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**SWORD**

UPGRADE YOUR BUSINESS

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**Who is Sword?**

Graeme Humphrey is the customer engagement director at Sword's engineering-led application development business, producing high-quality bespoke software systems. With over 25 years experience in software engineering, Graeme and his team focus on developing solutions that help energy organisations to make data driven decisions.

As the North Sea's largest provider of data and digital services, Sword focuses on solving the industry's most critical business technology challenges by enabling our clients to capture, manage, and utilise data to make informed decisions. This is supported by technology adoption and people engagement, together with modern ways of working to give confidence that the right decision is made every time.



**DATA DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT**



**Data Driven Development**

Organisations across the energy industry are pivoting to become data driven, harnessing the power of their data to make informed business decisions. However, we all know that decisions are only as robust as the underlying data and the systems used.

There is an astonishing amount of old software and products in the energy industry that have become business critical, but lack the capability and resilience that modern technology brings today. Increasing focus on getting the right foundations in place is helping forward-thinking energy organisations to become data driven.

At Sword, we help our energy customers avoid the 'garbage in, garbage out' trap by ensuring the right data is collected, structured, accessible, and in the right shape to make informed business decisions. We often develop new applications (apps) to integrate into all aspects of a business when off-the-shelf software solutions don't quite fix a customer's precise problem, from legacy issues bringing unwelcome risk into operations, to inefficient processes making every day tasks complicated or prone to human error.

**Connecting Legacy Information**

Harnessing the value of legacy data and information is a key driver behind new software development. Many legacy systems in our industry over the years have become business critical, but are no longer reliable or understood by current employees. Often the individuals who built or managed these systems have moved on, therefore the ability to support them becomes a challenge. Reliance on unsupported legacy systems can introduce risk into operations, that could ultimately impact on downtime and operational efficiency.

By auditing systems and their dependencies, we then make recommendations for technical upgrades, consolidation and can build new apps to replace those creaking at the seams. We can help take legacy systems from rusty to robust, well-engineering solutions that stand the test of time.

Information frequently resides in disparate, on-premise, aging systems that are unable to connect without manual intervention, which organisations identify as missed opportunities in the drive to be data driven. We help link legacy

systems together with modern technology, building bespoke solutions that unlock useful information from a myriad of systems. This enables legacy information to be used in real-time to bring new insights that inform business activity.

**Process Improvement**

Another key driver behind software development is the implementation of digital processes to improve operational efficiency. As organisations grow, internal office processes suited to an SME, such as simple payroll or invoice systems, don't always scale to suit evolving business requirements without active intervention.

Microsoft Excel is a great tool, but heavy reliance on it for business-critical activity can become a hindrance to decision making as organisations grow. For example, sales pipelines are often managed in Excel, but as businesses expand, multiple spreadsheets can exist for each region or business unit. Organisations gradually realise that it's difficult to get a real-time view of forecast revenue, or that there are missed opportunities from the inability to generate insight from sales trends, which mean basing recruitment decisions on this data could be subjective.

We can capture data in systems that are designed to fit your needs, enabling organisations to find trends and base decisions on solid foundations, such as investing in people with special skills when the data shows a clear upward trend in demand for that skillset.

**Becoming Data Driven**

It is also common in our industry for organisations to recognise the need to replace paper-based processes and modernise ways of working. Reaching out to a professional, experienced organisation to fix a problem plaguing progress, provides a consultative approach with clear plans, roadmap, and visualisation of the solution.

Organisations can only become data driven with the right foundations, by investing in solid fit-for-purpose platforms that integrate across office functions and operations. Insights and analytics from reliable systems enable informed data driven decisions to be made on everything from recruitment investments to pinpointing precise drilling locations.

