

Automate all hire activities

- ▶ Improve equipment utilisation
- ▶ Significantly reduce costs
- ▶ Respond to enquiries quickly
- ▶ Store all hire and customer related information
- ▶ View item availability in real time
- ▶ Produce quotations, convert into hire contracts, modify when necessary
- ▶ Embed images to be viewed and printed as required
- ▶ Forward scheduling facilities
- ▶ Powerful rollback features, eliminate incorrect invoices
- ▶ Manage full re-hire process with one module
- ▶ Reduce any downtime and costs associated with that
- ▶ Full asset management control

From initial customer enquiry through quotation generation, contract definition, final invoice, equipment purchase planning to servicing and equipment disposal, Answer Rental and Hire can help you to handle the full cycle.

The information and tools you need to improve equipment utilisation, achieve greater staff efficiency and significantly reduce costs.

Store all hire and customer information

Be sure that the information you see is accurate and answer customer enquiries quickly and efficiently.

All hire and customer related information is stored. This includes quotations, prices, customer contacts, credit history, purchasing and servicing details. Access can be granted to this information on a user by user basis.

Item availability in real time

View item availability online for an immediate, real time view of whether an item is available, or if the contract warrants it, a re-hire is to be created.

Convert quotations to contracts

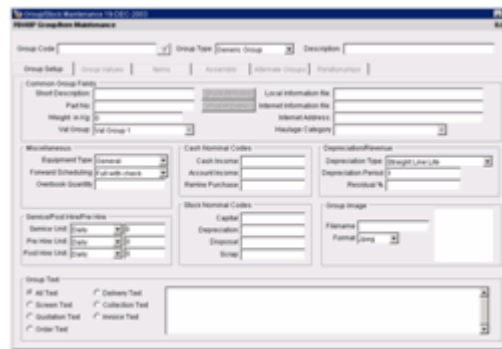
Produce quotations and convert these to contracts as required.

Answer Rental and Hire is flexible enough to allow modification of contracts without having to start from scratch.

Access information quickly and easily; there is no need to remember product codes, customer codes or function key codes.

Comprehensive search facilities are available, including the use of wildcards and mathematical operators.

Users can open a number of screens at the same time and navigate from one to another. Screen navigation can be done using a mouse, keyboard and/or function keys.



Embed, view and print images

Images can be embedded, viewed and printed as required.

These could include customer details such as drivers licenses and passports or other useful details including maps, instructions and certificates.

Forward scheduling

Forward scheduling works to make sure all hired assets are working to their full capability and to minimise rehires.

Events such as deliveries, collections, inter depot movements and servicing details can be entered in advance.

This means that users can accurately predict equipment availability giving them the opportunity to get new orders, minimise re-hires and increase utilisation.

Operational staff can prepare in advance for delivery or servicing.

System and User defined Item Statuses are available defining the following and more:

- ▶ Available
- ▶ Pre Hire Checking, Pre Hire
- ▶ On Hire
- ▶ Post Hire, Post Hire Checking
- ▶ Damaged
- ▶ Serviced

Invoicing

Invoices can be produced at any stage and can be for the whole contract or the off hired equipment only.

Several types of invoice are available, including:

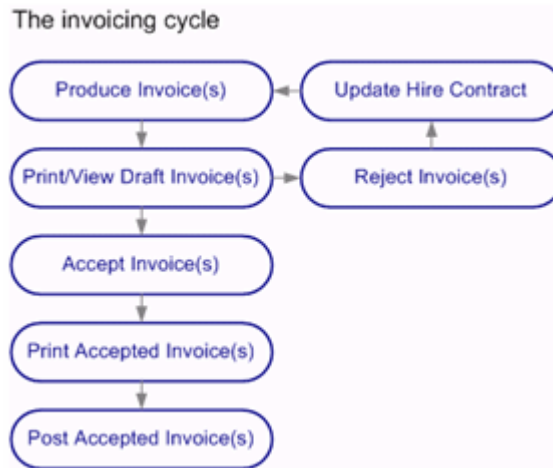
- ▶ Pro-Forma
- ▶ Deposit receipt
- ▶ Loss
- ▶ Damage
- ▶ Normal i.e. single, recurring, in advance
- ▶ Accept or reject invoices as necessary

We know that in a dynamic hire environment things change.

Answer Rental and Hire has the facility to change hire agreements and contracts immediately so that accurate details can be kept and users can maximise revenue opportunities.

Powerful rollback features are available. Selected invoices can be rolled back after printing but before committing them to accounts receivable. This means that, for example, you could quickly scan all invoices valued at more than £5,000 to ensure they are correct. Any incorrect invoices can be removed from an invoice batch without having to run the batch again.

Using the rollback feature can eliminate incorrect invoices, reducing the time spent to correct any mistakes and ensuring an efficient and accurate service.



Pricing

Hire charges can be calculated in virtually any way to suit you. These include:

- ▶ 1-7 day week
- ▶ Almost any combination of minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, quarters and years
- ▶ Using charge build up factors
- ▶ 'Free' periods for late return
- ▶ Include/exclude bank holidays
- ▶ Consolidate invoices

Pricing flexibility is important, so you have the tools to set up customer specific prices, price lists and pricing policies such as customer/product price and discount matrices.

Depot Co-Ordination

Answer Rental and Hire incorporates a multi depot, multi region approach to equipment. This means that company wide equipment is fully utilised to meet customer requirements.

Users can search for equipment based on depot proximity and equipment can be scheduled to move between depots.

Inter depot paperwork can be produced automatically and the status of equipment during the period of transfer can be automatically adjusted.

Depot managers will then know exactly what is to be delivered or collected from another depot and have the facility to monitor these situations.

Depots can be consolidated into regions for reporting, analysis and pricing, as well as availability checks.

Re-Hire (also Sub Hire and Cross Hire)

This is the process of hiring in equipment/services from external suppliers if they are unavailable at a depot.

Answer Rental and Hire ensures tight control over these processes to keep your re-hire needs to the absolute minimum.

The entire re-hire process can be managed using this module. From initial hire orders that can only be fulfilled using negative stock availability, this module will:

- ▶ Find the lowest cost suppliers
- ▶ Produce purchase orders
- ▶ Check incoming invoices against verbal and/or printed purchase orders
- ▶ Calculate the profitability of each sub-hire
- ▶ Keep details of negotiations and conversations with supplier e.g. off hire reference numbers

This puts you in control with full knowledge of previous orders. In the event of a disagreement with a supplier you will have all the information you need to hand. Users can also scan through previous orders to find the lowest cost supplier.

We know that situations and circumstances can change and that re-hires can become unnecessary.

We give you the facility to constantly check on re-hires and make sure that your resources are used more efficiently and less expensively.

Servicing

The servicing functions available ensure that equipment is serviced when necessary and details of work carried out are recorded.

As a result, long term downtime and costs are reduced.

Maintenance can be carried out to the manufacturers specifications and equipment that is costly to maintain is highlighted.

These facilities also help to ensure that legal maintenance requirements are met and detailed maintenance records are kept.

Service job sheets are produced detailing any parts needed and work to be carried out.

Full integration with the hire processes will produce warnings if items allocated to hire will shortly be required for maintenance.

Timesheets

Timesheets are provided for operated Plant Items with an unlimited number of build-ups.

Enter an unlimited number of equipment or operator timesheets per week, per item on hire.

Images of completed timesheets can be held to ensure that invoices can easily be printed, faxed or emailed with a copy of all supporting documentation.

Equipment Groups

Unlimited numbers of equipment, groups or subgroups can be set up with information consolidated at each level.

As needs evolve, individual pieces of equipment can be moved between groups to change the structure of the equipment groupings.

Equipment Information

We know that each company will have different needs when it comes to storing information, which is why operationally large amounts of information can be recorded concerning assets for you to use as much or as little as you like.

User defined fields can be set up to record information like warranty numbers, claim number, key numbers and so on.

More complex data including images can also be held – for example, certificates, diagrams or servicing instructions – which can then be accessed from a database.

Accounting conventions such as depreciation policies can be held e.g. straight line or reducing balance.

Text/comments can also be recorded against each equipment type, these can then be printed out on customer documentation. For example, delivery notes would always display the correct health and safety details along with any other information relating to that piece of equipment.

Operating System Support

Answer Rental and Hire has a client server design; it runs on operating systems such as Microsoft Windows (98, 2000, NT, XP), Unix (Linux, HP/UX, AIX, SCO, Solaris) and many others. It is fully web enabled for Intranet/Internet deployment.

Accounting - depreciation and assets

To ensure that the necessary accounting information can be correctly analysed, various general ledger account codes are held and masked by depot or region code (e.g. depreciation, capitalisation and re-hire sales revenue).

Full asset management control, vital to the provision of an accurate profit and loss and balance sheet accounting.

A variety of depreciation methods are supported and the resulting journals produced can be 'masked' by branch/region codes to provide management information at the depot levels e.g. branch/region profitability.

Fixed asset accounting is integrated into the hire system and can be used, for example, to provide journals of profit and loss on disposal of fixed assets.

Utilisation and profitability

We realise that utilising your assets and maintaining profitability is of prime importance to managing and optimising the hire fleet.

This is why we provide information on utilisation, revenue analysis and profitability at over 100 different levels, which means that you can analyse trends at the level you need.

Analysis is available on a range of time spans from day to year and at company levels from the group or company as a whole to individual items.

This information is always available for any given range of dates, both in the past and projecting into the future.

Graphical, spreadsheet and other methods can be used to manipulate data to show trends over weeks, months or years. Trends can then be established more quickly to resolve any marketing issues, i.e. pricing and discounts.

Technical details

Answer Rental and Hire supports all standard communication methods: fixed line, dial up, ISDN and ADSL in any combination. It is fully internet/intranet enabled so that users and customers can securely access RHM details, wherever they are.

The Automatic Database Synchronisation features ensure that the costs associated with communications are greatly reduced while increasing system stability.

The database design features a transaction processing architecture. This means that transactions can be rolled back and re-applied and that many of the traditional limitations of databases are eliminated. For example, Answer Rental and Hire can be backed up while in use so that backups can be performed more frequently.

The Oracle based design supports the use of all major web based technologies including HTML, XML, Java 2 Enterprise Edition (J2EE) and SOAP. A future proof design with high connectivity.

Integration with the web means users can cut the costs associated with placing orders and add value to the hire services undertaken by your organisation. This is achieved by automating company/ customer reporting so that customers receive the information they require in the correct format automatically.

It is possible to allow customers to check pricing, equipment availability, place, query and check orders in a highly secure online environment.

Multi-lingual, multi-currency

Answer Rental and Hire is designed to be fully multi-lingual. Users will see the whole system in their own language by default but the multi-lingual facilities ensure that screen prompts and even data such as product descriptions are viewed or printed in the preferred language.

All major, and many more minor, European languages are supported as well as Chinese, Japanese and Arabic.

All transactions involving money (e.g. invoices and cash receipts) can take place simultaneously in multiple currencies, making this ideal for supporting the Euro.

We can also provide for international hire operations with full support for multiple sales tax and VAT mechanisms.

Assessing and manipulating data

We realise that it can be a frustrating and time consuming process to access useful information from the huge quantities available. This is why we have made it a straightforward process where users can see the data they need, set it out exactly as they require and turn it into useful reports covering virtually every aspect of your business.

Data can be viewed, browsed and manipulated in three or more dimensions, allowing 'what if?' simulations to take place; questions of how and when can be answered on an ad hoc basis. This data mining can also include other rich data sources such as Microsoft Office files.

Answer Rental and Hire can also be connected to other software. It is enabled with MS COM, OLE 2.0, .NET, XML and Active-X, allowing users to embed a wide variety of third party products. Data can be accessed directly from other software products, for example, Excel spreadsheets, Microsoft Access databases and other tools including Microsoft Visual Basic.

This is all achieved without batch files, users can 'see' the live data and as it changes so will your spreadsheets and graphics. This means that reports can be set up and monitored in real time, as it happens.

Documents available

- ▶ Quotations
- ▶ Hire Agreements and Contracts
- ▶ Proforma Invoices
- ▶ Deposit Receipt Invoices
- ▶ Re-Hire (Cross Hire) Orders
- ▶ Picking Notes
- ▶ Loading Lists
- ▶ Delivery Notes
- ▶ Multi-Depot Delivery Notes
- ▶ Collection Notes
- ▶ Multi-Depot Collection Notes
- ▶ Re-Hire (Cross Hire) Collection Instructions
- ▶ Hire Invoices
- ▶ Sales Invoices
- ▶ Credit Notes
- ▶ Damage Letters and Invoices
- ▶ Loss Letters and Invoices
- ▶ Exchange Notes
- ▶ Bar Code Labels
- ▶ Inter Depot Delivery Notes
- ▶ Inter Depot Collection Notes

For more information visit the Answer Solutions website or contact us.

Answer Solutions Ltd

The Innovation Centre
Festival Drive
Ebbw Vale
NP23 8XA

w: www.answersolutions.com
e: info@answersolutions.com
t: 01495 356771
f: 01495 356774