

CASE STUDY

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES BOARD (PRTB)

VULCAN IMPLEMENTS MICROSOFT DYNAMICS CRM AT THE PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES BOARD TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PRODUCTIVITY

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Minister Michael Finneran TD, Minister for Local Services & Housing



Pictured (L-R) at the launch of the PRTB's Tenancies Management System in the Custom House, were Tony Johnstone, Operations Director, Vulcan Solutions, Anne Marie Caulfield, Director of the PTRB, Minister Michael Finneran TD., Minister for Housing & Local Services at the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Orla Coyne, Chairperson of the PRTB, and Cian McNamara, Managing Director, Vulcan Solutions.

THE CUSTOMER

Employing over 70 people in Ireland, the PRTB is an independent statutory body whose responsibilities include:

1. The operation of a national registration system for all private residential tenancies.
2. The operation of a dispute resolution service involving mediation or adjudication and tenancy tribunal hearings.
3. The provision of information, carrying out of research, and the provision of policy advice regarding the private rented sector.

BUSINESS SITUATION

As the independent statutory body responsible for operating a national registration system and dispute resolution service for all private residential tenancies, the PRTB required a custom, integrated information system and associated services to support its key business functions. This system would manage the tenancy registrations and disputes of the 350,000 tenants and 100,000 landlords registered in Ireland.

SOLUTION

- Custom, integrated Line-of-business application delivered on the Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform.
- Complete IT service; business analysis, project management, solution design, software development, systems integration, system implementation, training, user documentation, support and maintenance.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

The key business benefits delivered to the PRTB include:

- Improved Customer Service
- Improved Productivity
- Strategic Development Platform

BUSINESS SITUATION

The Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB) was formed in 2001 under the aegis of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG). The Board was formally established on 1st September 2004 as a result of the enactment of the *Residential Tenancies Act 2004* (RTA2004).

The PRTB is an independent statutory body whose responsibilities include:

1. The operation of a national registration system for all private residential tenancies through a system of 4-year tenancy cycles.
2. The operation of a dispute resolution service involving mediation or adjudication and tenancy tribunal hearings.
3. The provision of information, carrying out of research, and the provision of policy advice regarding the private rented sector.

In 2009, the PRTB went to market for a custom, integrated information system and associated services to support its key business functions. The chosen system would have to be capable of managing the PRTB's business processes in relation to the tenancy registrations and disputes of the 350,000 tenants and 100,000 landlords registered in Ireland.

The key requirements of this project included:

Solution: The provision of a scalable, highly customised and integrated solution, on a proven platform. This system would have to replace legacy systems and automate the PRTB's existing paper-based business processes.

Full Service Offering: The PRTB required a complete range of system implementation services including project management, business analysis, software development, systems integration, training and ongoing support & maintenance.



SOLUTION

Following a competitive tender process, the PRTB commissioned Vulcan Solutions to deliver a Tenancies Management System (TMS) on the Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform. The TMS system provided by Vulcan is an enterprise SOA solution, and it automates the key business processes at PRTB for registrations, registration enforcement, disputes and tribunals.

The TMS solution has delivered significant benefits in relation to customer service and productivity at PRTB. It also addresses the PRTB's key strategic objectives which include extending its core offerings through new channels, a move to a paperless office, and the adoption of an extensible RAD platform that can quickly adapt to changing business and legislative requirements. The TMS implementation included the full data migration (using a custom framework) of 2 million records from PRTB's legacy applications.

The new TMS system delivers a wide range of functionality which includes:

- A secure online portal for registrations and customer self-service (<https://www.prtb.ie/>).
- A CRM application for internal PRTB staff which is fully integrated with the portal.
- A payment processing subsystem, correspondence management system, and workflow.
- A Document Management System (DMS) which incorporates integrated scanning for financial documents (cheques, postal orders, bank drafts) and associates them with CRM payment records using advanced OCR/ICR techniques.
- Rapid, efficient and cost-effective entry of legacy non-standard paper-based registrations using an Excel-based Bulk Data Loader.
- Significant integrations with third parties including Realex, DFSA, PrintPost and PostTrack PCI.
- Comprehensive reporting and BI functionality leveraging SSRS, SSAS, and Performance Point.

The solution is also notable for the degree that it extends the capabilities of the MS CRM platform through the development of custom frameworks. Most notably:

- **Portal Architecture Framework:** This significantly extends the capabilities of the Microsoft e-Service Accelerator by delivering fully functional internet facing portals. It includes full localisation support, comprehensive logging/notification, dynamic data caching, entity consolidation, transaction management and integration with Vulcan's proprietary Rules Framework.
- **Rules Framework:** Enables the sharing of validation, UI and business rules across portals, MS CRM and SharePoint platforms.
- **Locking Framework:** This framework enhances the record-locking functionality of MS CRM by ensuring that two people cannot modify the same record at the same time across the CRM and portal applications.
- **Batch Processing Framework:** For the definition and management of complex enterprise-level batch processing.
- **Geo-Coding Framework:** Full validation on all addresses leveraging a custom geo-coding subsystem which incorporates fuzzy matching and complex partial matching algorithms.

As the sole vendor on this substantial project, Vulcan Solutions is providing a range of services to PRTB including project management, business analysis, solution design, software development, systems integration, data migration and training. This project has been underway since January 2010. The first phase went live during Q3 of 2010.

TECHNOLOGY

Vulcan Solutions utilised a wide range of technologies and processes in the delivery of this solution:

- Microsoft Dynamics CRM 4.0.
- Microsoft SharePoint 2007.
- MS SQL Server; T-SQL, Stored Procedures, Reporting Services (SSRS), Integration Services (SSIS) & Analysis Services (SSAS).
- .NET Framework 3.5, ASP .NET, C#.
- Microsoft Exchange Server.
- Vulcan Solutions Components & Frameworks.
- Microsoft Internet Information Server (IIS).
- Microsoft Windows Workflow Foundation (WF).
- SOA, XML & Web Services.
- Performance Point.
- Geo-Coding.
- Data Migration.
- Document Management.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

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- **Improved Customer Service** - TMS has provided the PRTB with a secure online registration portal for landlords and agents and a Single Customer View across all of its activities.
- **Improved Productivity** - The solution has replaced paper based registrations with online registrations and provided a Bulk Data Loader to accelerate data input for manual registrations. It has also provided an integrated DMS solution incorporating OCR/ICR scanning functionality and automated a range of key business processes using MS CRM's workflow.
- **Strategic Development Platform** - The implementation of MS CRM provides PRTB with a flexible RAD platform, reducing cost, risk, and timelines, for future business applications.

ABOUT VULCAN SOLUTIONS

Established in 1989, Vulcan Solutions is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner with certified competencies in software development, Microsoft business solutions, and portals and collaboration. Vulcan specialises in the provision of custom line-of-business applications on the Microsoft Dynamics CRM and Microsoft SharePoint platforms. It enables organisations to leverage Microsoft's integrated technology stack to create world-class software solutions.

Vulcan has experience of delivering and supporting mission-critical and enterprise-scale business applications to major organisations in Ireland, UK and USA. Its clients include the Road Safety Authority (RSA), the Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB), NUI Galway, Marsh, and One Direct (An Post).

Vulcan has implemented a wide range of xRM solutions for its clients in the private and public sectors. Applications delivered include Case Management, Registration, Licensing Management, Training & Certification Systems, Communications Management, Policy and Claims Management, and Helpdesk Solutions.

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