

CODA provides 5 star finance for siblu

Dream meets dual accounting requirements for European holiday company



Transaction handling

Analysis tools

Smarter processes

Expert services

Siblu is France's leading holiday parc group, comprising 14 of the country's finest holiday parcs in regions including Brittany, Loire-Atlantique, Loire Valley, Vendée, Charente Maritime, Aquitaine and Languedoc. The company has offices in both the UK and France, with 14 wholly owned holiday parcs in France. Siblu also works with 11 hand-picked independent parcs across France, Italy and Spain. Over 4,500 families own holiday homes at siblu parcs, with the company selling accommodation from a selection of mobile home manufacturers from across Europe.

Siblu is a complex and diverse business to account for. It has a finance department based in Hemel Hempstead in the UK, and one based in Bordeaux, France which reports back into the UK. Both have been using CODA's Dream accounting software for a number of years and are great advocates of the software. Dream has supported the company as siblu has grown over the years and it offers a simple, flexible system that is used across the groups' holiday parcs in France, as well as in the administration offices in the UK and France. They recently completed a migration which saw the UK and French businesses move onto a single database and they have ambitious future systems plans.

EUROPEAN ACCOUNTING SUPPORT

Although Dream is designed as a system primarily for companies operating in the UK, it supports siblu for all its European accounting requirements.

"Siblu has a complex business structure, but Dream's flexibility enables us to account in both Euros and Sterling and means that we can provide access to the system to users across each of our holiday parcs so they can see up to date information on how they are performing," says Tony Betley, Consultant Systems Accountant at siblu. "Things like payment processes are different in France, but Dream's flexible structure means that we can easily accommodate the diverse requirements of the various countries that we operate in."

Using Dream, siblu also ensures compliance with the French Government's Chart of Accounts specification as the Dream nominal structure is free format and

can be designed to suit the individual structure of the business. Further analysis can be provided by careful use of attaching ledgers to the nominal accounts.

"The business is unique in the way it operates," continues Tony. "We sell holiday homes out of the UK priced in Euros, but some people want their financial data in Euros and some in Sterling. This has never been a problem with Dream. When changes to the system are requested, I find it can usually be done without much difficulty. It's the inherent flexibility built into the system that enables this. We have a nominal ledger set up in Sterling for the UK, and Euros for France, but also use both Sterling and Euro attached ledgers. This means we can easily input documents in different currencies and use spot rates where necessary. We work to a 52 week period with intermediate weeks in between used for period end adjustments. We have grown substantially over the years and hope to continue on that growth path and we believe Dream is the system to support that in the future."

"The system lets us compare actuals with previous years by holiday parc and mobile home, and we have more insight into company performance than ever before. Dream is primarily a UK system but it works very well for us as a dual French and UK business."

DIRECT ACCESS TO THE SYSTEM FOR NON-FINANCE USERS

Dream's unified ledger structure enables growing businesses to achieve the transparency they need, improve efficiency, and help drive an informed approach to decision making. In siblu's case, access to the Dream system is available to each holiday parc so that they can see up to date, real-time information relating to their financial performance at any point in the month. Parc users, including the General Manager, Admin Manager and Sales Manager, are able to drill down to the detail behind financial transactions to help them make intelligent decisions about parc operations.

REPORTING WITH DREAMVIEW

Siblu has also invested in CODA's DreamView tool which builds upon and extends Dream's in-built

browsing and reporting functionality, by providing direct, seamless access to external reporting products – helping users to interrogate their data and prepare custom reports.

Using DreamView, each sibilu holiday parc is provided with what is known as a "StatPack" every month, compiled by the UK Finance Department. It consists of data relating to sales and performance relevant to them, taken from the Dream accounting system. The reports are produced in a secure Excel format which is familiar to everyone involved. DreamView is an add-on to Dream so from these Excel reports, users can drill down to the financial information contained in Dream to find out how that number was generated.

"DreamView allows users to extract data from the system in a secure but familiar format, while providing the ability to drill down to the details of each transaction in the Dream database," says Tony. "It is one of the best tools on the market in terms of simplicity and, to date, we have never received a request from the business that Dream and DreamView haven't been able to accommodate."

DreamView makes it easy for sibilu's finance team to produce management accounts and compare budgets and expenditure with previous years. The company always knows how it is performing against previous periods and what it needs to do to improve performance in certain areas as necessary.

FUTURE SYSTEM PLANS

Sibilu has a number of systems plans for the future to improve efficiency and automate processes further across the business. Currently, all purchase orders are raised centrally by the finance teams, which is a big task according to Tony. "Each parc has its preferred suppliers, and they place orders as and when they need to, so we want to make improvements to the purchasing process so that we have more control over this. We have already trained the admin users at Hemel and Bordeaux to use a new purchase order processing tool, which will integrate with Dream, so we will begin the implementation soon.

"We also want to integrate other business systems with Dream, as the software has its own integration toolset which will make this relatively straight forward. By interfacing our mobile homes sales and maintenance system, and our holiday sales system, which are both currently going through a revamp, we are confident we will have an advanced infrastructure in place to support the business and improve efficiency in a number of areas. Finally, we are also looking at CODA's Control solutions in a number of areas to automate our expenses and 'on parc' cash book systems."

ABOUT CODA

CODA is the choice for finance professionals who need business software and services they can count on.



We provide award-winning solutions that help organizations to streamline and automate their finance processes (from accounting and procurement to reporting and analysis) and to achieve better compliance and corporate governance. CODA applications work seamlessly with each other or independently and they integrate with other leading operational systems to maximize the return on your broader IT investment too. And our products are all underpinned by expert consultancy, training and support services, delivered by teams of experienced accountants, business analysts and technology specialists.

Founded in the UK in 1979, the CODA Group now employs around 600 and has offices around the world to deliver easy, local access to sales, service and support. Around 2600 medium and large organizations, across all sectors, use CODA solutions to control costs, drive performance and ensure compliance, while remaining agile and responsive.

CODA is part of Unit 4 Agresso NV. Headquartered in the Netherlands, the group provides business software solutions to its customers internationally.