

# CUSTOMER PROFILE

LAWSON AT AGGREKO FEATURING ERP



## Aggreko Puts Lawson at the Heart of Its Growth Strategy

When Aggreko, a rental company specializing in power generators, temperature control equipment and compressed air systems, developed a new global business model it placed Lawson M3 at the heart of its growth strategy for the next five years.

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**Tom Armstrong, Chief Information Officer, Aggreko**



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## Business Benefits

Aggreko Chief Information Officer Tom Armstrong is not a man prone to exaggeration. But he has no hesitation proclaiming that Aggreko’s company’s new global collaborative enterprise system is fundamental to the company’s future.

“[Lawson M3] is mission critical! It will drive significant top-line growth and margin enhancement,” Armstrong says.

An overstatement? “Definitely not,” says Armstrong emphatically. “[Lawson M3] is the enabler for our new and radical ‘hub and spoke’ business model that will deliver additional sales volumes through increased market penetration and margin enhancement in local businesses.”

Armstrong is leading the team masterminding Aggreko’s technological transformation. He believes that in 12 months time Aggreko will be the most technologically advanced company in its industry. This, he says, will enable the company to become the market leader by providing such a high level of customer service that it will become the benchmark for the power equipment rental industry.

“We operate in a global market, and we also serve customers locally. This means we have to be ‘touch sensitive’ to a wide range of service needs to fulfill these varied customer requirements,” explains Armstrong.

“[Lawson M3] gives us the tools and capabilities to be successful in meeting all the tough service and commercial goals we’ve set ourselves.”

Armstrong elaborated on the practical contributions of Lawson M3. “We have ‘plug and play’ access to a global information database, anywhere, anytime. And we have a consolidated, real-time view of the business with the ability to drill down to whatever level of detail is required.”

Lawson M3 makes a huge impact “on-the-ground” and at a management level, says Armstrong. “Operationally, we have total visibility of all our equipment and accessories for hire. We can optimize materials planning to best meet demand while achieving full equipment utilization, maximizing margins and providing customers with a tailored, rapid response service.

“And at the management level we will have real-time business analysis at the touch of a button to help us make faster and better-informed decisions.”

Armstrong says that in his opinion Lawson M3 “is probably the most advanced and functionally comprehensive collaborative enterprise system available for the rental market.”

He is confident that the scalability of Lawson M3 will provide the company with the dynamic information infrastructure needed to support the business as it grows rapidly.

“Thanks largely to the rich functionality and impressive scalability of [Lawson M3], we anticipate at least ten years from our investment,” concludes Arm-



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**Steve Leslie, STI Implementation Manager,  
Aggreko**

strong, adding that the company is also in the process of implementing Lawson Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

Enthusiasm for the contribution [Lawson M3] is making to the success of the company is widespread among the project implementation team and key users.

Steve Leslie, Aggreko's European STI implementation manager, says Lawson M3 has had a big impact in three key areas—financial, operations and logistics.

“Finance can now complete month-end reporting in a much shorter time,” says Leslie.

“Reports are more detailed and accurate, and can be run within minutes. This flexibility and responsiveness has enabled us to move to 28-day billing, which is improving cash flow.”

Leslie also said that the company now has a transparent view of all labor and materials costs, as well as of margins and profit at individual item and contract levels.

“[Lawson M3] is giving us a more detailed and broader understanding of the effects of costs and margins on different types of equipment in all parts of the business,” he says. Leslie adds that this information feeds back into life-cycle management and life-cycle cost of equipment.

Meanwhile, in logistics, Leslie says the biggest impact has been felt in the use of materials planning. “We have full visibility of our equipment fleet, at the depot, regional and divisional levels. And we can now fully optimize fleet utilization, improve equipment availability to customers and reduce transport costs.”

Equally enthusiastic is Erik Vermaat, asset manager for central Europe. Vermaat and his team are responsible for logistics, transport, spare parts purchasing, repairs, and ensuring equipment is in the right place at the right time.

Vermaat admits it's a big job. But he says it is made much easier because the asset team now has information at its fingertips.

“We can log on to the system anywhere at any time and get the accurate, up-to-date information we need to make fast decisions.”

He adds, “In central Europe we have three hubs, and five depots in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, and soon in Italy and Spain. It's the asset team's responsibility to ensure equipment is in the right place at the right time so that customer needs can be fulfilled and we achieve the highest possible return on capital.

“[Lawson M3] will add considerable value to our business,” Vermaat succinctly concludes.

## The Company

Aggreko employs more than 2,000 people at 120 locations in 80 countries. The company famously provided temporary power for the 2002 Winter Olympics and on the set of the Hollywood blockbuster “Titanic.”



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Its generators are also to be found in everyday use in industries as diverse as construction, agriculture, paper, forestry, shipping, manufacturing and utilities.

## Why Lawson?

"Lawson understood the rental and service business and has global reach. And [Lawson M3] is multilingual and multicurrency, and has comprehensive functionality," says Armstrong.

He adds that Lawson also had "a good handle" on business intelligence, "an area where other ERP systems are weak." He was also impressed with Lawson M3 for customer relationship management.

Armstrong stressed that most ERP systems undertake planning at the item level. "However, Lawson understood that in service and rental this is not the case. In service and rental we don't know, up until the last moment, what will be shipped. Therefore, while contracts cannot be completed until the items leave the depot, they can be processed without having to specify specific items.

"This is a big challenge and Lawson understood that rental is done at the generic level."

## The Implementation

"In a nutshell," says Leslie, "Lawson's consultants are very professional. They understand our business and the market. They add considerable intellectual value, and they are very knowledgeable and keen. I can give them no higher praise than that."

## Future Plans

After the success of Lawson ERP and CRM, Aggreko is planning to implement the Lawson data warehouse solution.

## About the Solution

The Java version of Lawson M3 is running on a Sun platform with an Oracle database, supported by a Sun storage area network.

There are a minimum of 1,000 concurrent users, with the potential for up to 2,000. The scalability of Lawson M3 was a key reason that it was chosen.

## About Aggreko

Aggreko provides rental energy solutions including power, temperature control and compressed air systems to companies worldwide. Its vision is to be the leading global player in the specialist energy marketplace. The company's largest customers include Ford, Shell, IBM, Microsoft, Volvo, Paramount and AT&T.