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Karen Orr (left), Office Manager, Fluid Power Solutions with Sue Brunton, Brunton NZ.

## Hydraulic company powers ahead thanks to flexible controls in Accredo software

**One system that does everything is how Karen Orr, Office Manager for South Island-based Fluid Power Solutions, describes the company’s Accredo business management software solution.**

“If Accredo has built the functionality, we are more than likely to be using the module for it. It is our one and only business software solution and it takes care of our reporting, accounting, job workflow and inventory needs.”

Typical of many small to medium New Zealand companies, Fluid Power has grown incrementally over time, adding new services and opening new offices to become one of the leading hydraulic and pneumatic services companies in the country. When it was established in 2001, Fluid Power operated from one office in Nelson, but over the years it has at least doubled in size and now has offices in Greymouth and Blenheim as well.

The business provides hose and fitting products and repair and maintenance services to a wide range of industries, but also operates

an engineering workshop where it designs and builds industrial equipment for forestry and fisheries operators.

“We are all things to all people within our area of activity,” says Orr. “And when we went looking for a new accounting solution, we knew we needed one that could stretch to support the wide variety of business processes we undertake.”

Fluid Power was desperate to find a more versatile solution after an unfortunate experiment with a system it had implemented to replace its old bespoke DOS software.

“The DOS system performed adequately when we operated from a single location, but we knew we needed something more modern to cope with our expanding activity. Regrettably, we chose a replacement that wasn’t fit for purpose.”

Orr says the new software was unable to undertake the job costing processes that are an essential feature of the engineering and repair side of the business.

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"The new software was fine for compliance accounting activities, but when it came to the nitty gritty aspects of job and workflow processing it was a disaster. A lot of the jobs we do are one-off and costs and materials vary considerably as a result. Our close-off periods were taking longer and longer to achieve because we couldn't get costing statements completed in a timely manner – and that was having a negative impact on our cashflow."

As one of the people who suffered the inadequacies of the system acutely, Orr, together with the company's accountant, took a proactive step and researched what else was available on the market. They identified three or four possible replacements.

The pendulum swung Accredo's way, when Orr read a case study about a company similar to Fluid Power, based in Gisborne.

"They were hydraulic specialists also. So the problems they were encountering were very similar to ours. We ended up having a frank discussion with them and they only had praise for Accredo. They imparted a lot of knowledge which made us feel very comfortable with the decision to select it."

What Fluid Power required went well beyond accounts processing. The company wanted a system that could streamline some of its core business operations. More flexible work processing functionality was paramount to enable staff on the shop-floor to access the information they needed to complete their day-to-day tasks more easily and efficiently.

"Essentially, the boys in the workshop wanted a one-stop shop, a summary screen from which they could perform all their key actions. And that is what Accredo gave us. We call it our custom job form. One simple keystroke and the form appears on screen and allows them to create and print purchase orders, obtain job cost reports, enter on-the-job costs and analyse the amount of labour used to date on any particular job."

Previously, Fluid Power had no way of accessing this data efficiently. Says Orr: "On most other systems to get this data you need to dive from one area of the system to another – that takes time and leaves things open to error as people

move from screen to screen. The beauty of the Accredo system is that everything relevant to the job at hand is easily accessible."

The implementation and ongoing support of the Accredo system is carried out by Brunton NZ – an Accredo reseller with plenty of experience managing the technology needs of growing companies.

"The support we receive from Brunton's is second to none. They are more than willing to transfer their knowledge of the system to us. This gives us improved control because we can then tailor it to better suit our business practices, as and when we need to. Accredo reduces the time we spend on manual tasks by automating a whole range of day-to-day activities."

The reporting power of the system is another feature the company could not do without. "Again, it is the flexibility which is so appealing, says Orr. "We can make changes to the report layouts to capture just the information we need to see. Many other vendors charge you to undertake changes to their core reports, but with Accredo's Report Designer module we can do it ourselves for free."

The company uses Accredo for managerial and financial reporting. "We can always extract the data we need. I run staff productivity reports on a monthly basis and we also produce financial reports which give our owners and directors a clear indication of how the business is performing."

Budgeting, fixed assets and inventory control are all managed, and more importantly controlled, with the help of the Accredo system.

"We have over 10,000 items in stock and Accredo enables us to allocate it to different locations and service vehicles. This means we can reorder stock as and when we need to and not tie up money in stock that sits around unused. It also gives us good visibility into how each department or mobile service unit is performing because we can analyse stock turnover at each location."

Orr believes the Accredo system has given herself and the other managers a finer degree of control over the company. "We know what is happening within the business at a much more granular level. And because Accredo has automated many of the manual tasks, we have more time to monitor our key performance indicators and anticipate issues before they become problems."

**"The flexibility of Accredo's reporting is very appealing. It allows us to capture and extract just the information we need to see."**

Karen Orr,  
Office Manager,  
Fluid Power Solutions