

COLLABORATION DRIVES INNOVATION AT BAILLIE GIFFORD

Brian Hunter, Systems Support Manager for Baillie Gifford, has worked with Linedata Icon throughout his career. Although he did not work with Baillie Gifford when Linedata Icon was first adopted in 1992, he knew that the firm had something of a 'build versus buy' orientation.

Still, Baillie Gifford did not want to devote the resources required to make and maintain something as complex as a fund administration platform at that time. Ultimately, Baillie Gifford went with Linedata Icon, which Hunter said was recognized as "the best solution in the market."

"There's nothing else that encompasses our whole business the way that Linedata Icon does. We couldn't do without it."

Linedata Icon quickly became integral to Baillie Gifford's operations: "It's the asset and valuation platform used in all our internal systems," said Hunter. "There's nothing else that encompasses our whole business the way that Linedata Icon does. We couldn't do without it."

Linedata Icon continues to add value at Baillie Gifford, automating complex labour-intensive processes at the firm. This allows Baillie Gifford to re-allocate internal staff members who were burdened with time-consuming activities that needed to be completed before the opening bell.

"Before we were really struggling with the overnight tasks which needed to be done before the day began," said Hunter. "Now we have a bit of freedom to move other things around."

A GREAT PARTNERSHIP FROM THE START

Baillie Gifford also benefitted immediately from the relationship that it had with the team supporting Linedata Icon.

"Every year the product just gets better and better."

"We've always had a close working relationship with Linedata," said Hunter. "We work with Linedata to make sure that we get the best value from the product. It's not just a support relationship, although we do get good support."

from Linedata."

That great association translates into high-level interactions between management at Baillie Gifford and product experts at Linedata. These two groups work often together discuss the direction of the product, to ensure that it continues to be a good fit for Baillie Gifford for the long term.

BUSINESS SITUATION

Baillie Gifford based in Edinburgh, Scotland, is one of the UK's leading independently owned investment management firms. The firm's assets under management were a massive £72 billion at December 2010, a figure achieved by steady, organic growth.

In the early 1990's it became clear that Baillie Gifford needed a back-office system that could handle the breadth and depth of its operations. The firm had a history of successful in house development and needed to decide whether it was going to purchase a solution, or develop it in-house.

SOLUTION

Baillie Gifford decided to utilize Linedata Icon for its core fund accounting functions in 1992. Since then, Baillie Gifford has invested in Linedata's evolution of the Linedata Icon fund accounting platform. Baillie Gifford has provided insight and given input as Linedata developed Linedata Icon. This partnership has yielded client-side proof of concept on the features and functionality that have made Linedata Icon one of the leading back-office investment management, fund administration, valuation and reporting solutions.

AN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

“There are a number of items that we wanted included in later versions of the application,” said Hunter. “Things like amortization or swaps – we saw these things coming a few years ago (before they were ultimately included in Linedata Icon.) I think they were on the Linedata roadmap anyway, but it was nice to know that we had someone we could tell what we wanted to see in future versions of the product.”

“We meet with Linedata at least twice a year, and we meet senior people – the heads of product, development, consulting and client services,” said Hunter. “You don’t get any higher up than that at Linedata. That is great, because getting to the people at the top means that whatever we say, Linedata is getting our input and feedback first-hand.”

Hunter says that input has had a beneficial effect on the product, which allows it to add more value to Baillie Gifford’s business.

“Every year the product just gets better and better,” Hunter said. “Linedata Icon is a great solution; it does everything that we want it to do.”

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Many firms talk about their great partnerships, but Baillie Gifford is actively investing in the relationship with Linedata.

In early 2010, Linedata announced a plan to increase its ongoing investment in Linedata Icon, adding new functionality and changing the underlying technical platform, which included moving Linedata Icon to a new database. The database component is a particularly good fit for Baillie Gifford, since its in-house development team had experienced users of the same platform.

“We have a true partnership with Linedata.”

Because Baillie Gifford values its relationship with the Linedata Icon team, it volunteered staff to lend time and expertise to Linedata to assist in this migration. “Baillie is getting more involved in Linedata’s migration to a new database,” said Hunter.

“We’ve offered resources as well. It’s all part of the great relationship we have with Linedata.”

“I’ve told Linedata, ‘If there’s anything we can do to assist, please let us know – we’re here to help,’” added Hunter.

“The word ‘partnership’ gets bandied about quite a bit and sometimes it loses its meaning,” Hunter said. “But I would say we do have a true partnership with Linedata.”

KEY BENEFITS

- **Control** over Event Scheduling
- **Real-time** updates of transactions
- **Flexibility** to customize and configure
- **Strong technology** partnership
- **Personalized service** from senior Linedata technologists
- **Scalable solution** that grew with the Company

CONTACT US

Linedata Headquarters

19 rue d’Orléans
92 500 Neuilly-sur-Seine
France
Tel: + 33 (1) 47 77 68 25

Linedata

Northern Europe
85 Gracechurch Street
London EC3V 0AA
United Kingdom
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7469 8600

Linedata

Southern Europe
2-6 Place du Général De Gaulle
92160 Antony
France
Tel: + 33 1 46 11 70 00

Linedata

North America
260 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110
USA
Tel.: + 1 617 912 4700

Linedata Asia

Unit 901-902, 9/F
Li Po Chun Chambers
189 Des Voeux Road Central
Hong Kong
Tel: + 852 3583 7900