



# APS Case Studies

## International Professional Services (IPS)

**John Illingworth** - Managing Director

**Tel:** +61 7 5581 3200

**Email:** [johni@ips.com.au](mailto:johni@ips.com.au)

### Involvement in selection process

I was the one who led the change and investigated the difference that APS could bring. My co-directors agreed with the choice and we actually finalised the process in a restaurant on the Gold Coast. It was a good sign for our future relationship.

### Key Quote

I am happy – APS continues to improve. Advance CRM is about to be installed and we are looking forward to getting into that to see what and how it can help our marketing.

## Section One General

### When did your firm implement its APS Advance Practice Management system?

It was about 18 months ago now – we started in November 2005 and all elements of the suite were implemented well before 30 June 2006.

### How many users do you have?

We have 35 people in our firm and I think 33 of them are APS users.

### Which APS products have you taken out licences to use? (PM, Tax etc....)

Apart from Practice Management, we have just about everything available to us – including Practice IQ, Xcede Professional Accounting, Advance Tax, Time and Fees and we are currently installing Advance CRM.

### Who was your previous supplier and how long were you using that supplier's software for?

Our previous supplier was MYOB / Sol6. I actually had been using Sol6 products since the mid-1980s when Paxus went under.

For many years we used all the Sol6 products as they served us well until the software became out-of-date – all the old cheetah data and dos work became unwieldy. So we moved over to Viztopia when offered the product by Sol6.

### How did the firm adapt to Viztopia after the switch from Sol6's traditional product suite?

It was a disaster for us. We couldn't access proper service from our account manager and after about 18 months we just gave up trying having researched what APS could offer us.

### From start to finish, how long did the meeting, testing and decision-making process take that saw you move over to APS?

We had actually looked at APS some time previously, before switching to Viztopia. However, the price seemed to be too high in comparison at that point.

Down the track when we did sign the deal with APS, we were satisfied on all fronts. APS moved on the price to a degree and the value that we wanted from the product was there. Also, we thought the product had clearly improved over the period and this was the real key to our decision.

### Was your decision to move over to APS made on gut-feel, or was it more scientific than that? Please explain how you went about making your decision.... (e.g. team approach: IT manager, IT Partner, Work Group etc...)

It was most of all about the software meeting our needs – we wanted to be able to produce Accounts that you could edit, we wanted interactive tax sheets, we wanted to be able to manage our WIP and debtors through the system more efficiently. We wanted to be able to run reports to help us manage our practice as well as our clients' affairs.

We were sure we would get all of this from APS – and so we went with them.

## Section Two Installation / Implementation

Conversion of practice data from your old system to your new one was of course going to be one of the major issues in your implementation – can you tell me how the APS consultant performed in this regard?

It all went very smoothly. We provided APS with a very clean database and they converted it to the Advance database – and it came out the other end almost perfectly. Of course, it required planning and we took a logical joint approach.

A new system means that ‘change’ is forced upon team members – how did your team react to the new system and how quickly did they pick up the new system?

They picked it up fairly quickly – not overnight, but pretty quickly. There was always going to be some downtime but this was minimised probably as much as it could have been.

There is still plenty for us to learn about the system and we know it can do more than we currently use it for.

## Section Three Product

### Functionality

How does the Advance suite compare to you previous product in terms of functionality?

The system just works. I can run the reports I need to run our business. I can produce clients’ accounts that look good. What more can you want. Its really that simple – Viztopia was just hard for us – we couldn’t get through to anyone, it was horrible. Licence codes would change un-announced, shutting down our system.

With APS I get what I want from the people and the software. I trust them.

The cost of change from Sol6 was not small in dollar terms – but the benefits outweigh those costs.

### Future Development

What would you like to see APS add to its product set in its next releases of Advance that will assist your business? What does it need to do to stay ahead of its competitors?

We’d like to see plenty of improvements delivered – there is always room for improvement.

For instance, we would like to see simpler trust distributions, more detailed standardised reports to access amongst other things.

We are also really keen to see more integration with Business Fitness / BOS on standard forms and templates.

## Section Four Summing Up

Do you have any final words that sum up how you feel about APS, its team and its software?

I am happy – APS continues to improve. Advance CRM is about to be installed and we are looking forward to getting into that to see what and how it can help our marketing.