



Xicon at Work



Park Group plc is a success story
born out of enterprise and
excellence



Acknowledging the shortcomings of several of its systems and processes, Park engaged Xicon to review the business processes and supporting IT systems. The brief was to confirm Park's own thoughts and to propose a new architecture to improve the processes, flow and quality of data and the timeliness of the information

Park Group was founded in 1967 as a supplier of Christmas hampers and is now a long established specialist sub-prime financial services company, providing a range of personal loans, mortgages and insurance products.

Park is committed to being the best operator in their markets through continual improvement in the quality, profitability and value created by their businesses.

Recent growth and business change did however identify that several supporting computer systems in certain areas of the business were increasingly problematic, proving not to be agile enough to support the needs of the business. There were too many manual processes and in certain circumstances, time consuming reconciliation of crucial business data.



“Many thanks for the contribution that Xicon has made to Park Direct Credit Limited”, Chris Houghton, Group Managing Director

Why Xicon?

Xicon were recommended to Park by one of their senior managers who had worked with them extensively at another client. Although initially wary of another software development company, after several previous bad experiences with other suppliers, confidence grew quickly as Xicon repeatedly delivered to time and budget during the initial project stages.

Key Requirements

During Xicon's analysis exercise, the following key requirements were identified.

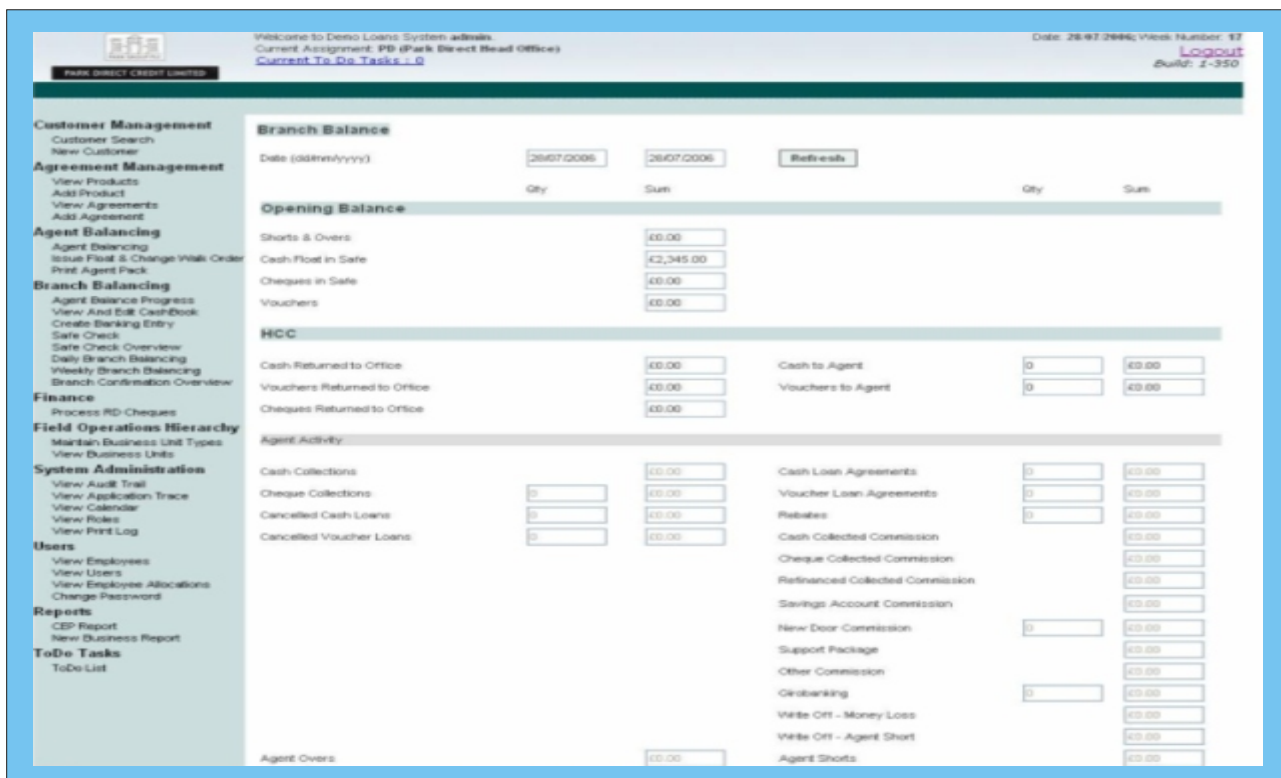
- To improve overall security for better transparency during auditing
- To create a single centralised repository of good quality customer information, for better customer management
- Various improvements to business performance reporting based on 'one version of the truth'
- Introduction of "to do" task workflow processing enabling task generation, task escalation, task maintenance, list viewing and reporting and closing tasks

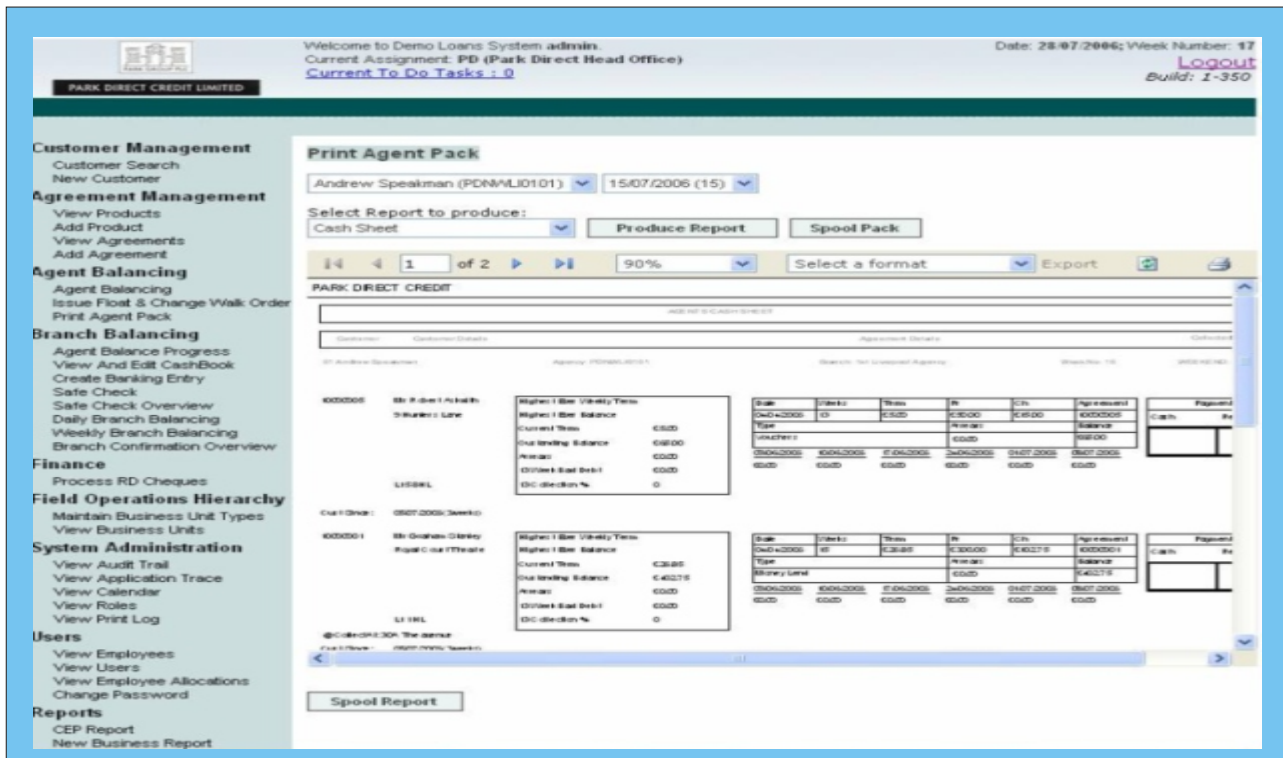
- To improve key business processes such as:
 - agreement management
 - payment and collection management
 - incidents and their association with agreements or compliance purposes
 - post and pre vetting for credit control and to perform money-laundering checks

Benefits

Park identified that the returns on this investment would be significant most notably

- Deliver significant cost savings
- To consolidate existing data, thereby providing a "single view of the truth"
- Provide improved financial controls





Solution Overview

Xicon's analysis exercise delivered a fully costed project plan for the design, development and roll out of the system enhancements. The focus was to significantly simplify and speed up the consolidation and reconciliation process as well as remove duplication of data entry. The solution also integrated with Park's existing applications including J. D. Edwards, Sentinel and DataMart.

Xicon's recommendation was to replace several old disparate systems written in Microsoft Access with a new web-based centralised solution to be developed in Microsoft Visual Studio 2005, connecting through to a Microsoft SQL Server 2005 database. Microsoft technology was chosen because of the following features:

- Park's preferred corporate technology
- Significantly increased developer productivity
- Reduced deployment and maintenance costs
- Enhanced mobile productivity tools

- Enhanced scalability and improved reliability
- Increase security
- Built in functionality for unit testing and configuration

The project was to be delivered in 3 phases enabling user acceptance testing and development to happen concurrently, suiting Park's plans to have the systems in place for key seasonal milestones.

During the design and development phases, Xicon worked extremely closely with Park's technical and business staff to ensure that the detailed requirements were successfully implemented. The plan was also sufficiently flexible to allow additional functionality to be dovetailed in.

Technology Summary

Xicon delivered the following components as part of the Prism project.

- Suite of Microsoft ASP.NET 2.0 web applications using VB.NET 2.0
- Centralised Microsoft SQL Server 2005 formed the single repository for the data
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Reporting Services used for reporting and letter generations
- Spooling mechanism for batch letters and reporting, including a client side print manager application

“ It was important that we found an company who were able to deliver to aggressive time-scales. Our internal team were totally submerged fire-fighting the current system.”



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About Us

Xicon is an IT services company. We have worked with our customers for more than 14 years to deliver powerful IT solutions that help businesses develop. Xicon does this through exceptional service delivery, which is only possible due to the high quality of the people in it's employ and the culture in which they operate.

Our mission

“To increase efficiency, effectiveness, and profitability of our clients through assistance and support, both strategic and tactical and by getting a better understanding of our clients business.”

For more information on Xicon's solutions, or to arrange a meeting with one of Xicon's Principal Consultants please contact Anna Gronnow on 01925 248 224.

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