Case Study
University of Sunderland

The University of Sunderland employs over 1,500 staff across four faculties and two campuses. With over 17,500 students and a largely Windows-based yet diverse ICT infrastructure, the central IT Services department of 33 staff facilitates an annual IT spend for services and faculties of over £2mil.

The Challenge

Achieving sustained and validated best value on every purchase.

Sunderland formalised its IT procurement activity whereby an executive-level 'Business Systems Strategy Group' considers IT requirements and finances centrally. With economies of scale improving buying power, the organisation hopes for better discount rates, reduced duplicated buying, and less rogue purchasing. The IT department's Dave Hartis is positioned to coordinate ICT buying centrally.

The University adheres to best practice policy, buying through national and regional frameworks.

Dave Hartis said: *"Whilst we have instilled a centralised IT procurement function in a bid for sustained value for money, we still did not have absolute confidence we were being given the best value on every purchase. We often saw certain products available for a lower price via Internet Resellers. Therefore we knew there must be cheaper routes to procure those products, but we lacked that vital additional knowledge."*

The Solution

After a thorough demonstration, the University of Sunderland adopted KnowledgeBus - a simple online IT buyers' platform that instantly tells buyers IT trade guide prices and product stock levels. This CIPS-accredited technology empowers IT buyers with market knowledge, so they can rapidly negotiate the price of IT products with their contracted suppliers.

Buyers input their supplier product lists or spot check online for an automated comparison and display of trade guide prices and stock on over 150,000 live products from over 2,500 manufacturers.

The user discovers what margin their supplier is proposing and receives daily alerts about their Product Lists, stating whether the price or stock has moved.

Management functionality provides insight and validation of current purchasing ability and expenditure levels.

"For the first time ever, we have access to 100% validated benchmark prices."

Dave Hartis, *IT Information Co-ordinator. The University of Sunderland*

At the demonstration stage, the University uploaded a range of historical purchases and discovered that some resellers had added up to 33% margins.

Dave Hartis said: *"This tool fundamentally empowers us with deep industry knowledge to challenge resellers and discuss why, in certain instances, their margins appear to be higher than the market average.*

It gives us knowledge and the supplier a choice - reduce the price, or we'll go elsewhere. We are driving down the cost of IT whilst agreeing on a fair and equitable value for both parties.

We have access to 100% validated benchmark prices for the first time. We also save time identifying suitable solutions, as KnowledgeBus provides only UK-available products. ROI has been quick and easy to achieve.

We have stretched the reach of our existing IT budget to either purchase more equipment for the same budget or improve the specification of the equipment requested.

We now have access to a complete online catalogue to explore and develop an unbiased product view, including specification, pricing and availability.

Critically, with more intelligent buying, we are exceeding objectives to drive better technology into the learning environment at competitive prices.

Put simply, KnowledgeBus stands for common sense in driving down the cost of IT. It is integral for our centralised IT procurement team to deliver beyond expectations.

This innovative tool drives radical efficiency in buying IT, enabling us to balance accountability with freedom and trust in our supplier base. These are critical factors in education going forwards."
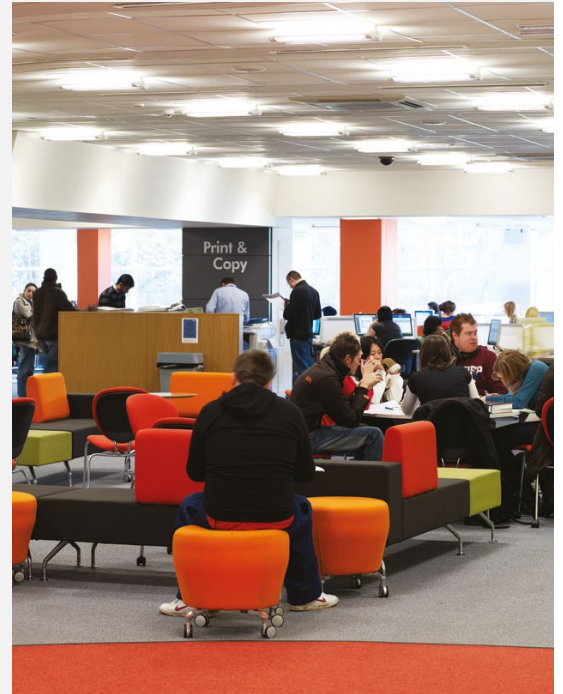
" In modern IT procurement and today's financial climate, KnowledgeBus should be the first procurement any IT buyer should look at before making decisions on an organisation's IT spending. "

Dave Hartis, *IT Information Co-ordinator. The University of Sunderland*

The UK's only fully Certified IT Price Benchmarking Solution – Find out more at **www.knowledgebus.co.uk**

CIPS CERTIFICATION

ICAEW ACCREDITED SOFTWARE

bsi. ISO/IEC 27001 Information Security Management
IS 590006

Deloitte. Technology Fast50

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Crown Commercial Service *Supplier*