

e-government@radius



**Powersolve 2000
is launched**
see inside

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Delivering real benefits from interoperability now

Fulfilling the demands dictated by e-government represents perhaps the biggest challenge local authority computing has faced in the past 20 years. Yet the benefits are immense. Investing in and implementing Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) will have a positive impact over both the short and long term, with the adoption of *interoperability* delivering immediate and significant cost, efficiency and service benefits that will only increase with every passing year.

By constantly monitoring the changing requirements of local authorities, Radius remains at the forefront of the adoption of *interoperability*, outlined in the Government Interoperability Framework (e-GIF). Our leading-edge technologies future-proof our customers' investment in ESD, and enable them to both realise immediate and significant cost benefits and deliver improved services.

Radius offers a range of solutions across a number of e-government applications:

e-payments - Radius/CON, our market-leading income management system, allows citizens to pay any council bill - for example the Council Tax, or a parking fine - using a credit or debit card over the phone or the Internet. Highly secure, Radius/CON also includes an on-line CC/DC check to the Merchant Server to minimise the risk of fraud. The London Borough of Harrow are vanguard users of Radius/CON for Internet and digital payments, and in recognition of their use of this leading edge technology Radius, together with Microsoft, have produced a video which highlights their success. For more details see inside or visit: www.radiusplc.co.uk/radius/products/income.html.

e-procurement - RadiusOrbit has been specifically designed to meet the demanding needs of local authorities, including support for new technology such as e-hubs, and electronic catalogues which are hosted on customer and supplier sites. Our product supports recognised international standards such as BASDA eBIS-XML for purchase orders and invoices and CIF for electronic exchange of supplier catalogues. The London Borough of Greenwich is our flagship site, and an article about it can be seen overleaf. For further details on RadiusOrbit, our e-procurement product, visit: www.radiusplc.co.uk/radius/products/eprocurement.html.

e-billing - For electronic invoicing within our own FMIS products, Radius has adopted the BASDA eBIS-XML schema - further details of this can be found in the Powersolve 2000 article overleaf. We also have our own XMLGateways to the BASDA standard

which support the import/export of XML documents to and from legacy systems not supplied by Radius. We can also web-enable existing legacy applications, which need not be supplied by Radius, without needing to make any modifications to them.

e-forms - In partnership with Jetform, the market-leading supplier of electronic intelligent form technology to US Government Agencies, Radius delivers intelligent e-forms. By using innovative technology we have overcome the drawbacks of deploying forms on the Internet. Further details can be found inside and on our website: www.radiusplc.co.uk/radius/products/eform.html.

e-government services - Our systems integration services are based around Microsoft technologies and XML in order to deliver truly interoperable systems. We can implement everything from the design and delivery of application forms, including on-line validations, over the Internet to the provision of user-friendly, web-based front-ends to existing systems (not necessarily provided by Radius) right down to the integration of Internet-based transactions between multiple systems. Moreover, all this can be linked to workflow and/or call centre technology to deliver state-of-the art systems for electronic service delivery.

For further information please visit the e-government practitioner's area on our website at: www.radiusplc.co.uk/radius/practitioners/index.html.

New contract awards

Bassetlaw DC
Corby BC
East Staffordshire BC
Havant BC
Ipswich BC
LB of Barking & Dagenham
LB of Greenwich
LB of Hammersmith & Fulham
LB of Harrow
LB of Merton
Macclesfield BC
Prescription Pricing Authority
Rochdale MBC
Stonham Housing Association
Wandsworth BC

Havant Borough Council reduces housing benefit fraud and increases productivity

As the pressure to meet central government anti-fraud targets increases, Havant Borough Council has joined a growing number of local authorities in implementing the RadiusFDMS fraud detection and management system.

Havant has always appeared high on Central Government league tables which track benefit fraud detection. RadiusFDMS has allowed the Council to extend its anti-fraud capabilities and at the same time increase both officer productivity and detection rates. "We conservatively estimate that as a result of the time saved by using the Radius system, each investigator will be able to identify one additional fraud per month," said Alan Patrick, Investigations Manager at Havant. "The additional subsidy earned from this will more than justify the expenditure," he added.

Commenting on the wide ranging capabilities of the system, Patrick said, "We envisage that the data warehousing facility available within RadiusFDMS will enable us to take a far more pro-active approach, as it will be possible to access details from all existing computer systems and databases within the Authority. For example, investigating officers will be able to cross-check suspected fraudulent claimants against other department's databases which include registered taxi drivers, street traders, and of course the electoral register."

In addition, RadiusFDMS has the potential to provide a rapid return on Havant's investment as a result of incremental Weekly Benefit Savings subsidies", said Steve Talbot, Radius' Anti-fraud Manager.

Powersolve 2000 launched

At the Powersolve User Group meeting in mid September, Radius announced the introduction of Powersolve 2000, the next version of its market-leading Financial Management Information System.

Powersolve 2000 contains a range of additional functionality which allows customers to support the concepts of interoperability and to gain the benefits of e-government now, through process re-engineering and process improvement. It introduces:

- Support for industry-standard XML documents such as purchase orders and invoices
- e-billing
- Secure Internet transactions for suppliers and customers
- Improved intranet access for budget holders
- Much improved security through digital authentication

It also offers close integration with Radius' e-procurement, e-payments and digital imaging modules to provide the complete solution for local authorities wishing to introduce true interoperability both externally, and internally between the authority's departments.

Powersolve 2000 was well received by the users and the Chairperson of the group, Jane Pearson of Ribble Valley BC said "the new functionality of Powersolve 2000 and the benefits it brings, will ease many local authorities into e-government."

Commenting on its launch, Phil Benton, Radius' Managing Director, said, "the launch of Powersolve 2000 demonstrates Radius' commitment to monitoring the changing needs of our local authority customers, and to future-proofing their investment in Radius' products. Not only are we addressing their changing functional needs, we are also focussing on providing e-government solutions which are secure and will help to minimise the opportunity for fraudulent activity in an increasingly inter-connected environment.

Through our development programme, which is targeted specifically at the needs of local authorities, we are retaining our market-leading status as a supplier of best-of-breed systems to local authorities, whilst also aiming to become a leading supplier of e-government products and services. As the requirements of our customers continue to change, Radius will ensure that its customers have access to the necessary improvements, in both functional and technical areas, to gain the benefits that they need to remain competitive in a Best Value e-government environment."

Making income returns a paperless exercise

Due to the variety of sources one of the greatest challenges to finance departments is probably the speedy processing of miscellaneous income. This was a particular problem for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham which has in excess of 56 schools. Each school has to collect and either bank or pass to the cash office what can be a considerable sum of money, mainly from dinner money. Part of the process inevitably includes the completion of a paper return detailing the money banked, or to be banked, and a breakdown of the amounts against their requisite ledger codes. These then have to be keyed in to update their general ledger.

As the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham was already a user of Radius/CON for cash receipting, they were aware of the exciting new facilities being made available via the Internet and intranet. They approached Radius about taking their system (which already offers unique return processing) a stage further by providing a simple data return screen via their Intranet.

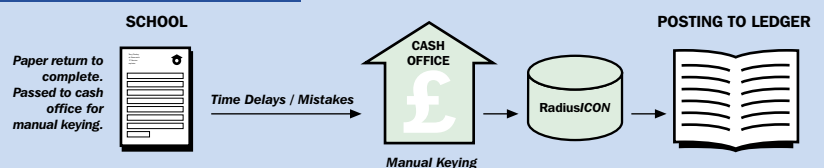
As a result of this, Radius/CON now enables users to define data input templates, which handle the processing of any miscellaneous income at source. Using an authority's own intranet and web pages, these can be tailored to suit individual establishments - schools in the case of Barking and Dagenham, or leisure centres, libraries, or any area where income is collected and/or banked separately.

Screen templates can be set up with pre-defined income codes so that the user has only to enter the relevant amounts. Banking deposit information, such as the paying in slip reference and the amount banked, can also be entered onto the same screen for automatic reconciliation with the user's bank statement.

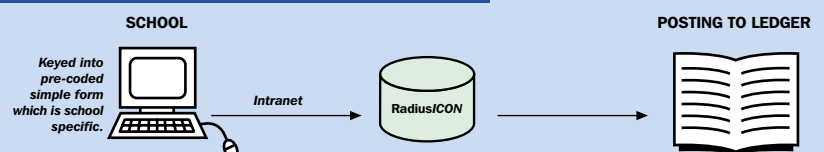
These unique web pages increase productivity and reduce coding error at source, further benefiting the finance department by eliminating the need to re-key. Once completed, they can be viewed for final checking before being posted to the ledger and appropriate feeder funds as part of the automated overnight process, using the built-in scheduler.

LB of Barking & Dagenham INCOME RETURNS

EXISTING MANUAL PROCESSING



USING Radius/CON INTRANET RETURNS PROCESSING



Greenwich Council moves towards full e-procurement environment with RadiusOrbit



Radius is pleased to announce that the London Borough of Greenwich has purchased RadiusOrbit to complement its use of RadiusPASS: a creditors, debtors, stores and procurement portfolio. RadiusOrbit enables the Authority

to deploy self-service requisitioning and ordering throughout the organisation and to take advantage of the time and cost savings available through the use of electronic procurement. The integrated Greenwich Borough system handles in excess of £200 million of orders annually and forms a vital part of the Borough's role in demonstrating Best Value in local government.

Terry Dowley at Greenwich IT Services, explains, "A key part of our work involves not only controlling the expenditure within the Council but also the procurement of approved supplies at the best price. But, with over 300 users, there are always opportunities for non-standard items to be ordered from unapproved suppliers and not at the best price. With the implementation of RadiusOrbit we will be able to virtually eliminate 'maverick' purchases without increasing the red tape. In fact, we will be automating many of the processes that, at present, have had to be carried out manually. This will enable Greenwich Borough to keep staff costs down, increase productivity, and reduce the overall time it takes to process an internal order. In addition, the Council's catalogue holds details on several thousand items and is held centrally. RadiusOrbit will enable the catalogue to be updated directly by suppliers, giving the Council the immediate benefit of any price or product changes."

Commenting on the implementation, Phil Benton, Managing Director of Radius says, "We are delighted to have extended our relationship with Greenwich. Looking further ahead they are well placed to take advantage of new developments within RadiusOrbit, as e-commerce spreads into local government."

Radius/CON Bank Reconciliation goes live in Scotland

Both Scottish Borders and Fife Councils have now completed implementation of Radius/CON's Bank Reconciliation module.

The primary requirement of Scottish Borders was for a Bank Reconciliation system to replace an original supplier's solution, which had failed to deliver for over 18 months. Following exhaustive discussions and demonstrations, Scottish Borders chose to replace the original supplier's solution with Radius/CON - Cash Receipting and Bank Reconciliation.

The first phase of the replacement project was to implement Cash Receipting. This was done successfully to tight time-scales and with no disruption or visibility to the public. Once completed, the next phase was to deliver, test and go live with Bank Reconciliation. This phase, too, was implemented successfully on-line with minimal disruption.

Extensive automation of much of the bank statement reconciliation, coupled with the ability to reconcile multiple bank accounts on a daily basis, has significantly reduced the amount of manual resource required. It has also allowed the Authority to bring forward revenue system billing runs by a full seven days.

Fife Council implemented Radius/CON cash receipting in 1999 with over 120 concurrent users across more than 50 sites. The second phase of the project was to replace the Bank Reconciliation system with an integrated solution that would provide more effective response and management information.

Rochdale improves the processing of benefit claims with Radius verification framework solution

Rochdale MBC has recently signed contracts for Radius/VCS, the leading verification framework software product. Initially installed in the Authority's information services department, it will be used for logging and tracking benefit claims. It will be invaluable to information services staff who will be able to register claims and to give accurate advice to customers of their progress throughout the verification procedure.

By making use of an electronic application form, the benefit claim will be processed more accurately and quickly and will help to prevent backlogs. On successful completion of the pilot in one of the many service centres, the intention will be to make Radius/VCS available to staff on an authority-wide basis.

The Prescription Pricing Authority chases debt with RadiusARMS

The PPA is a Special Health Authority whose primary function is the processing of NHS prescriptions in England. The PPA approached Radius at the end of 1999 to discuss the suitability of RadiusARMS for collecting debts owed by patients wrongly claiming to be exempt from health charges. A contract was signed in April 2000 for a 17 user RadiusARMS licence, together with some bespoke work, to enable them to administer the 100,000 cases that they expect per year.

East Staffordshire moves to Powersolve

East Staffordshire Borough Council, a long-standing Radius user, has recently signed a seven-year agreement to replace their current ledgers with Powersolve. The project, including a comprehensive implementation and conversion service, is due for completion by 1st November 2000. In addition to Powersolve, the Council has also purchased RadiusARMS to assist with the court processing of debt recovery. There are now over 70 users of Powersolve, retaining its status as the leading financial management information system in local authority use.

Ipswich Borough Council purchases Powersolve Debtors

Ipswich Borough Council has been a Radius client for many years and uses the PASS Debtors system to invoice and collect its sundry debt. The Council aims to take a lead in the use of new technology and has just renewed its commitment to Radius and upgraded to Powersolve Debtors in the process.

In addition to the Powersolve Debtors module, Ipswich Borough Council has also opted to use the comprehensive BusinessObjects end-user enquiry and reporting tools. A major factor in the Council's decision was the ability of Radius to provide a straightforward conversion of all its existing debtors' data.

Sundry debt recovery at Bassetlaw

Bassetlaw District Council, based in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, has opted to purchase RadiusARMS and Powersolve Debtors to provide a total sundry debt recovery system for the Authority.

The initial requirement was to satisfy operational needs within Legal Services using RadiusARMS. Early discussions revealed that significant benefits would also be gained in Finance Services by implementing Radius' market-leading Powersolve Debtors package. This integrated solution aims to provide a much more effective means of sundry debt recovery throughout the Authority.

e-forms - the challenge

As the Inland Revenue found out with its ill-fated self-assessment form, making intelligent application/claim forms available on the Internet is not a straightforward exercise. Indeed, handled the wrong way it can be extremely painful when the citizen attempts to use the facility.

The form has to be usable by citizens operating a wide range of computers such as PC, Mac, and Linux as well as different software environments including Explorer, Netscape and Opera. Yet it also has to provide a consistent and user-friendly experience with minimum download time. To achieve this, Radius supplies e-forms solutions based on Jetform's ReachForm™ so that any person connected to the Internet can access, complete and submit the data, regardless of browser type and platform, without needing to download any proprietary software or plug-ins.

ReachForm™ also overcomes the problems of trying to download large forms with in-built validations (i.e. for validation to run on the PC or client) and minimises network traffic by implementing server-side validation of data, reducing download times and enhancing the user experience.

Radius' e-forms solution allows multiple user options for form completion:

- Supply of a blank form for printing and completion by hand with manual submission, for instance by post
- Presentation of a blank form on the screen allowing the user to type in the data directly, with the data being validated on the server. Alternatively, the user can print the form as above, or submit it electronically through the website
- Use of *forms wizards* to work through question and answer routines. The data is then injected automatically into the electronic form, again with facilities to print out the form or submit it electronically through the website

ReachForm™ technology is also able to support electronic/digital signatures, e.g. using Entrust or ViaCode, for the authenticated, electronic submission of forms.

To support e-GIF compliance and with the objective of open operability, once a form is submitted electronically using ReachForm™, it can be presented both as a PDF image for viewing and printing, and in an XML format for transfer to, or processing by, other computer systems.

Radius releases RadiusXMLGateway

Radius recently announced the release of RadiusXMLGateway, designed and developed by its special e-commerce team in Watford.

As an object-oriented system, it truly 'bolts on' and will allow existing applications to both generate XML documents automatically and to send and/or receive documents between trading partners. To achieve this, RadiusXMLGateway uses the latest XML technologies to produce and process data to the new internationally accepted BASDA standards for purchase orders and invoices. Using Microsoft Back Office technologies and e-mail APIs, RadiusXMLGateway can generate XML documents and additionally attach them to standard text e-mails for trading partners to process. It will equally accept XML attachments from partners and automatically present them to the existing application interfaces for import.

Improved Practitioners' Guides

The newly updated Radius website contains a Practitioner's section (www.radiusplc.co.uk/radius/practitioners/index.html) which provides the reader with information and thought-provoking comment for practitioners involved in the following areas:

- e-government
- e-procurement
- fraud prevention
- financial management information systems
- debt management
- income management/cash receipting
- work management

There is a short overview of each area, followed by briefing documents on related topics. Documents that have recently been added to the site include:

- Information Age Government Targets
- The e-GIF
- The Real Benefits of Interoperability
- e-forms
- Finance 2005
- Activity Based Costing

Some also contain links to relevant websites. The documents do not contain product information in general, although you do have the opportunity to link to any of the Radius solutions.

HOW TO GET YOUR FREE VIDEO

Cash receipting - case study at the London Borough of Harrow

Radius and Microsoft have produced a short video explaining the business benefits of Radius/CON within the cashier's department.

Tracking the success of the London Borough of Harrow the video, which lasts approximately 10 minutes, includes comments from users of the system, information on Radius and Microsoft, as well as an overview of the strategy behind the deployment of the system from the Head of Financial and Exchequer Services at Harrow.

To reserve your copy please e-mail templetonj@radiusplc.co.uk

For details on our latest events visit:

www.radiusplc.co.uk/radius/newsevents/index.html