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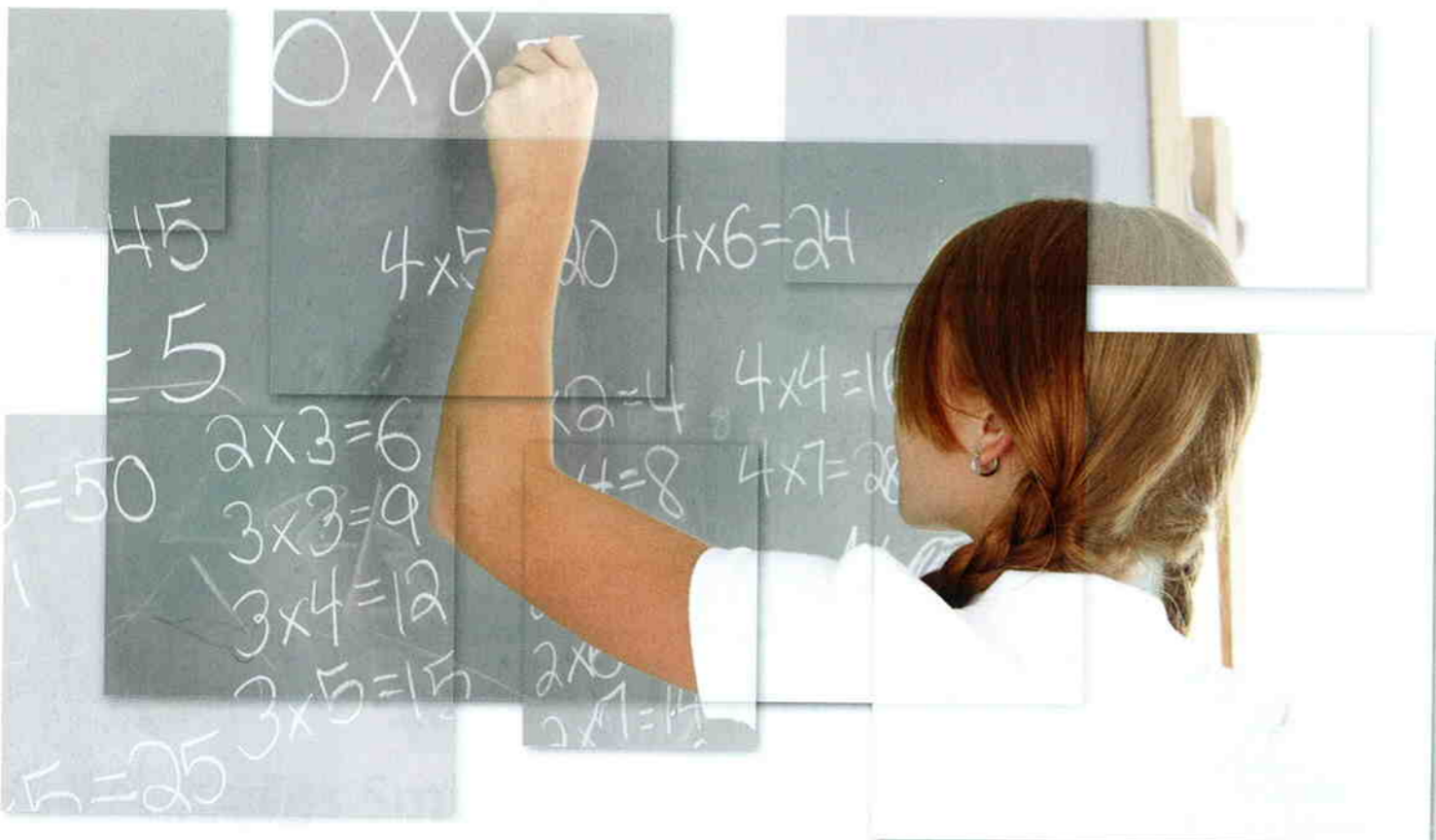
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Catholic Education Office Overhauls Business Systems To Boost Efficiency

With Greentree and Star Business Solutions, the Melbourne agency is able to be much more responsive to its schooling partners...

Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne represents the fourth largest education system in Australia, operating in the third largest Catholic diocese in the world.

The Catholic Education Office in Melbourne works in partnership with Catholic schools to provide a wide range of advice and services for schools, teachers and members of the Catholic education community.

Time For An Overhaul

After 21 years of operating on the same financial system, the Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM) made the decision to overhaul its AS400 accounting and business system.

Turning over \$1.2 billion per annum, the Melbourne-based organisation began with the roll-out of the Greentree Financial Management suite.

The CEOM processes about 25,000 transactions per annum with schools across Victoria and needed

up-to-date systems in place to ensure these processes flowed efficiently.

"Before the roll out, we realised that many of our existing financial modules were inflexible and that we needed to change them," says CEOM chief finance officer David Wilkes.

"The prime driver for the Greentree implementation is our schools as the system will enable us to keep them continually informed of the current status of transactions between them and the CEOM online," Wilkes says.

"Having more electronically driven processes allows us to be much more responsive to schools."

The organisation began investigating options for new software suites last year.

This was followed by a rigorous tender process looking at a cross-section of small-to-medium enterprise programs to meet key needs such as:

- to boost and improve existing processes and effi-

I can see exactly what is going on in real-time and the ease of access to information is very valuable.

David Wilkes
chief finance officer

- ciencies through automated, real-time financial practices;
- to implement a flexible system capable of being customised for future growth and needs; and
- to access information seamlessly.

Flexibility Was Key

According to Wilkes, the CEOM needed a flexible system that could "talk" to their legacy database (CIS).

It also needed to be able to download existing data directly from the database in order to streamline processes, as well as pave the way for future upgrades and improvements in financial and information technology processes.

During the selection process, the organisation spoke to existing Greentree clients to get feedback about Greentree's products.

"We thought Greentree was a very simple, but robust package and we were very pleased with the people presenting it," Wilkes says.

"The other strength we saw was the one-source data entry which would reduce the number of data entries required for various applications across the CEOM. We looked at many different medium-sized packages, but were impressed with Greentree and its business partner, Star."

On Time And Within Budget

The first phase of the project was rolled out on time and within budget, and Wilkes credits the work of his accounting team and Star for the success of the implementation.

"The CEOM knew what was needed and we needed a package to take us to the next level," he says.

"Star has done that as they are qualified accountants and not purely information technology consultants, as such. They understand our requirements and can speak our language. And they were sensitive to the fact that we're a not-for-profit organisation."

Since the first phase roll out the CEOM has added additional Greentree modules to the core Financials including an automated purchasing system, eRequisitions and Payroll.

Early Benefits

Wilkes adds there are already visible benefits to using the new system.

"I can see exactly what is going on in real-time and the ease of access to information is very valuable," he says.

We're already able to create tailored management accounts and information that the CEOM will continue to refine and develop."



> Catholic Education Office Melbourne



Business Objective
 > Deployment of a new financial system with the flexibility to integrate with a legacy database in order to streamline processes, while also paving the way for future upgrades.

Solution
 > Greentree's Financial Management suite.

Business Benefits
 > Real-time visibility of financial data, ease of access to information, and ability to tailor management account reporting.



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