

STORY HOMES

Audacia develops bespoke Land Development Application (LDA) for leading house-builder



“The LDA is critical to supporting the expansion of the business with a now increased growth forecast of more than 1,000 properties per year within the next five years. The business has been genuinely impressed with Audacia’s delivery of the product.”

George Thomson - Project Systems Manager, Story Homes.

Summary

When Story Homes, an established, award-winning house-builder, began to look for a software solution to help meet ambitious growth plans, it determined that no off-the-shelf solution would meet all of its requirements. Ultimately it chose Audacia to develop a bespoke Land Development Application (LDA) that addressed the gap in functionality left by existing construction software packages. Although only released in Q1 2015, the LDA is already redefining the way Story Homes works.

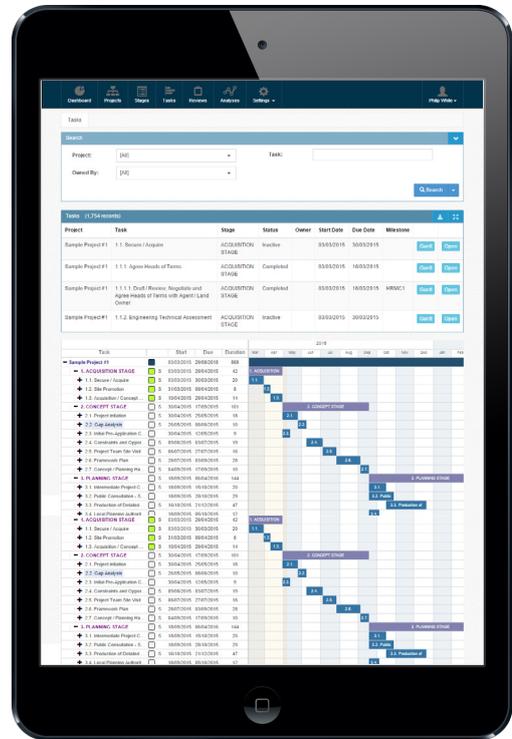
QUICK FACTS

Situation: Established, ambitious house-builder requires integrated software solution to support future growth.

Solution: Innovative fast growing bespoke managed software development house provides tailor-made solution.

Success: Easy to use, bespoke fully functional, fully compliant Land Development Application that supports the future-proofing of house-builder’s IT/application infrastructure, enabling it to meet growth plans.

Technologies used: ASP.NET MVC, C# and SQL Server.



Situation

Story Homes is an established and award-winning independent house builder that has grown from strength to strength over the last 28 years. With plans to increase its building schedule from 150 houses, in 2012/2013 to in excess of 1,000 houses per year by 2017/2018 the organisation’s management team decided that it was time to review the business’s IT system and automated processes. George Thomson, Project Systems Manager at Story Homes explains:

“Like many long-established businesses, we were heavily reliant on the experience and capability of individuals managing processes with basic out of the box tools, such as Excel spreadsheets. The introduction of automated systems and processes was vital to our business growth plans.”

“We considered various off-the shelf-solutions targeting the construction industry, none of which met all of our requirements. We held discussions with a range of software providers and bespoke developers. Ultimately we chose Audacia due to the thorough analysis and flexibility of its proposed solution.”

Solution

Philip White, Managing Director at Audacia recalls the original brief:

“Story Homes required an integrated project management system, with workflow management, that would enable it to manage sites throughout the UK from land acquisition, throughout production, to 1st legal completion. It needed to manage all aspects of feasibility, planning and design. We worked together to build Story a fully customised Land Development Application (LDA). It has been so effective that we have since been contracted to work together on a new business critical project.”

Audacia’s modular approach and flexibility was vital, explains George.

“It was clear from the start that ongoing detailed analysis of our system’s requirements was going to be required throughout the build. Audacia worked with us adapting and tailoring the process until completion. This ensured that our system was flexible enough to support continuous feedback and improvement during the development stage, and to support our continuing growth needs post launch.”



Success

Released in Q1 2015, Story Homes' LDA supports the management of production from land acquisition to completion of first legal. It provides the business with full visibility of production matched to sales, with clear processes for managing business critical workflows and monitoring key milestones.

This enables Story Homes to:

- Plan and manage sites across the UK
- Interact with the system at various levels of detail from many devices
- Manage user access levels across multiple roles and departments
- Manage dashboards & export management information
- Identify scheduling improvements
- Perform scenario/impact analyses where risks/opportunities arise necessitating reappraisal of the plans
- Meet its ongoing growth goals.

"The business has been really impressed with the result," explains George.

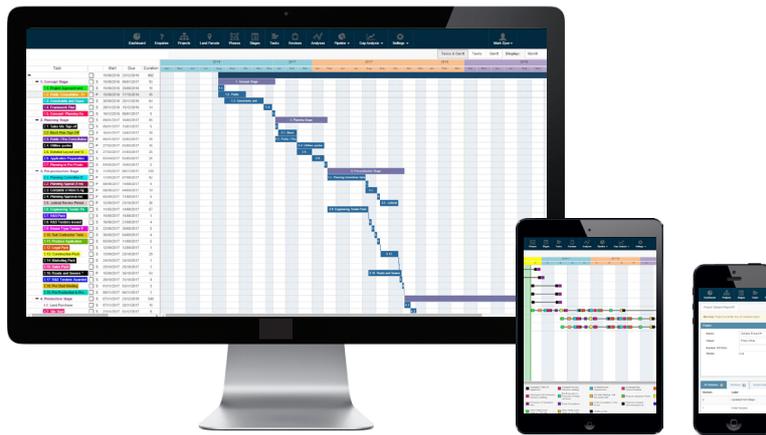
"Audacia has provided us with a business rules engine that enables us to schedule and manage sites, projects, milestones and tasks, as well as perform real-time reporting and analysis at varying levels of detail (i.e. by region, department and individual)," he continues.

"It has been well received across all departments and by senior management, and we are currently in the process of extending its scope to include additional features and activities. Audacia provided us with a simple-to-use online change and issue management system that enables us to track and manage the life cycle of queries, change requests and bugs through to testing and deployment.

"We have only just gone live with it, so it's too early to quantify the benefits but we are very pleased with the initial response to the system and are confident that it will support our expansion plans over the coming months and years.

"The success of the LDA is critical to supporting the expansion of the business with a growth forecast of more than 1,000 properties per year within the next 5 years. It's currently being used by 25 users with a plan to roll out to more than 250 users over the next 3 years.

"We've recently re-contracted with Audacia to work with us on another business critical project which substantiates the organisations confidence in their ability," concludes George.



ABOUT AUDACIA

Audacia Consulting is a Leeds based Microsoft certified partner with an excellent track record of delivering secure, reliable, scalable & cost effective business systems to a wide range of clients across a wide range of sectors.

A bespoke managed software development company, Audacia specialises in developing web-based & mobile applications as well as integrating with existing software & database systems. Audacia provides flexible and scalable access to our team of project managers, business analysts & developers based on fixed-budget or rolling project terms.

ABOUT STORY HOMES

For nearly 30 years, Story Homes has been the name most often associated with luxury, aspirational houses for sale throughout Cumbria, the North East, Lancashire and Southern Scotland. Its passion for quality and excellence has seen it become a multi award winning UK property developer.

Together with customer service, which consistently exceeds expectations, Story Homes provides a perfect house buying experience for its clients, picking out the best sites and locations to build stunning developments often described by owners as 'dream homes'.