

"Their breadth of knowledge and technical ability quickly identified areas for development"



BROOKS GAMBLE

Statement of Capability

CONTENTS

SERVICE OVERVIEW

ORACLE DATABASE ADMINISTRATION & CONSULTANCY

PROJECT CASE STUDY

Regional Prime Contract Scotland *(for Turner Estate Solutions Ltd)*

Injury Benefits Scheme *(for NHS Business Services Authority)*

Practitioner Pension Scheme *(for NHS Pensions Agency)*

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY PROJECTS

Rock Characterisation Facility – Long-term Groundwater Monitoring System *(for Nirex)*

Dounreay Groundwater Monitoring System – Data Management & Visualisation *(for DSRL)*

BESPOKE COMMERCIAL SYSTEMS

Procurement Database *(for Howgill Family Centre)*

Manufacturing Process Integrated Production & Order System *(for Slacks Millom Ltd)*

Stock Control & Order Processing System *(for Bunzl Textiles Products Ltd)*

COMPANY HISTORY & WORK PROFILE

COMPANY DETAILS

SERVICE OVERVIEW

Brooks Gamble Ltd has provided high quality data management solutions to a wide range of business and scientific clients for over 10 years. With a wealth of experience and solid technical know-how we have played a significant role in the success of many commercial, industrial and scientific projects, taking the technical lead in the data management field.

Working on a number of platforms, using various database management systems and programming languages, our solutions are always developed with the user in mind and we work closely with our clients to guarantee this. Whether on placement with the client or in our offices in West Cumbria we know that effective communication is a key component to delivering a successful project, an aspect of our service in which we place great emphasis.

Specialist technical data services include;

- capture,
- conversion,
- quality assessment,
- manipulation, and
- visualisation.

Although we provide solutions using a range of systems, we are specialists in database applications designed and developed with the Oracle relational database management system (RDBMS) and Oracle Application Express (APEX), a powerful combination of database management and application development software, particularly suited to projects which;

- consolidate multiple spreadsheets & departmental applications
- hold large volumes of data,
- require multiple operations & calculations,
- need to be flexible for users & customers,
- operate in a multi-user environment,
- enable information sharing, optimise data usage and provide interactive reports

Working in-house, side-by-side with client staff, we develop and improve existing systems or create new data management systems. Sharing knowledge and experience with other team members, we provide support and advice, and where necessary, vision and the direction to drive projects forward.

In response to individual requirements, we create bespoke systems and stand-alone solutions, designed, developed and delivered to meet client specifications. In large organisations this may be carried out alongside the Business Analysts, in smaller operations it may be through talking to the person who does the job.

Whatever the project, our combination of;

- Strong communication skills,
- Deep technical knowledge,
- Problem solving ability, and
- User-focussed approach

assures our work is of only the very highest standard - *that's what our clients say, anyway.*

Oracle

Oracle Corporation is the world's leading supplier of software for information management. Lauded for its sophisticated relational database management system (RDBMS) it provides a rich and advanced feature set.

The vast suite of Oracle products includes several editions of the RDBMS software itself and many tools and applications covering an array of business uses. Oracle delivers business solutions to all scales of database deployment from single-user development environments to massive, multi-site installations, data warehouses and web-based operations. It is the system of choice for the world's largest and most successful companies.

This powerful combination of RDBMS and associated tools requires specialist skills and knowledge to maximise delivery. In a rapidly evolving development environment, professional training under the Oracle Certification scheme backed-up with systems experience ensures that Brooks Gamble Ltd can deliver the level of efficiency, security and reliability demanded by our clients.

Our Service

The specialist database administration and consultancy services we offer, includes:

- devising, implementing and testing optimum backup and recovery strategies
- capacity planning,
- performance tuning, both for database internals and code for database applications,
- implementation and enforcement of database security,
- providing technical expertise to support team development,
- ensuring data integrity,
- data migration,
- problem solving and database troubleshooting,
- database monitoring and system 'health checks'.

Our Clients

Among our client list are some of the largest, most dynamic and high profile organisations in the UK. Our portfolio of Oracle consultancy services and technical development projects includes work for:

- NHS Business Services Authority
- BAE Systems
- Turner Estate Solutions Ltd. (*for Defence Estates*)
- General Medical Council
- Welcome Holidays Ltd.
- NIREX
- BNFL IT Services
- CSC - Computer Sciences Corporation (*for BNFL*)
- DSRL – Dounreay Site Restoration Limited (formerly part of UKAEA)
- ICI (Dulux) Paints

PROJECT CASE STUDY

Regional Prime Contract Scotland *Turner Estate Solutions Ltd for Defence Estates*

The Project

Turner Estate Solutions Limited delivers the Regional Prime Contract Scotland (RPC) on behalf of Defence Estates (an organisation of the Ministry of Defence). The RPCs employ Prime Contracting methods for the procurement of substantially all construction and maintenance services across Great Britain, where PFI is not appropriate. RPC Scotland was the first of the five Regional Contracts to be awarded. The contract provides for capital works and estate management services, to some 128 sites across Scotland, delivering a service to both the technical and housing estate with a stock total in the order of 9250 buildings/facilities.

Originally awarded to Amec Turner Ltd on 31 March 2003, Turner Estate Solutions Ltd assumed delivery responsibility for the contract in December 2007. Valued at £427 million, the contract will run for seven years initially with an option to extend the period to 10 years subject to satisfactory performance. Currently, the largest contracted Core Work is for development at Her Majesty's Naval Base Clyde.

Our Input

Brooks Gamble Ltd have provided on-site support to the IT team at Turner Estate Solutions Ltd in the field of Oracle database administration from the original system development and installation in 2003. We implemented an Oracle Dataguard solution for a remote site standby failover solution.

In 2006 we introduced the development of APEX application solutions for data reporting; existing reporting systems were based upon spreadsheet exports, requiring a great deal of manual input and placing a heavy burden upon staff. Working alongside site staff in an advisory/consultancy role we were instrumental in the introduction of Oracle APEX within the IT development team providing end-users with an interactive, point and click facility, enabling speedy and flexible reporting, freeing up work time for the on-site support staff and improving the quality of the reporting system as a whole.

Our commitment to database tuning and proactive maintenance continues to date providing support for Oracle database and APEX issues both through site visits and remote working.

The Client's View

"Input from Brooks Gamble Ltd has improved efficiency of Turner Estates Solutions Ltd delivery of RPC Scotland by reducing the time spent on reporting and the costs associated with this. Working alongside our IT support team they have provided us with a reliable service, in-depth knowledge and advice and helped guide the system development throughout the project. The ability to call on this experience and knowledge has removed the need for in-house specialist staff."

"Introduction of APEX applications has revolutionised our reporting procedures and given users real control of the data in addition to speeding up the entire process."

"Their breadth of knowledge and technical ability quickly identified areas for development, addressed issues arising during the operation of the system, presented clearly not only the options available but backed these up with the ability to implement the solutions. With the added benefit of remote working, we have received an exceptional level of service over the years of our association."

LYNNE RAFFERTY – IS/IT Manager
Turner Estate Solutions Ltd, Rosyth, Fife

PROJECT CASE STUDY

Injury Benefits Scheme *NHS BSA Pensions Division*

The Project

A review of the NHS Injury Benefits Scheme (IBS) instigated by the Pensions Ombudsman in 2003 identified that the scheme had been wrongly applied since it first began, in its current form, in 1972.

The Review involved all 23,735 cases on record and found three separate areas in which mistakes in administering the scheme had been made:

- levels of injury benefit (IB) payments to a number of claimants had been incorrect
- some applications for PIB that should have been accepted could have been rejected
- claims decisions notified to PIB applicants were technically legally invalid

Work to rectify this situation was begun in April 2007 and the reassessment of every case was undertaken including complex calculations to adjust for time-indexed effects of applicant incomes, benefits and compensation claims. The project was subject to internal and external audit, tight deadlines and Department of Health approval.

Our Input

Brooks Gamble Ltd was involved in the recalculation of IB payments (rectifying the first point identified in the review). Information for the scheme was stored in a huge volume of paper files with a minimal amount of data stored in a legacy Paradox database.

The first step in the reassessment was for us, working alongside IBS administrators and system users to develop a database for the manual input of this data using an Oracle/APEX solution. To ensure that errors in data input did not occur during the transfer from the paper documents to the system a double-entry data validation system using timeline creation and cross-checking was built.

Further to the database design and data entry system we developed the software and a user-friendly browser interface for the calculation suite based on new Department of Health rules incorporating compound interest payments, indexed increase to pension payments, complex data cross-checking and management reporting. The project was delivered in 8 months, on schedule.

The Client's View

"This high profile project was subject to great scrutiny; it was essential therefore that it be delivered to specification and on-time. Brooks Gamble Ltd worked well with our own staff, understood the issues we faced right from the start and played a large part in the project's success."

"Particular strengths were demonstrated in rapid assimilation of information, identification of problems and their solutions, proactive engagement with the project and excellent communication with administrators and end-users."

"The system delivered was robust and user-friendly, met all the required criteria surpassing expectations in performance, flexibility and efficiency."

LINDA BATES – Team Manager, Pensions Division
NHS BSA, Fleetwood, Lancashire

PROJECT CASE STUDY

Practitioner Pension Scheme *NHS Pensions Agency*

The Project

All data for the NHS Pension Scheme is stored in a MS SQL Server database. However, the calculations necessary to administer schemes for Medical and Dental Practitioner members are beyond the scope of the general pensions system. These calculations could only be performed by experienced members of the NHS Pensions Agency staff using two parallel, cross-checking systems (one a proprietary product, the other an in-house amalgam of MS Excel and MS Visual Basic) and required a great deal of manual input. The two parallel systems were not only cumbersome but with the advent of new pension scheme rules would become obsolete.

The project was to develop a solution that would replace these legacy systems and extract up-to-date data from the SQL Server database to provide a single environment from which Practitioner calculations under both the old and new rules of the new NHS schemes could be made and stored. These calculations are in some cases extremely complex and the specification was challenging. Calculations needed to be both accurate and precise and the system required high degree of performance tuning to meet target time for the calculations.

Our Input

Brooks Gamble Ltd led the technical development of the system, setting coding standards, determining appropriate methodologies and developing program code. Work comprised the design and development of a new system interfacing with MS SQL Server databases and applying several processing routines using complex business rules and calculation methods. System outputs included a range of reports in PDF format stored within the database and output in hardcopy form.

The solution using Oracle PL/SQL and APEX was adopted enthusiastically by the user base and required minimum training. During the project we provided 'hands-on' coaching of user staff in uses and best practice for APEX and PL/SQL.

The results of the project were considerably faster processing times, added functionality, storage of result sets within an Oracle database, more flexible outputs and automatic generation of statistics for management reporting. The new system was developed quickly, to detailed and complex specifications, meeting tight deadlines.

The Client's View

"Having had Brooks Gamble Ltd working alongside the NHS Pensions Agency team for some time, we had total confidence that they would help deliver a smooth, slick system for this project, and the result was all we could have asked for. They responded positively to the tight deadlines and the detailed and complex specification and provided a strong technical lead in the development, encouraging and supporting our own staff throughout the process."

"Understanding that the final product must not simply meet the technical scope of the work but provide a usable system has been a major strength of the solution."

"The success of this project has been a large factor in the business decision for NHS Pensions Agency to make a significant commitment to Oracle and to look to Oracle/APEX as the preferred in-house solution in the case of both small scale departmental applications and large scale business critical developments."

STEVE NEWMAN – Assistant Director Information Management and Technology
NHS Pensions Agency, Fleetwood, Lancashire

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY PROJECTS

Rock Characterisation Facility - Long-term Groundwater Monitoring System

NIREX, Sellafield, Cumbria*

The NIREX Rock Characterisation Facility (RCF) study began in 1992 at Longlands Farm, close to the nuclear facility at Sellafield, Cumbria. Among the aims of the project was the desire to study a range of properties present in the geosphere at that location and assess these with a view to the suitability of the site for deep radioactive waste storage.

As part of the study a large network of deep boreholes was developed into 23 of which were installed arrays of groundwater pressure monitoring probes providing 482 measurement ports in total. Data from these monitoring arrays was collected and stored in an Oracle/UNIX Long-term Groundwater Monitoring System (LTMS). The system was required to store large datasets, perform data manipulation and output data for use in geosphere modelling; at its peak the database contained over 76 million readings. In addition to the groundwater measurements the system held meteorological data from regional weather stations, flow data from watercourses and geological data derived during the investigation.

Planning permission to construct the RCF was refused by the Local Council and in 1997 the appeal to overturn the decision was rejected following a Public Enquiry. However, the LTMS continued to be operated and from early 1998 the management and administration of the LTMS was provided by Brooks Gamble Ltd, until its termination in 1999. Post closure reporting extended the project into 2000.

*NIREX is now integrated into the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency, NDA

Dounreay Groundwater Monitoring System – Data Management & Visualisation

Dounreay Site Restoration Limited, Dounreay, Caithness

Dounreay Site Restoration Limited (DSRL) is the site licence company responsible for the closure programme at Britain's former centre of fast reactor research and development. DSRL has held the site licence since April 1, 2008. Prior to this date the site was managed by the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA).

As part of the site restoration works, DSRL must deal with the presence of Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) contained inside a shaft some 5m diameter and 65m deep, excavated within rock adjacent to the shore. The project to retrieve this material is well underway, however, prior to commencement of the works a groundwater monitoring system (GMS) was installed to measure and record groundwater pressures in and around the shaft area. Data from the GMS was used to model hydrogeological conditions and advise the design of shaft isolation works.

Having experience of a similar environmental monitoring system as part of the NIREX RCF project, Brooks Gamble Ltd were engaged to design and build the GMS at the Dounreay site. The system was required to store and manipulate time-series pressure data from an array of underground monitoring probes as well as atmospheric, tidal and shaft water level data and comprised Oracle/UNIX with PV-Wave data visualisation software. Tasks included data conversion, storage, quality assessment and graphical output of the data suite, and continues to-date with tidal, shaft water level and post isolation works groundwater monitoring boreholes .

BESPOKE COMMERCIAL SYSTEMS

Procurement Database

Howgill Family Centre, Whitehaven, Cumbria

Howgill Family Centre works to build healthier, safer communities, where children, young people and families are valued, respected and encouraged to achieve their potential.

In order to improve efficiency of the Centre's services Brooks Gamble Ltd were employed to develop a user-friendly database to manage procurement by the control of Purchase Orders and recording of purchasing activity. The system was required to be suitable for use by staff with minimum IT skills, both in the office and on-site, and reduce the burden and errors associated with the existing paper records system. The budget for the whole project was small.

We developed an application using MS Access which met the brief presented by the Centre and provided support and further development during the initial years that the system was in operation.

Manufacturing Process Integrated Production and Order System

Slacks Millom Ltd, Borwick Rails, Millom, Cumbria

Slacks Millom manufacture synthetic bristles for use in a wide variety of industrial brushes servicing markets throughout Europe from the works in West Cumbria.

The company required a bespoke system which could monitor and store data throughout the entire cycle of production from entry of raw material to exit through the factory door as finished products. The level of IT experience within the company was limited but the management were keen to be involved in all stages of development.

Through close liaison with the company, we were able to design a cost effective application using MS Access that fulfilled their needs at the time and allowed subsequent expansion of the system as new processes and procedures have been introduced into the works.

Stock Control and Order Processing System

Bunzl Textile Products Limited, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire

Bunzl Textiles Products Limited produce recycled textile products used as the raw material for a number of industrial and commercial processes. They are the UK's top exporter of these materials.

The company needed a system which could hold data on stock and orders, match orders with stock and use this information to feedback into the manufacturing process to ensure order fulfilment. In addition the system was required to automate the invoicing of orders. The overall aim of the system was to improve efficiency in management of the manufacturing side of the business and reduce paperwork and errors from the supply side.

Brooks Gamble Ltd were able to provide a MS Access application solution which fitted into the company's existing IT portfolio. During development we were able to include programs which added value to the data stored by identifying new areas where the data could be used to streamline existing management systems.

COMPANY HISTORY & WORK PROFILE

Brooks Gamble Ltd was born in 1998 by an association of the two founding directors, Kathryn Brooks and Nick Gamble, who after being involved in a large-scale project together, felt the need to explore new areas of interest and believed the experience they had gained through a variety of industrial and engineering positions would form a sound foundation to launch their own consultancy business.

Initial contracts were specialised within the engineering, environmental and data management spheres but it soon became clear that the wide range of skills and experience needed to achieve success in these areas were fully transferable to other areas of business. The portfolio expanded to embrace a more general IT consultancy service, bespoke applications and placements as technical expert.

The company began to build up a wealth of expertise as providers of Oracle database solutions. An emphasis on continued professional development and work at the sharp edge of business has maintained a high level of proficiency in database design, administration and performance tuning. Recent work has concentrated on developing Oracle/APEX solutions, providing fast, flexible systems designed with the end-user in mind.

In 2008 we began an Associate Scheme to search for new and complementary skills which could expand our range and quality of service in commercial, industrial and scientific sectors.

COMPANY DETAILS

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