

Technology Business Intelligence Products

US clothing firm trials BI system in the UK

by **Will Hadfield**

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US-based clothing manufacturer Russell Corporation is using the UK to trial a global roll-out of business intelligence software.

Russell Corporation, which owns brands including Russell Athletic and Jerzees, has implemented the TXT e-Solutions system at its European headquarters in Livingston, Scotland.

The production and demand planning modules of TXT e-Solutions were deployed at Russell Europe last October.

Russell Corporation wanted to see how the applications worked in the smaller European business before deploying the system in the US.

The European business has sales of £45m a year, compared with the US business' sales of almost £600m a year.

Stewart Wilson, Russell Europe's IT director, said, "They [the US] were very keen to see how it went with us first. Because we went through the pain, they have a headstart on their side of things."

Russell Corporation's US headquarters went live with the production planning module last November, but will wait until April or May this year before implementing the demand planning module.

The production and demand planning applications replaced spreadsheet-based applications in Europe and legacy software systems in the US.

Russell Europe needed a business intelligence system because its number of stock-keeping units had increased from 3,000 to 4,000 in just two years as the business grew.

The applications enabled Russell Europe to spend more time forecasting market trends.

"With the spreadsheets, 80% of the planners' time was spent manipulating data and 20% analysing it," said Wilson.

"We have swapped that round now. What we have done is reduce our head count in the production planning area by half and moved [the employees] into forecasting."