



The Confederation of British Industry

The CBI is the UK's leading employers' organisation. Founded in 1965, it is an institution whose objective is to create and sustain the conditions in which business in the UK can prosper. As such, the CBI has a clear understanding of the importance of good systems for the management and control of a



business, and has carefully selected its internal IT systems to ensure that they contribute to its own effectiveness.

For fixed assets management, the CBI has chosen asset management systems from AssetWare Technology, a leading supplier of fixed asset systems to both the public and private sector. AssetWare's flagship product, AssetPro, is installed in the CBI's

London Head Office, and provides financial management and control of all assets over the CBI's thirteen regions nationwide.

As a distributed organisation, an important requirement for the CBI is that its systems can be configured to correspond with its organisational structure. Assets belong to a particular region and are also classified into categories and sub-categories. Varying depreciation rates are applied to different groups of assets. Explains Assistant Accountant Dino Thompson; "One of the problems we had with our previous asset management system was that we had to go to several different reports in order to pull together the information we needed. When we installed AssetPro, one of AssetWare's consultants helped us to set up the system so that it reflected the structure of our organisation and our method of classifying assets. We were able to modify AssetPro's standard reports so that they show individual assets and groups of assets, by category and by region, with totals for all our financial reporting units."

One of AssetPro's reports has been further customised so that it shows the depreciation rates being

applied to various categories of assets. This greatly facilitates the regular review of depreciation rates, which the CBI carries out as part of its financial control procedures. "We were pleased to see how quickly and easily we could modify the system to suit our needs," says Thompson.

The CBI operates to a monthly update and reporting cycle. Information generated by the CBI's financial accounting system is used to update AssetPro. At the end of each month, the Finance department reviews purchases, monitors the value of assets, and reviews the actual depreciation figures against those budgeted.

"AssetPro is very fast and accurate when it comes to depreciation calculation," says Thompson.

"When we set up the system, we transferred some information from our old system to an Excel spreadsheet, then imported it to AssetPro. There were several areas of discrepancy, and in all cases these were because of the scrupulous accuracy of AssetPro. For example, AssetPro uses a 365 day year rather than basing its calculations on 12 months, and it calculates depreciation from purchase date rather than addition date."

The CBI also makes use of the powerful forecasting facilities of AssetPro. The standard forecasting period of a year can easily be modified, and Thompson has used AssetPro to forecast depreciation for the next ten years, enabling the CBI to plan its asset acquisition programme and maximise the use of its financial resources.

Future plans include making use of AssetPro's ability to scan in documents in order to streamline data entry, as well as to scan in pictures of assets. The CBI are now considering the use of AssetAuditor, AssetWare's bar-coding and asset auditing system.

AssetWare Technology's asset management systems will continue to make a significant contribution to supporting the CBI in its important work as a key representative of business in Britain