

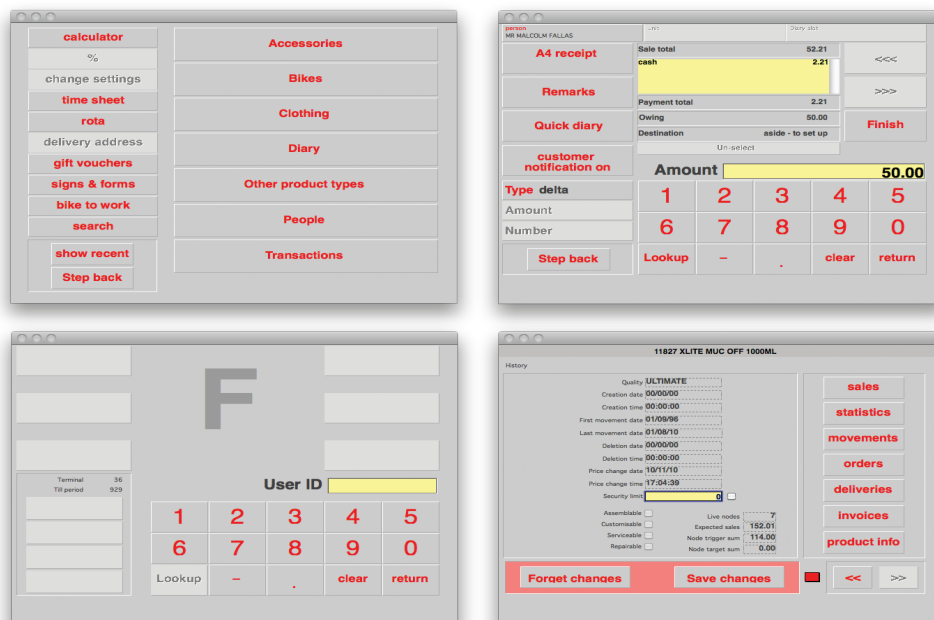


EDINBURGH BICYCLE CO-OPERATIVE

One of the UK's leading bicycle retailers, Edinburgh Bicycle uses a 4D-based retail system to drive its day-to-day business.



Founded in 1977, Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative has grown with branches throughout the UK, employing 180 members of staff nationwide.



The system is at once simple and elegant enough to be run at the point of sale, yet powerful enough to provide back-end data analysis.

Continuous development

Business process automation using 4D was first introduced to the Edinburgh Bicycle Co-op in the early 90s in the form of a Point of Sale (POS) retailing application.

This has grown (often in quick, successive development cycles) to meet the needs of the business as opportunities arose. Today, deployed on one server and available to 90 clients in 6 cities through-

out the UK, the retail application empowers strategic departments (buying, marketing, admin) by enabling complex data analysis at high speed, yet is robust enough to continue driving day-to-day operations at the tills.

Functionality within the retail application includes: a diary system for workshops, stock management, replenishment and procurement with computed trigger levels, customer

"4D gives us the development agility to quickly capitalize niche opportunity."

Dave Gradwell
IT Manager
Edinburgh Bicycle

management (with a history of interactions), POS mode driving a till printer and cash drawer and barcode scanner, integration with a third-party warehouse management system, SMS- and email-capable customer notification system, templates for creating product web pages, financial management, and analysis tools and reports.

The co-op's web site also sits atop a full stack of 4D technology. One 4D Server and three 4D Clients are housed in a collocation facility; the 4D Server manages the data whilst the 4D Clients face the world wide web. Being a native 4D solution, the web site readily communicates with the 4D retail system for tight integration.

Practically plug-and-play

4D ships with an arsenal of technical components to quickly dispatch technological challenges right out the box. This lets the developer – Netkelvin – put the crosshairs directly on the business problem, focusing on systems analysis, strategy and implementation. 4D's application server handles deployment, a powerful SQL database is built in, backup is automatic, etc. So many technical components come under the hood, that 4D is pretty much ready to solve technical problems out of the box.

Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative

Widely considered as one of the UK's leading bicycle retailers, Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative was founded in 1977 and today has branches throughout the UK.

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Edinburgh Bicycle Co-op's retail space in the heart of Manchester –one of six locations across the UK.

For resolving UK postcodes into complete addresses, for instance, a 4D Server was deployed, configured to field web services requests. Internally, the server referenced an off-the-shelf, commercially available postcode-lookup DLL. 4D automatically generated the plug-in to use the DLL, and the server was made ready with less than 20 lines of code.

The 4D web services client was employed in the retail application to query the 4D web services server. 4D generated the important client-side code, and within an hour a client-server solution had taken shape.

With 4D covering the technical challenges, the co-op can fulfill its business requirements faster.

Netkelvin

Netkelvin has been a provider of software development services for nearly 20 years, serving retail, construction, medical, marketing, and internet technology firms.

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