

# Directions

FROM **PARAGON SOFTWARE SYSTEMS**  
LEADERS IN COMPUTERISED VEHICLE ROUTING AND SCHEDULING

## Expansion supports sales success

Paragon's dramatic growth over the last year does more than mirror its growing global business - it guarantees the company stays one step ahead.

The expansion of Paragon Software Systems makes a strong statement about its status and intentions. In strengthening its three core teams, Paragon is not only guaranteeing the resources to maintain its position as the market-leading developer, supplier and supporter of computerised vehicle routing and scheduling systems. It's also responding to the impetus created by winning substantial international contracts. As a result, Paragon's new, larger teams have the skills to respond as effectively and swiftly to the needs of distribution operators in Brussels as Birmingham and Santander as Swindon.

### Quality assured

As with everything Paragon does, its recruitment has been logically planned and carefully executed to bring a broad range of benefits. New members of the sales team do not just have the experience to spearhead European business, they also speak Dutch, Italian, French and Spanish. Expansion of the sales team by 50% has also released resources to create a new role - key account manager - to continue to add value for existing users.

Similarly, support team expansion of 50% means Paragon can sustain its philosophy of providing quality support to an increasing number of clients. It also means the Helpline service hours can be extended. And by taking on support consultants who between them speak German, French, Spanish and Russian, Paragon's ability to support its European activity is assured. Paragon's horizons are not, however, limited to Europe. 'On the basis of current discussions we should have systems in the USA and Asia Pacific within 12 months,' says Managing Director Dr David Holmes.

### Accelerated development

In growing the software development team, Paragon got even more than it had hoped for in the form of some very specialised skills such as problem-modelling and digitised mapping. We wanted to be able to accelerate



Support, Sales and Development Managers - Phil Ingham, William Salter and Richard Street - welcome the new team members to Paragon headquarters in Dorking: (from left to right) Laurence Corps, Andrew Thompson, Laurie Boyle, Richard Chambers, Michael Sitch, Chris Golding, Jean Cangle, Nicola Beswick, and Sam Chor. New team members not pictured: Gareth Evans, Gerald O'Loghlen, and Suzan Evans

our on-going software development programme,' explains Dr Holmes, 'but we also secured the ability to respond even more quickly to the increasing demand for tailored systems.'

In the last six months alone this need has been clearly shown. In the UK, for example, Tesco and Homeworthy Furniture have benefited from bespoke alterations. In Europe, Paragon has developed interfaces to accommodate four different versions of Whirlpool's SOP system in France and the Netherlands, not to mention linking Paragon with General Motors' EuroMais lean materials ordering system.

### Winning focus

In its response to the complex needs of pan-European operations like General Motors and components supplier Tenneco, Paragon is already proving the value of both its well established and new skills as it implements multiple-site systems. That the sister companies of clients such as Whirlpool and Henkel are now also Paragon users is testament to its power to deliver the goods wherever they might be. With its Swedish agent, Unicorn, working to great effect in Scandinavia and its East European operation busy implementing its eighth system, Paragon is clearly not just a presence in Europe, it is a force.



## NEWS briefs

### FLYING SCOTSMEN

It was action stations at Paragon in March when word was sent that SCOTTISH POWER, one of the country's largest retailers of white and brown goods, wanted to replace its existing computer vehicle scheduling system with Paragon ASAP. The next working day, Paragon had a support consultant on site discussing how Paragon could help Scottish Power halve transport planning time, reduce distribution costs and facilitate confirmation of delivery time to the customer at the point of sale. Mid June was set as the date for the Scottish operation, based at a new 24-hour, 54-vehicle depot, to go live. And it did, immediately achieving a 10% decrease in transport costs. Implementation at the English depot, delivering to up to 1,000 customers daily, was equally fast and effective.

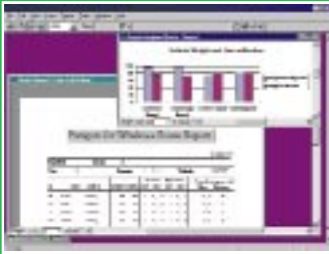
### BUILT-IN VALUE

TIBBETT & BRITTEN'S use of Paragon to meet the challenge of B&Q's distribution operation, based at one of the largest depots in the UK, exemplifies the system's inherent versatility. Using Paragon's strategic modelling capability, as it has for other clients over the years, this logistics operator looked to secure three principal objectives for the nationwide DIY retailer: a reduction in planning time, better load utilisation and a decrease in the number of drivers' shifts. When Paragon had shown these possible, the system's operational capability came into its own. Its inherent flexibility meant that it was able to interface seamlessly with T&B's systems to enable a whole day's deliveries to be planned from one location. Thus the fourth goal - optimum fleet utilisation - was achieved. And since these goals will undoubtedly shift as market needs change, the project's partners are already discussing how to ensure the system shifts too.

It's all systems go at agricultural co-operative, Midland Shires Farmers as it prepares to phase in Paragon at both its animal feeds and fuel delivery operations. Managing all areas of this complex business through just one supplier of distribution planning systems, to include options such as Compartments, Multi-Depot and Integrated Fleets, will bring valuable system commonality and operational efficiency.

make contact,  
add value

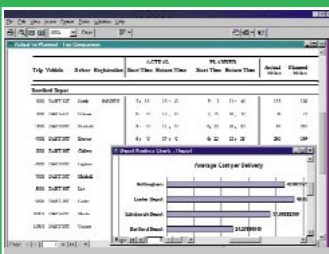
READY AND WAITING



They've always been there, ready to pre-empt problems, firefight, offer advice and arrange training. Only now there's more of them, they can speak more languages and they're embarking on a mission to make sure clients know where they are, what they can do and how exactly they can continue to add value to Paragon - days, months, even years after installation. They are Paragon's Support Consultants. And they're waiting for your calls.

- Are you about to embark on a strategic modelling project using Paragon? Call to confirm the viability of your plans.
- Is a new depot opening soon? Call to ensure you take the easy route to integrating it into existing live planning.
- Are you manually inputting details of a new vehicle? Call and we'll automatically make life easier.
- Do you need to add another country to the planning of a European distribution operation? Call and we'll map out the solution.
- Are you a live user looking at strategic use for the first time? Call and we'll point you in the right direction.

BACK TO BASICS



Are you a Paragon for Windows user unaware of the huge time savings you could be enjoying by going back to basics - Paragon Basic, that is? According to the Support Team, this easy-to-learn language, designed to manipulate data imported from spreadsheets and databases according to user-defined rules, is often underused. Which is a great shame, because it can automatically take on some of the time-consuming manual tasks performed by the transport office. So, if you have a need to set vehicle type override for calls based on order quantities, for example, prioritise orders over a certain volume or allocate calls to particular depots based on postcode, get in contact. Together, we can identify if you'd benefit from going back to Basic.

# Smart moves at Safeway

As an upgrade implementation integrated with a leading-edge in-cab system nears completion at Safeway, Paragon proves its ability to work harder - and smarter.

Paragon and Safeway go back a long way - to the system's early development in fact. Ever since, Paragon has been an instrumental part of Safeway's distribution planning process. And now, with the implementation of the latest Paragon for Windows version, Safeway will secure a streamlined system as strong on control and customer service as it has always been in planning.



Paragon has been an instrumental part of Safeway's distribution planning process for many years

Impressive potential

Paragon has been used successfully by Safeway for the fixed route planning of its daily deliveries to over 400 stores nationwide. It's a complex operation involving 600 tractor units and 1,000 trailers, with many stores receiving multiple fresh produce deliveries daily. But the benefits of upgrading the Paragon system operating in the 10 major depots were too impressive to miss.

It would undoubtedly be sensible to standardise systems across the operation and to introduce a more user-friendly interface. But Safeway saw even greater opportunities - the chance to combine both its order processing and Logiq in-cab systems with Paragon. Working with Paragon's dedicated support consultant, Safeway's plan is for the new system to go live by Christmas.

Monitoring link

While Paragon will continue to be used in the same way as before, constantly seeking improved vehicle utilisation and mileage reductions, the interactive facilities on the Windows version will make checking routes and load

*For the first time we have the facility to see how we're actually performing against Paragon standards.*

GEOFF MITCHIE,  
NATIONAL TRANSPORT CONTROLLER

utilisation, for example, a much simpler, at-a-glance task.

Customised reports generated by Paragon's CSV output facility will contribute much to the ease and speed with which management are acquainted with distribution plans. Complementing these will be the in-cab computer's hard evidence of the reality of these plans providing, it could be said, the missing monitoring link.

The on-board computers, the majority operating on the RAM network, will use a smart card containing route plans from Paragon to record data on actual driver speed, distance, delivery time, fuel consumption, arrival time and vehicle temperatures. Back at the depot, with the smart card loaded back into the PC, this data will act as a powerful searchlight in the quest for efficiencies in every area of the distribution operation.

# General Motors puts Paragon in the driving seat

Global automotive manufacturer General Motors produces 1.8 million cars a year in Europe. It is also implementing a lean materials ordering system. How does Paragon fit into all this? Very neatly.

In its bid for performance improvement throughout the European production of Vauxhall and Opel models, General Motors' lean materials ordering system is pivotal. And making best use of transport planning to support it through the cost-effective, level in-flow of components from thousands of suppliers across Europe is seen as crucial. Enter Paragon.

Vote of confidence

When the search began for a logistics planning partner with a system powerful enough to bring

efficiencies to this complex operation and flexible enough to interface with EuroMais, General Motors' lean materials ordering system, Paragon was already at the top of the list. And it stayed there; its selection representing a significant vote of confidence in the system's practical value to the automotive industry.

Specialist distribution companies were already proving on a day-to-day basis that Paragon has the technical ability to meet the needs of motor industry applications. Inherent flexibility to deal with multi-day routes, multi-drop and single-drop routes, multiple loads per vehicle per day and multiple depots. Core routing calculations that can take account of 200 different kinds of stillages. And roadmap files that can easily facilitate multi-country routing. An additional need of this project was an interface with EuroMais. Paragon swiftly proved it could meet this one too.

Spread of benefits

The tailored version of Paragon is now installed at Vauxhall, Luton and in Opel plants at Antwerp, Eisenach and Zaragoza, where it is being used in

two ways. Strategically to design the most cost-effective fixed routes from suppliers to plants based on typical weekly volume requirements. And operationally to review these plans to deal most efficiently with production target variations transmitted from EuroMais, automatically assessing key aspects of the proposed routes, from load feasibility to load utilisation, and vehicle utilisation to route efficiency.



GM's Opel plant at Eisenach

The tangible benefits already achieved through the seamless operation of the two systems will spread through four more General Motors' assembly plants as roll-outs continue across Europe over the coming months.

*With tailored developments, Paragon now fits very well with our systems and our strategy.*

BILL SAUNDERS,  
ADAM OPEL, EUROPEAN LOGISTICS MANAGER

# more... NEWS briefs

SOLO PERFORMANCE

When EXEL LOGISTICS was planning the implementation of a suite of transport office products, including Paragon, at WALKER EXHAUSTS, part of TENNECO AUTOMOTIVE, they were left in no doubt which of the systems was in greatest demand. Rather than wait for all the systems to be installed together, Walker insisted that the benefits achievable with Paragon meant that it should be put in first, on its own if necessary. The choice of system was itself not surprising - Paragon is Exel's preferred supplier. Nor was the sense of urgency totally unexpected, given the requirement to model potential market strategies. What was, perhaps, surprising is the speed with which the system was up and running and the immediate impact it had on the efficiency of strategic distribution planning.

MODEL BEHAVIOUR

In another example of Paragon's strengths both in Europe and as a business development tool, the system has been purchased by the German arm of market-leading logistics service provider and contract hire specialist RYDER. Following its successful use by Ryder's UK division over the last 10 years, Ryder Germany picked up on Paragon's potential to help it achieve its aggressive growth objectives. 'We wanted an international package that offered an integrated solution for planning cross-country movements in Europe,' explains International Logistics Manager Michael Kluger. Initially, Paragon will be used to model a wide range of transport operations for potential customers across Europe, many in the automotive sector, giving Ryder the opportunity to assess with accuracy a variety of distribution frameworks, depot locations, fleet sizes, shift patterns and cost scenarios.

STANDARD BEARER

In the battle for order processing system supremacy, SAP R/3 appears to have secured an advantage - something Paragon is well aware of, having already successfully integrated its system with SAP R/3 for Henkel in Spain and Portugal, and BOCM Pauls in the UK. And while integration discussions continue with a major supermarket, Paragon's SAP R/3-interfaced implementation at IDEAL STANDARD, with distribution operator EDWARDS LOGISTICS, is nearing completion. This combined effort to create a seamless order/delivery system in the face of ever-decreasing lead times and increasing numbers of small orders will also enable the company to plan the operation of two vehicle fleets from one location.

WATERTIGHT OPERATION

There are some very tangible reasons why Paragon has been confirmed as WHIRLPOOL'S vehicle routing and scheduling system throughout France. Scheduling time cut by three-quarters. A 15% increase in load utilisation efficiency. And these improvements are all evident, day in, day out, at the Amiens and Lyon distribution centres of Whirlpool France. Following the latest implementation at Oosterhout in Holland, which will plan 500 daily deliveries to 1500 customers, Paragon will be bringing these benefits to the Benelux countries as well.

## Paragon partnerships

If there's one aspect of business in the late 90s that differentiates this decade from the last it's recognition that partnerships have the power to bring a range of valuable benefits to both sides.

While Paragon's culture has long fostered this kind of close working relationship, its commitment has recently been reinforced with the appointment of a key account manager and growth in all areas of the business. Which is just as well because Paragon is finding that an increasing number of blue chip clients are taking a very serious approach to the selection of suppliers with the demonstrable desire and ability to satisfy today's needs and pre-empt tomorrow's developments.

'Where we have developed partnerships - both formal and informal - we have proved that Paragon can underpin clients' existing and future distribution operations,' says Managing Director Dr David Holmes. 'It can contribute to strategic corporate goals, particularly through system interfaces which effectively close the information loop across related functions.' At a time when Paragon is being called upon not just to cut the number of vehicles and drivers on the road each day, but to deliver benefits in areas such as increased centralisation, rationalisation and down-sizing, and provide innovative software solutions to exploit

leading-edge technology, the company's track record is standing it in very good stead.

Certainly, the way Paragon is working closely with a growing number of distribution operators to add value for their current and potential clients is testament to the system's ability to contribute to competitive edge. By reacting quickly when contracts are won, by working effectively with both the contractor and their client's staff, by ensuring that systems are implemented on-time and that the targeted benefits are achieved, Paragon is helping them achieve key client retention and expansion plans.

Before too long, Paragon predicts that the 16 organisations which have already made a clear decision to use the system throughout their business, such as Booker, Exel Logistics, British Gas Energy Centres and TDG, will be joined by many more looking to secure similar performance and financial advantages.



Glyn Royles, Paragon's newly appointed Key Account Manager



## Introducing integrated fleets

When Paragon first developed an integrated fleets option for a bespoke animal feeds system its potential for wider applications soon became apparent.

For any distribution operation planning more than one fleet, the inefficiency involved with the inevitable periods of vehicle underuse is a daily frustration. And any that have been tempted to plan more than one fleet together manually have invariably given up. Which is why when Paragon was working with a client to optimise the operation of a number of mills and fleets they developed Integrated Fleets, which has resulted in reduced planning time and number of vehicles used. And, as Paragon's Sales and Marketing Director Charles Nockold says, 'it brings the opportunity to create one planning office that can become a centre of excellence serving the entire operation.'

As transport planning requirements throughout the UK and Europe move to new levels of complexity, there's an inherent need to look at ways of developing a more holistic approach. With Integrated Fleets, Paragon appears to have hit on a timely answer. Certainly, the speed with which it has been taken up for the animal feeds sector by



Introducing the innovative Integrated Fleets system from Paragon

Dalgety and BOCM Pauls would seem to confirm Paragon's faith.

Such is Paragon's faith, in fact, that it has used Integrated Fleets as the basis for the enhanced system it developed for five General Motors' assembly plants. It's also being built into a new system for the movement of hospital waste to incinerators, has been bought by Ryder for use in Germany and by one of the UK's leading supermarkets. The applications, it would seem, are endless. 'Companies with a collection of warehouses, with one main warehouse and several manufacturing sites as well as those with multiple vehicle bases, could all benefit from Integrated Fleets,' confirms Charles Nockold.

## all out for in-cab

The technology that keeps track of trucks on the road is itself being monitored by the distribution industry as it searches for the real time route to real benefits. Working alongside key players in the in-cab field, Paragon is helping to map out that route.

For Paragon, as for all companies looking for ways to drive down distribution costs even further, it's a natural progression. A progression from devising schedules and routes to monitoring what is actually happening to these plans on the road. But the additional business benefits will only come when this knowledge can be accessed and used to modify plans immediately, to assess each day's performance and to analyse transport trends.

Integrating Paragon with the in-cab technology that monitors transport activity in real time provides real added value: monitoring transport performance against the plan; flagging up problems as they arise; warning of expected late arrivals due to an earlier delay; enabling the user to modify the plan to overcome problems; monitoring service performance against targets; and identifying upward or downward trends. 'With the wealth of first hand experience that comes from working with Europe's leading distribution operators', explains Sales & Marketing Director Charles Nockold, 'we are integrating Paragon with in-cab technology in a way that provides real benefits for transport and distribution

next step...  
call Paragon

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