



# Thornton & Firkin Call Centre Software

## Problem

Thornton and Firkin opened a call center in order to aid in the management of repairs to machinery found in airport outlets. Initially, they used a small in-house database to manage the calls but limitations were soon reached and it was deemed necessary for the development of a fully functional bespoke solution. The new system would offer the protection of data needed and manage response and report requirements.

## Solution

The requirements of the system were forwarded to Wolf Consultancy and work began on developing the software. The system needed to capture all necessary data, be fully searchable, and have a flexible reporting system. To compound the difficulty of this development, a very restrictive timescale was applied so as to meet the requirements of their suppliers.

The initial requirements needed to fit in with the existing hardware infrastructure, a peer-to-peer network consisting of approximately twelve computers. Because of this, and the clients requirements, an Access database was developed and an interface designed in Visual Basic. The solution proved very successful, and the business grew. As throughput and reporting requirements increased, Wolf Consultancy offered further pro-active advice, suggesting to move all business critical data to a central network server, offering improved security, availability, scalability and full disaster recovery. With the improved networking facilities came the availability of a change of database engine. The transition to a true server based engine would allow significant performance improvements as well as further security.

To enable all of the mentioned benefits, an MSDE (Microsoft Database Engine) was installed on the server, with a conversion routine developed to import all of the data from the previous Access database. The MSDE offers all of the advantages of a full SQL sever installation, only without the cost. It also offers an easy path from which to extend the capacity of the network In the future using a simple upgrade to a full SQL server.

## Savings

The system has been live and active since July 2002 and continues to be used to completely manage the call center. A number of new features have since been added to the system by Wolf Consultancy to accommodate new business requirements. This has enabled the size and cost of the call center to a minimum, whilst the business grows in profitability.



**Fig. 1: Central Network Server**

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