

Global Design & Engineering Firm Broadens Value of Oracle EBS with Cloud Apps for HR



Client Profile: Atkins is a design, engineering and project management consultancy that takes on complex challenges in the energy, transportation and infrastructure markets.

Industry: Architectural and Engineering

Geography: Headquartered in London, with 178 offices across 23 countries.

Revenue: GBP £1.86 billion

Employees: 18,050

Supported Products: Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) 11.5.10, Oracle Database 11.2.03, Oracle Internet Application Server, Internet Developer Suite

ATKINS

"Rimini Street is helping us implement our core hybrid IT philosophy."

Randy Martin

Director of Corporate Systems
Atkins

Atkins, whose motto is "Plan, Design, Enable," is the UK's largest engineering consultancy and the fourth largest engineering and architectural consultancy in Europe.

The Atkins Challenge

Atkins' business revolves around managing some of the world's most challenging design and engineering projects. As a result, the Oracle EBS Projects application was identified as a key tool for the company. After years of rapid growth, Atkins spent 18 months implementing and customizing Oracle EBS 11.5.10 for its North American operations, going live in 2008.

"Oracle Projects is highly extensible — and I say extensible versus customizable because you can do it within the framework of the application without really touching Oracle's code," explains Randy Martin, Director of Corporate Systems for Atkins. "We have put a lot of specific logic into all sorts of areas — everything from revenue recognition to labor costing — and now we have an application that's very well configured to our business."

In 2013, Martin's team found themselves in a position familiar to many other organizations running Oracle: EBS 11.5.10 was moving to Sustaining Support, which meant virtually no support. The team at Atkins was very happy with their EBS stable system; it was performing and delivering what the business needed. They weighed their options of upgrading their system or breaking out of the traditional ERP upgrade cycle and driving their own roadmap.

The problem with upgrading to R12 — or tackling a brand new implementation project with Oracle Fusion Cloud — was that there was no business justification, no return on investment, to do so at that time. Martin says, "It was obvious Oracle wasn't putting much real investment into its legacy products — Oracle clearly seems to be investing mostly in its cloud business models with little in the way of enhancements for our EBS system."

In fact, Atkins wanted to embark on a hybrid IT strategy and implement a series of emerging cloud-based applications for HCM, payroll, recruiting and benefits that would enhance its established EBS system. "We defined a core hybrid IT guideline: New systems will go to the cloud unless there's a compelling reason why they should not be in the cloud," Martin explains.

Benefits

- **Avoided expensive, disruptive EBS upgrade** but can upgrade in the future at a time that makes business sense with a managed archive process
- **Cut annual support fees by 50 percent**, freeing up funds for innovation in other parts of the business
- **Received ultra-responsive service** including support for customized code

“Had we gone to R12, that would have consumed a lot of resources just to do the upgrade — and then certainly it would have resulted in more time and effort needed for stabilization and making changes in processes. The decision to stay on 11.5.10 helped allow our resources to be redirected to other critical projects.”

Randy Martin

Director of Corporate Systems
Atkins

For More Information

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Atkins proceeded in a search to identify a third-party support solution for EBS that would support those business’ goals, enable innovation around EBS 11.5.10 and comply with regulatory updates. In addition to these priorities, “Our conclusion was that Rimini Street would actually offer more comprehensive and responsive support,” Martin says.

The Rimini Street Solution

Along with moving its EBS support to Rimini Street, Atkins also moved its Oracle Database and Oracle Fusion Middleware support. Now the team enjoys better support of all their Oracle products.

Better yet, Atkins could change the way they looked at dedicating resources by reinvesting cost savings and shifting attention to innovation rather than self-support or unnecessary upgrades. Not only was Atkins’ team receiving more responsive attention for basic ERP support issues, but they no longer had to devote resources to support their EBS customizations.

“With Oracle, you were always kind of tiptoeing around any customizations that you added because the moment they discovered any, it was either, ‘Well, we can’t help you since you’ve customized that particular part of the application,’ or ‘You need to disable your customization so we can prove that it’s not what’s causing the problem,’” Martin says. This support model necessitated self-support and increased Atkins’ total cost of maintenance.

“With Rimini Street, it was always made clear to us, even before we came on board, that customization support was core to their support program. It wasn’t a hard black-and-white line between what’s Oracle code versus our extensions or customizations,” he adds.

Client Results

Now that its IT resources have been liberated to perform more value-added tasks than basic ERP support and maintenance, Atkins is extending its technology platform to grow the business. “We’re making inroads in the cloud peripherally around our ERP — especially in the HR/HCM area. We now use Choicelinx for our benefits,” Martin says, adding that Atkins is also utilizing ADP, which is starting to offer more cloud-oriented solutions.

For talent management, Atkins is tapping Taleo from Oracle as well as Cornerstone. Developing a hybrid IT approach enables the company to be more agile and responsive.

Since moving to independent support, Martin reports that Atkins has seen more engagement from Oracle, not less, covering both technology stack conversations and cloud applications. “Most people seem to feel that staying on Oracle support is for risk mitigation or that Oracle might hamper their efforts to maintain their system or move to the cloud — but that’s not been the case. Our relationship has improved,” Martin says. “I think, overall, making the move to independent support has increased our ability to redirect resources to strategic initiatives.”

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