

Packford's Storage Company Case Study

Packford's is a storage company that stores standard size crates for companies in various warehouses in the UK. Companies use these crates to store different types of contents such: paper business records (paper files), electronic media, miscellaneous (Christmas decorations, etc).

Clients can request a collection of crates for storage and can request Packford's to return crates to a delivery address. Delivery and collection times are usually on a next day basis. Clients are charged monthly according to the number of deliveries and returns.

Only certain staff (from the client companies) have the authority to make orders for crates. Some clients have many branches, and crates are ordered by a branch, but billed centrally. Some crates are left for so long that they may not ever be needed. They may be destroyed if the client wishes, but the Packford's wants to bear no risk of destroying unwanted crates.

The Packford's management staff are authorised to view all crates and their storage history with the Packford's. They may also obtain statistics on customer usage. Accounts staff may obtain information on the customer usage for customer billing. Sales staff are allowed to enter new business clients.

All crates are uniquely identified and associated to the right client. The staff at Packford's must record the warehouse and the particular shelf in the warehouse where a crate is stored. They can track a status of a crate to see if it is on the shelf, at the client, in transit, waiting to be delivered in the pick-up room or on the delivery van.

The Packford's management has come up with some future enhancements of the business. These were a result of discussions between Packford's sales managers and new potential business customers currying lucrative new accounts.

The desired enhancements are summarised in the following points:

1. Customers need the ability to request specific files contained in a crate. When the file is returned to be stored, the customer staff may request that it is put into a different crate/box from which it originated. The future business model needs to be able to track such movements.
2. The system needs the ability to keep track of crates/boxes containing different types of contents, such as electronic media as well as normal files. However, each box/crate will only hold one type of contents.
3. Customers may need to request a delivery of a box at some time in the future or a periodic delivery of a box (Such as: "deliver every Monday mornings and return on the following Friday afternoon")
4. The system needs to keep track of specific journeys on which a specific delivery was made. You have also been given some information about the technical specifications of the system: Packford's has a contract with an ISP that can provide a web server and the server-side software platforms and database back ends. The Packford's HQ has a dedicated high-end server for this project, but it has a slow connection to the Internet (ISDN). The main warehouse is adjacent to the HQ, and it is connected by a fast Ethernet connection

You have been employed by the Packford's to model the current business system and propose a new, integrated software system that will include all current functionality and any enhancements needed. Your job is to elicit the exact requirements from the client (presented in

your case study). You can make further assumptions, but they need to be clearly stated in your report. After eliciting the initial requirements for the new system, you are required to produce a design of the new system and a prototype using any competent technology / tools you are familiar with.