, using dashboards to deliver summarised information in real

time

- Seamless front and back office, by creating a streamlined, low touch operation which - when conditions change - actively seeks human intervention
- Using one database and one intuitive user interface to avoid the significant cost and risk of integrating different vendors' software products into a hybrid system

For more information about OneOffice, please go to www.OneOffice.is.it

About Strategix

Strategix is a leading European software house, dedicated to the development and rapid deployment of supply chain software. We focus on the wholesale and retail distribution, logistics and service sectors where our software maximizes supply chain efficiency and accelerates customer service. Our systems are designed for reliability, availability and performance. Our customers enjoy a rapid return on their investment and genuine competitive advantage.

Focused on key growth sectors, which range from high technology to household and building products, Strategix numbers businesses such as, Dimension Data, Eurodis plc, Fired Earth, Fuller Smith and Turner, London Underground, Midwich, Routeco plc and Virgin Mobile among its customers.

About Fired Earth Interiors

Fired Earth Interiors is one of the leading high quality interiors retailers, with over 65 showrooms throughout the UK and across Europe and Asia. Following acquisition by the Aga Foodservice Group in 2003, Fired Earth Interiors has continued to expand, opening 3 more showrooms so far this year. Though best known for its tile collections Fired Earth Interiors range of products for the home has grown to include fabrics, paint, natural flooring, wood flooring, and bathrooms.

In celebration of their 20th anniversary in 2004, Fired Earth Interiors have drawn inspiration from their interiors ranges and have established the Elemental Arts Project. The project encompasses a wide range of activities and has included fifteen established artists creating works using the Fired Earth paint range, a collection of paintings which forms the basis of an exhibition currently touring Fired Earth Interiors UK showrooms.

For more details on Fired Earth Interiors or the Elemental Arts Exhibition visit www.firedearth.com, or contact the Fired Earth Interiors Press Office:

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PHOTOGRAPHY OF RETAIL OUTLETS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST