

CASE STUDY

Largest Fire and Rescue Service in the UK Builds Solid, Flexible HCM Foundation with Accero

Customizable Accero Cyborg platform enables London Fire Brigade to consolidate core applications as well as integrate to others, saving time and effort by reducing data duplication and errors

CUSTOMER

London Fire Brigade (LFB)

**NUMBER OF
EMPLOYEES
SUPPORTED**

7,100

INDUSTRY

Government

CLIENT SINCE

Early 1990s

ACCERO SOLUTION

- Accero HR Administration
- Accero Payroll Administration
- Accero Reporting Administration
- Customized Self-Service Option

COMPANY

The London Fire Brigade (LFB) is the largest fire and rescue service in the United Kingdom, and the third largest in the world. It is spread over 120 sites, including 112 operational fire stations, with approximately 7000 employees. The LFB responds to fires and other emergencies, as well as actively promotes fire prevention and community safety. The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) operates the LFB, which is part of a group of organizations under the 'umbrella' of the Greater London Authority (GLA).

CHALLENGE

Like many other large organizations serving thousands of employees, LFB used a multitude of different standalone systems to meet its HR and Payroll processing needs. Yet because these applications or systems were acquired over a long period of time, many of them remained non-integrated—resulting in isolated islands of data.

As a result, staff at LFB was forced to duplicate much of their data entry efforts, with an increased likelihood of introducing data errors. Processes were more cumbersome than they needed to be and reporting was both complex and unreliable. In short, departments within LFB struggled to keep their arms around their data processing needs, and the organization lacked a comprehensive HCM solution. All HR areas needed to be addressed, from recruitment management to skills assessment to payroll to employee self service.

"We were trying to serve the HR and payroll needs of thousands of employees with various applications, some of which couldn't talk to one another," said Karin Salaria, IT Project Manager, London Fire Brigade. "As a result, we had redundant data, extra steps and processes, and flawed reporting, to name just a few of our challenges. It was apparent we needed to consolidate as much as we could, and as quickly and cost-effectively as possible."

SOLUTION

Fortunately for LFB, they didn't have to look far for a centralized solution. One of the systems they were using in-house was Accero Cyborg, a leading HR and Payroll solution known for its adaptability. With some customization, they were able to implement the core Accero Cyborg solution, which introduced the commonality they needed while still meeting most of their data processing needs.

Leveraging Accero's vast customization potential, LFB developed or modified other systems to work alongside the Accero Cyborg primary solution, enabling them to meet specific organizational needs.

"We elected to base our comprehensive solution on Accero because it gave us the core functionality we needed as well as the capability to customize it to meet our other requirements," said Salaria. "If a feature or a component or a report wasn't already there, we could create it within Accero Cyborg or connect to it."

A rundown of some of the applications used by LFB gives a sense of the magnitude of their HCM solution and why consolidation or integration was of paramount importance. Their Accero Payroll application suite, for example, needed to offer structured payroll as well as non-structured, and had to include elements of a local government module. Their HR suite needed to cover the basics, of course, along with Position Administration, Recruitment, and elements of Training and Development, among other features.

Accero: A Trusted Source for 35 Years

Founded in 1974, Accero Software (formerly Cyborg Systems) delivers high-performance, best-fit solutions for HR and payroll processes to organizations of all sizes and in all major verticals in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Trusted, innovative, customer-driven, and visionary, Accero remains an industry leader in creating best-in-class human resources and payroll solutions that transform departments into strategic business assets and models of results-driven productivity. Simply put, our scalable, customizable solutions streamline processes to help make enterprises more efficient.

Additionally, LFB needed to interface a wide range of applications including in-house solutions StARS (Staff Attendance Recording System) and STEP (System for Training, Evaluation and Performance), as well as CEMS (Course Evaluation Management System), to Accero. Integrated financial systems had to incorporate their Masterpiece GL. And they had to integrate ePRF, a virtual electronic personnel record folder, as well as many self-service applications, such as payslips, expenses, and job applications.

In sum, their solution required a solid core that was flexible enough to allow for broad customizations and unique integration points.

RESULTS

Today, Accero Cyborg can be deployed to any LFB site, as needed, using the Microsoft Windows 2003 Server via the thin client Windows Server Environment, a technology used by all of their users to access applications. There are more than 200 user accounts assigned to the Accero Cyborg system, of which about 75 use the system on a regular basis. All employees, temporary staff and consultants are recorded on Accero Cyborg, as well as all applicants. LFB employees use their HCM system indirectly, via LFB's own self-service applications, which are available nearly 24 hours a day.

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Karin Salaria, IT Project Manager, London Fire Brigade

LFB enjoys having all their data in one place, especially since it's so easy to navigate and comes with a strong reporting capability. Because Accero Cyborg can interface to other systems and feed data back in, data entry time and data entry errors have been dramatically reduced, while reporting has been streamlined and made consistent. They've been able to realign processes, ensuring that updates and inputs are always in the most logical place. And they can now produce more effective reporting on vacancies, establishment control, etc.

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LFB is rolling out developments in their self service application suite using Accero Cyborg, alongside infopath forms. They expect this will result in a reduction in the number of staff members required to perform HR duties. They have found the Position Management module to be especially useful; the module has enabled them to establish control over recruiting and performance matters. Additionally, they use the Position Management module to interface to AD (Active Directory) and to manage secure access to their self-service applications.

Technologically speaking, LFB has found that Accero's internal simplicity leads to higher reliability and produces excellent, reliable performance. Perhaps the chief benefit in using Accero Cyborg for LFB has been the system's robust customization capability. LFB has made a strategic commitment to make Accero its preferred database for all of its HR-related data transactions.

Accero helps LFB to select the right people, provide effective and ongoing training, continually assess skills and performance, manage resources and keep costs down. The organization is currently working on both VEB and recruitment implementations, and looks forward to upgrading to version 6.0 in the months ahead.

