



## Davies Turner

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Andrew Slater,  
*Head of Logistics, Davies Turner*

## Overview

RedPrairie Corporation, a world leading consumer driven optimisation company, has boosted productivity by 20 per cent at Davies Turner, the largest independent multi-modal freight forwarder in the UK.

## Company Background

Davies Turner was established in 1870 to provide transport services for general freight and the shipping of personal effects. The company's founder, Alfred Davies, pioneered the system of grouping together small consignments to help reduce the costs for individual shippers. Expansion has seen the company develop strategic alliances with strong regional partners throughout the world and a comprehensive network of branches throughout the UK. The company is now the leading independent operator in the UK for European freight and international logistics business.

Davies Turner has three operating units dedicated to the provision of distribution management services internationally, that offers groupage and full load trailer services throughout Europe, air and sea freight services worldwide, contract distribution operations, and handles order scheduling through stock management to synchronised just-in-time deliveries. It has 22 branch locations throughout the UK and over 750 employees, and the company's annual turnover is in excess of £140 million.

## The Challenge

Davies Turner's legacy system had originally been set up to support Primark; however the system had become unwieldy and didn't fit its business requirements as it was looking to maintain its growth strategy. Each time a new client came on board the software needed to be rewritten. This process could take up to three months and put huge pressure on the company's internal development team. Even worse, it systemised bad practices and the business wasn't as efficient as it should have been.

To support its growing success in the 3PL sector, Davies Turner required complex functionality from its new Warehouse Management System (WMS). It needed to be an end-to-end supply chain solution customisable for each client and support bonded warehousing with a direct customs link. Management considered building an in-house system, but it was ruled out as too expensive.

Andrew Slater, Head of Logistics, Davies Turner, said, "We needed a configurable system that would give us more flexibility. We selected the RedPrairie solution because it is user-friendly and enables us to take on new clients at short notice. RedPrairie offered a brand new approach and we decided to go for their technology as it symbolised the new direction the business was taking."

## The Solution

RedPrairie supplied Davies Turner with its Warehouse Management and Billing software, plus its EAI (enterprise application integration) tool to integrate with multiple host systems, supporting multiple contracts with customers for sales invoices and reports.

As Davies Turner wanted to take ownership of the project and drive down costs, they decided to manage the rollout process. RedPrairie and Davies Turner worked very closely on the first rollout, which went live in April 2007. On the projects that followed, Davies Turner took the lead, using RedPrairie for back-up when required.

Slater said, "We got a group of users trained early on – both in administration and warehouse roles. We also put two clients live in a test module to see if there were any problems or issues from the introduction of the solution, prior to going live. On the first go-live date we had a project manager on site, however operations went so smoothly that he wasn't required to resolve any issues and he did a full training audit."

The company set a timescale of 20 weeks on being fully operational in two sites, Birmingham and Dartford, and it went live on budget and on time. The company now has the technology operational across seven sites with 43 customers, including names such as WD40, UGG, Recaro, Vango and Crew Clothing.

## For more information

RedPrairie Corporation  
Beacon House  
Ibstone Road, Stokenchurch  
Buckinghamshire HP14 3AQ

+44 1494 486 500    [info.emea@RedPrairie.com](mailto:info.emea@RedPrairie.com)    [RedPrairie.com](http://RedPrairie.com)

## The Benefits

Following the introduction of the new technology Davies Turner has the flexibility it needs when it wants to make changes to its processes.

Slater said, "By improving the supply chain we enable our clients to exploit new markets, new channels and new customers. This is achieved without incurring significant investment costs in fixed assets and specialist infrastructure.

The new solution has made us more self-sufficient. For example, the operations team is in charge of its own destiny and doesn't rely upon IT. We have super users at each site and have seen productivity increase by 20 per cent. The technology is improving our management of stock and accuracy levels have increased.

Communication between sites has been greatly improved due to the multi-site functionality, which means the same product and processes are used across all sites. The system is accessible across all locations. The new solution has given us the opportunity to manipulate data easily and expand the business with a more competitive offering. It has also harmonised working practices across the business."

The implementation of RedPrairie's WMS means that Davies Turner can expand the logistics business by having a more competitive offering. Future plans include looking at both the Transportation Management and Duty Management solutions, as a means of offering a fully integrated bonded warehouse solution with direct customs input.

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