

# Life IT give Dawson Home Group the finishing touch



DAWSON | HOME GROUP

Dawson Home Group (DHG) is a £30 million supplier of luxury home textile products based in Manchester. They design, market, source and distribute fine bed linen, curtains, towels, throws and accessories.

Major customers include Dunelm Mill, Marks & Spencer, John Lewis, House of Fraser and Harrods, and Dawson Home Group also sells to a broad spectrum of smaller independent retailers of luxury home textile goods throughout the UK.

In 2007 DHG purchased an IBM i 520 specifically to run the Lawson M3 ERP application. Lawson M3 was selected to replace an in-house developed solution which was running on an HP3000 server.

DHG decided to outsource their system i operations to a specialist company, rather than employing their own dedicated staff. This approach would significantly reduce their costs – and also broaden the range of skills available to them.

DHG needed a business partner who could deliver more than just a technical support contract; as they did not have their own skills in-house, DHG wanted a complete services solution for their environment.

Life IT has strong skills in System i, and an excellent relationship with Lawson, so was the perfect partner for DHG.

## Overview

### ***The Challenge***

Dawson did not have the in-house IBM System i skills they needed to support their new Lawson M3 ERP implementation.

### ***The Solution***

Life IT delivered a combined operational and technical support solution, which included remote and on-site support, systems monitoring and backup consultancy.

### ***The Benefits***

Life IT significantly reduced Dawson Home Group's forecasted costs. DHG accessed a range of services that delivered proactive systems management as well as remedial support, within a transparent and predictable cost structure.

The two companies worked together to create a services plan. They considered DHG's own capabilities and identified the gaps in their skills. Dawson Home Group explained how they use the system and the business activities it supported, and clarified the nature of the support they wanted. With their understanding of Dawson's systems and processes Life were able to take this one stage further, working with DHG team members to set up automatic monitoring.

The combined team then drew up a schedule that included:

- A dedicated help desk to report issues
- Out of hours support when required
- Support processes and documentation
- Remote & on-site support
- Management & escalation of issues within IBM

Once Life's monitoring software, Lifeline, was installed it allowed DHG to user configure the tool to monitor any Lawson M3 jobs, in particular critical overnight batch jobs This specialist software allows Life to remotely manage critical tasks for DHG, and to quickly respond to any system events. Remote cover significantly reduced system management costs for DHG, but still delivered the expert skills they need to manage their Lawson M3 environment.

DHG's support contract was designed to be as flexible as possible; they could integrate other Life services into their program on a regular, or ad-hoc basis, as required. Life supplemented their remedial cover with a series of pro-active activities, including:

- Technical reviews
- PTF & Operating system upgrades
- Backup process amendments specific to Lawson M3
- Operational support – e.g. disk space management & printer configuration
- Automatic Monitoring of LawsonM3 jobs
- Hardware support calls – e.g. disk failure
- Consultancy, e.g. performance tuning, Mentoring/Training
- Weekend on-call

These services were all 'called off' DHG's annual support contract so the company was able to predict and manage their spending.

#### **About Life IT Ltd**

Life IT focus on providing the best System i support, solutions and infrastructure for our customers' needs. As an IBM Premier Business Partner we provide a full range of services for the System i from sizing, configuration, hardware and implementation services, through to system support and maintenance.

We can ensure that you have the service and support you need to keep your System i running on a day-to-day basis, and that you are aware of the latest upgrades and new technology.

Our system i Services include:

- Support
- Consultancy
- Training
- Application Development
- Business Continuity
- Virtualisation

*“The key to this successful support solution has been the close working relationship between Dawson and Life. The interface between the two companies is both efficient and seamless.”*

Steve Alexander  
IT Manager  
Dawson Home Group

**life**  
A world of support

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