

Customer success story

Lecky's Electrical & Data

Industry

Wholesale &
Distribution



Location

Australia

Greentree product suite

Financial Management

Distribution

Supply Chain

Workflow

GREENTREE POWERS UP LECKY'S ELECTRICAL

Melbourne-based Lecky's Electrical and Data has grown to become one of the most successful electrical component wholesalers. Since 1990, the company has expanded to open a total of five Melbourne outlets, along with one in Albury in regional New South Wales. Lecky's presently has a base of over 1,000 regular customers and to cater for their varying needs, Lecky's stocks over 40,000 different inventory line items, a number which is growing exponentially.

For the past 11 years Lecky's has been a user of Greentree International's character-based system, CBA 2000. Office Manager for Lecky's, Jan Crooks, looks back on the greater part of her CBA days quite fondly; "CBA had served us well over the 11 years; however 12 to 18 months prior to going to Greentree our stability began to suffer." Undoubtedly, Lecky's size was pushing CBA beyond its limits. Lecky's had opened five branches by 2001 and had 36 concurrent users accessing the Financials and Distribution functions. Along with CBA, Lecky's expansion meant the existing hardware infrastructure was untenable, resembling "a bowl of spaghetti" in Jan's own words. Remote access was achieved via a multitude of modems running from the branches to head office. Jan states that "on CBA, little things not working were causing us big problems". By December 2002, Lecky's was ready to explore the options.

After some preliminary shopping around, Lecky's formulated a shortlist of three solutions, which included Greentree. Greentree seemed a logical product to

consider given its CBA heritage, and it also came highly recommended by Lecky's CBA support organisation. In developing its evaluation criteria, knowledgeable and stable support services were considered crucial at Lecky's, and after seven years with the Greentree Business Partner, Jan and the evaluation team were very confident that this pre-requisite could be ticked off immediately.

After viewing the shortlisted bidders' demonstrations, the decision makers, including Jan, felt that "Greentree was a clear choice for Lecky's". During the two demonstrations of Greentree, Jan recalls the evaluation team's ability to tick off many of the requirements with a degree of certainty as "we had given our Greentree Business Partner some of our data, which helped to contextualise the demonstrated scenarios and gave us a better idea of how it worked". Lecky's was able to isolate a vast number of areas where the system had an edge, ranging from simplicity and speed of day-to-day data entry, to advanced features such as the native integration to Microsoft Excel for reporting and analysis. Of particular importance, and an unquestionable time-saver to Jan, was the "soft period-end, which is just a case of clicking period-ends on and off as you want them". Other factors that Jan felt truly differentiated Greentree from the competing systems included "linking purchase orders to sales orders and the capability to buy and sell everything by location".

Lecky's implementation project was split into two phases: hardware and network first, followed by Greentree, once the new infrastructure had been tested. Before installation, a power of preparation work was done to ensure a smooth transition



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Jan Crooks, Office Manager, Lecky's Electrical Data



to Greentree. Lecky's CBA database before migration was enormous, and "as Lecky's transaction history was so large, to make the process manageable we only imported some transactions in some areas," says Jan. With the new servers and ADSL Citrix connections in place and tested, the Greentree installation project began.

Showing extreme faith and confidence in the management at the Greentree Business Partner, Lecky's made a totally clean change: "We finished with CBA on Thursday night when the data was picked up, and Greentree came on board Monday morning," recalls Jan. "In retrospect, I was glad we weren't running the systems parallel; it made us focus solely on Greentree and the implementation".

At the time of migration, Lecky's required 40 concurrent users for financials and distribution, and combined with the five branch offices accessing Greentree remotely, the implementation was particularly challenging for both Lecky's and the Greentree Business Partner. Jan concedes that "Upon reflection, it was not an enjoyable first week. However when I think back to our last major CBA upgrade, that was stressful too. It really tested the Greentree Business Partner consultants' skill and efficiency in resolving issues; however the major issues were bedded down after the first week."

With 40 users to please, Lecky's made a significant commitment to training, with a view to mitigating the risk of user resistance. "Our staff were trained at the Greentree Business Partner's office, which was great. It gave everybody a chance to ask questions and get answers from professionals. After the training programme, our users were confident and did not have to rely on Chinese whispers to learn Greentree," says Jan. While some well-drilled CBA users had to break many long-term habits and routines, Jan now acknowledges, "these same users are comfortable now and show other staff members how things work".

Lecky's Greentree system continues to expand and evolve, and is now accessed by 48 users concurrently. In Jan's eyes, "reporting and analysis through Microsoft Excel, and the ability to stocktake at any time and at any branch" are the standout benefits: "at our major year-end stocktake, the time to enter stock counts has been reduced by 90%".

Looking back at the migration project and its resulting yield, Jan recommends arranging a Greentree demonstration, as "by doing so, you have the ability to do your own cost/benefit analysis of Greentree for your business". She also urges those companies planning to move to Greentree, to involve their consulting firm from the beginning. "Given Lecky's user numbers and remote sites, having the Greentree Business Partner to guide us through was vital in getting the project off the ground."

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Lecky's is a privately owned company based in Coburg, Melbourne. Lecky's supplies electrical componentry to Electrical and Hardware retailers, along with direct trade sales. Lecky's currently uses most available modules in the Financial and Distribution suites of Greentree, with a 48-user licence.

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