

# Asysco helps the financial world switch to open systems.

**The financial world is switching increasingly and more quickly from closed mainframe applications to open systems. Not simply because this saves costs but particularly also in order to improve the competitive position. Asysco in Coevorden is in the ideal position to accompany these companies to the open world.**

**M**arket leader Asysco is active worldwide with conversion software which allows a fully automated switch from a Unisys environment to a full 4GL world. According to Erik van Rikxoort, Chief Executive Officer, Asysco's success is first and foremost thanks to the fact that many companies wish to migrate in order to save costs and of course also for reasons of flexibility.

## Direct switch

"More and more often, we're confronted with financial companies who are not willing to wait until the old contracts have expired. They want to switch as quickly as possible to open systems, especially because this will improve their own competitive position. That is all due to the keener competition on the financial markets, which requires distinction between companies."

An added aspect is that such companies have had time to study all the options, partly due to the long-term contracts. Van Rikxoort: "They currently feel they're being restricted in their competitive position and therefore wish to take immediate advantage of the opportunities offered by an open environment." The roll-out and support of the functionality of new products is becoming increasingly important, according to Romke Wijmenga, Chief Technology Officer of Asysco. "The old rigid environment of mainframes is too restrictive for that purpose. The situation is becoming more and more pressing".

## Pitfalls

Van Rikxoort: "Take straight through processing, for example, i.e. doing business on line. You could wait until your contract expires, but if the competition is already doing it, you'll have to follow suit." Wijmenga: "It's all about business agility. How quickly can you market a new product? That can be done much more quickly in an open environment." Another factor is that the financial market is very much on the move thanks to the financial crisis. The number of mergers, takeovers and cooperations is increasingly strongly. It is of course also very useful if the IT systems are aligned or if this can be arranged in the foreseeable future. Once again, this can be achieved much more quickly in an open environment. Van Rikxoort:

"These are things which are really occupying our time at present. Companies ask us to unravel their systems because they are selling the company or a part of it."

**Competition and business agility are the driving forces behind accelerated switching.**

He continues: "Of course the large mainframes will continue to exist because there's a good market for them. However as soon as you drop below a critical point of, let's say 500 mips, it simply becomes more difficult to maintain them yourself. And so you have a number of options: outsourcing, redevelopment or migration. There are a number of pitfalls associated with outsourcing and redevelopment, consequently there's plenty of attention for migration."

## In the cellars

Asysco is specialized in migration of Unisys mainframes to a 4GL environment. Although the financial world is mainly an IBM world, there are also many Unisys systems. Van



Romke Wijmenga

Rikxoort: "We have been most surprised to find out just how many Unisys mainframes are chugging along in the cellars, totally unknown to us!" Wijmenga adds: "Unisys has always held a strong position in this market. Here in particular, it's essential that the systems offer continuity because management of capital is involved. It's becoming increasingly difficult to find people who can keep the mainframe systems going, which in itself is reason enough to make the switch."

## IBM too

Asysco is also working on a solution for migration from IBM systems, which is expected to be ready by the end of 2008. "It requires a different approach however", says Van

Rikxoort. "IBM mainframes are true number crunchers and companies want to keep it that way. They're still looking for open application though, i.e. the front end of the system. We have the technology to bring that piece to the Windows environment. There are also much smaller IBM systems in circulation for which we'll provide a complete solution." Asysco has earned itself a reputation when it comes to migration; clients know where to find them. "The American Microsoft website lists us as the migration partner", Van Rikxoort explains proudly. And so we get leads in, also from machines we could not even suspect existed. We're presented with prospects who weren't even on our suspects list." The two Asysco directors believe that the

solutions offered by their corporation are so popular because they facilitate trouble-free migration. "Migration is often the nightmare of many CFOs and CIOs because it's difficult to chart out the time planning and costs. We start by offering them a fixed price, fixed time. We also have a method in which each component of a migration process is formulated in a project plan. The client can then monitor the status of the process via internet, including any delays and the prospects. We have a 24-step plan which runs from site survey to commissioning. That generates a lot of clarity and particularly also confidence. Our users can actually see for themselves whether they can go live on the planned date!"