

CASE STUDY FEATURE
AVENDRIS SOLVES IT FOR WOLFSON

Over the past few years, Edinburgh-based Wolfson Microelectronics has achieved significant growth and business success across all of its global markets. By the spring of 2003 its ambitious business strategy was beginning to deliver ever more impressive results, but it was clear that the challenges still to come might require a step change in its IT capabilities.

The IT services at Wolfson were being stretched to cope with the rapid growth of the last few years, and as a robust IT environment was essential to Wolfson's future growth, the company recognised the need to change the way IT was managed. After an intensive selection process Wolfson chose Avendris Consulting Solutions to provide the support they needed. **George Elliott**, Wolfson's Chief Financial Officer takes up the story: "We knew IT was becoming more of a business critical issue. Our IT department had grown up with the company, but they were starting to face issues that were beyond the norm for a traditional IT function. The existing IT infrastructure was showing signs of strain as we grew, with ever increasing demands for high-reliability services from a highly skilled and global work-force. In addition, we had just selected a new enterprise resource planning package (ERP) to support our business, and we needed more experienced IT support in order to leverage the benefits that such a system could bring."

"We looked to the traditional IT consulting solutions providers, but recognised that they did not offer the pragmatic and cost effective solutions we needed. Avendris came with a different proposition. Not only did they have some of the most experienced IT professionals in Scotland, but they also provided a frame work

where we would see real business benefit delivered. It seemed a big promise to make, but the references from other clients were excellent and we chose to follow our instincts."

Avendris Consulting Solutions unique IT Managed Service provides solutions for 5 key areas of IT:

- highly experienced IT managers with the experience to manage internal and external relationships
- an approach to IT strategy development which ensures pragmatic, best of breed IT solutions are found for complex business issues
- infrastructure design and delivery programmes, which balance internal skills with those of proven 3rd party specialists and integrators
- the commercial skills and experience to negotiate with major IT suppliers and manage large scale change projects
- day to day management and development of internal IT staff which aims to minimise operational risk whilst increasing the technical and managerial skill base.

George Elliott continued: "As soon as we started working with Avendris we could feel the difference. We had a number of short term issues facing us and Avendris changed the management of these from a reactive, quick-fix, situation to one of planned and controlled change. Our business plans for 2004 also raised several issues which would have put many other consultancies off. Inside one year we wanted to implement an ERP solution, expand our regional operations, relocate the whole company from one side of Edinburgh to the other, double the number of employees *and* successfully IPO. Enough for anybody, but we also wanted to ensure the underlying IT infrastructure was capable of coping with our growth, and we knew that would involve a major refresh."

Iain Mackay picks out the key factors which influenced how Avendris approached this challenge: "Wolfson's IT environment supports three distinct functions, design and engineering, manufacturing control and standard business support systems. The resulting complex IT infrastructure needed to be flexible, resilient and easily managed."

"The key to any successful change management programme is to identify, understand and manage the detail and be prepared for the unexpected. Wolfson wanted to implement a number of major projects over a very short period of time! We devised a programme and divided it into a number of interrelated projects, which were then delivered almost weekly. Success and progress was easy to measure and any problems that arose could be resolved without affecting the overall programme."

Jim Reid, Wolfson's Chief Technical Officer and one of the company's founders, summarised what has been delivered: "Avendris devised a new IT strategy, infrastructure design and change management programme that encompassed all of our requirements, including the relocation and replacement of all of our core IT services. They also helped us to change the shape and skills-mix of our IT team. We successfully completed our IPO in October 2003, opened two new offices in South Korea and China and by March 2004, had moved all of our Edinburgh staff to a new Head Office. We were hugely helped in achieving all of this as a result of the business management team not being distracted by IT issues. I am also delighted to say that the programme was delivered to time and on budget! IT has now become an area where we feel confident that we have the best support and the

whole area has moved from being a potential problem to being a business enabler.”

Wolfson is now beginning to deliver on the next phase of its IT Strategy; exploiting the potential of its new infrastructure to support business expansion and deliver new IT services to improve business efficiency and effectiveness. Avendris continues to work with Wolfson to provide the IT management services which will ensure that it achieves its business objectives.

About Wolfson

Wolfson is a leading supplier of mixed signal semiconductors which are sold world wide for high volume digital consumer applications. The company's products are selected by the leading consumer electronic companies for a wide range of applications including hi-fi, home cinema, portable music players, digital cameras, flat screen TV's, DVD's, game consoles, multifunction printers and multimedia mobile phones.

The company is headquartered in Edinburgh, has a design office in Swindon and sales offices in Tokyo, Seoul, Taipei, Shenzhen, San Diego and Manchester.

Wolfson Microelectronics successfully floated on the London Stock Exchange in October 2003. Interim results, for the period ending June 30 June 2004, show that the company is growing fast with six consecutive half years of revenue and profit growth. H104 revenue increased 94% to \$56.9m (H1 2003, \$29.3m) and profit before tax increased by 123% to \$9.3m (H1 2003, \$4.2m).

About Avendris

Avendris Consulting Solutions is a technology and change management consultancy that specialises in implementing cost effective business improvement programmes. It provides assistance in designing, developing and implementing IT strategies and provides Change Management services, to plan and prepare organisations for major business changes. Avendris combines real experience and a commitment to delivering results to ensure their clients gain maximum benefit from their investments in business change and new technology.

Avendris was founded in 2002 by Mike Robb and merged with Mac-XS in November 2003 bringing on board Iain Mackay. Iain and Mike have both held a number of senior IT and consulting positions in Scotland and across the UK. Mike has a background in software development and business systems delivery. Prior to setting up Avendris he was a Director of a leading UK business and IT consultancy. Iain has worked in IT strategy and delivery and was previously CTO of All-Hotels.com and IT director at Kwik-Fit Insurance.

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