Interprise Product Review by John Oates of Baker Tilly Accountants

Launched in the UK during 2007, Interprise Suite has recently been accredited under the Accreditation Scheme provided by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales.

Interprise is an entirely new application written from the ground up to meet the needs of businesses in today's "connected" world. The software is therefore free from the compromises required to maintain backwards compatibility with an older legacy application.

Generally speaking, business applications today come in two types: desktop applications designed to run on a PC or via a local area network and "on demand" browser based applications designed to run over the internet. Interprise Suite's "Smart Client" technology will automatically optimise itself based on the connection method to provide a rich user interface without sacrificing the performance whether a user is connecting to Interprise Suite via the network or Internet.

Interprise is available as both a licensed application that can be installed at any chosen location or as a hosted solution that can be subscribed to for a monthly fee.

Interprise Suite – Overview

Interprise Suite is a truly integrated system that looks and feels the same and follows the same business logic throughout. The suite includes the most commonly used applications like CRM, ERP, accounts, stock, order processing, business intelligence, reports and e-commerce, all out the box.

The product is competitively priced with a 3 user copy of costing from £1,500. A fully working single user version is available free of charge.

Interprise Solutions Background

Interprise Suite is distributed in the UK by Interprise Solutions LLP. Interprise Software Systems International Inc. is the author of Interprise Suite founded in Makati City, Philippines in February 2004 by a group of enterprise software developers. The founders felt that the market was ready for an affordable application that not only combines the features of ERP, CRM and accounting applications, but can also take advantage of the new "Smart Client" technology that allows a normal desktop application to run over the internet like a browser application. They believe that the resulting product, Interprise Suite, is nothing less than a revolution in software that will forever change the Small to Midsized Enterprise (SME) market.

With a presence in Asia, Australia, North America and the United Kingdom, Interprise Solutions claims to be in a unique position to take advantage of today's global business realities. Through a combination of affordable pricing, state-of-the-art-technology and excellent support services, Interprise Solutions expects to gain considerable market share in the years to come. The global architecture of Interprise Suite makes it easily adaptable to different countries and Interprise is looking forward to developing partnerships with established companies to broaden their reach into additional international markets in the year ahead.

Interprise Suite – Features

Interprise features a familiar Windows user interface with easy navigation tools. Users can opt to select from a number of views which tailor the screen layout according to the workflow of particular job functions and the "dashboard" view (shown right) provides a visual representation of the workflow in each module.

The software is easy to navigate using either the dashboard or the set of tasks for each module. It is also easy to move between modules by clicking a button for each. Wizards are provided for common tasks that require a series of steps such as building reports or month-end procedures.

Standard modules include Customer Relationship Management, Customers, Suppliers, Inventory, Banking, Accounting, Reports, Trade Counter and System Administration. Optional modules include e-Commerce, Fixed Assets, Project Costing and HR / Time & Attendance.

Product Support

Various sources of support exist including a user manual, quick-start guides, demonstration videos and an online user forum which is accessible via the software. At the time of writing an online user help system was under development and this will become available in a forthcoming service pack.

Additional support including implementation assistance where required is provided by local resellers who are themselves supported by Interprise Solutions.

Software Customisation

Even with feature rich packages, businesses often need software to be customised in order to cater for important processes or procedures that have been developed internally. Interprise has been developed with this in mind and resellers will be able to tailor the software for particular businesses.

The Interprise framework will allow developers to use all the objects within Interprise Suite and has code snippets to speed up and improve development of new applications. Interprise Suite was designed with an extendable architecture that allows a developer to easily separate custom code from the main application code via .NET user controls that have been designed to "plug-in" to the Interprise Suite forms. In Interprise Suite every form is comprised of a base form that contains multiple .NET user controls (plug-ins) for the presentation of the user interface. By replacing one or more of the existing "plug-ins" with custom "plug-ins" it is possible to change the functionality associated with that part of the form. As new updates and upgrades are available, any custom plug-ins are re-applied to retain software customizations.

Networking & Connectivity

Most companies today need a mobile solution. They have branches and mobile workers that include directors, managers, support and sales people. A product that allows them to have full functionality and the same user interface wherever they are will give the user much better productivity.

Interprise Suite is in a new breed of software applications called "Smart Client" or "Service-Oriented Architecture" applications that bring together the best aspects of a traditional desktop application with its rich user interface, amend ability, easy printing and a browser based application with its advanced internet connectivity. Interprise Suite provides the best of both worlds allowing users to use the application whether in the office, at home or on the move by combining the power and flexibility only possible in a desktop application with the ability to transfer data over the internet like a web browser.

In a typical Client / Server setup, a Smart Client application runs on Client machines with full access to the computing resource on that machine for example, access cache or data on the client's memory or hard drive, access printers and other local resources. As Smart Client applications rely on the resources of the client, they greatly increase the scalability of a Client / Server application. Compared to a browser based application, Smart Client applications are substantially faster since they do not have to download HTML, JavaScript, Cascade Style Sheets, Images, etc in order to function.

Summary

Interprise Suite is an exciting addition to the range of business information systems aimed at the SME market in the UK. Its refreshing approach and rich functionality are bound to result in it gaining substantial popularity.

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