

## Connect Electrical Wholesale Ltd

There are a large number of independent electrical wholesalers in this country which were started by entrepreneurs who had previously managed one or more of the 'nationals'. Very few people will have enjoyed the success of Jon Bishop, who has recently started Connect Electrical Wholesale in his home town of Newbury.

Jon was an outstanding branch manager – the first in the company to top £1/2 million sales in one month. He then went on to open a new region and ultimately manage a large country, a post he held for several years.

Not only is he an expert in all aspects of electrical wholesaling, he has also installed and helped to develop national computing systems for both Spanish and French multi-location operations.

It follows that when he started his own business, the qualities of the computer system, the company supplying and supporting it were of paramount importance to him.

"I saw 9 different systems", he says, "and picked Sharp-Ax from Sharp-aX Computer Systems, because it used all modern windows techniques and was by far the best I saw; they are very experienced in electrical wholesalers systems and while they are a large software house which is reassuring, you are still treated as important, whatever size you are."

Jon also bought his 5000 square feet premises which enable him to stock a full and varied range of products from leading manufacturers such as MK, Aurora, Fluke and Schneider and by joining the IBA buying group it has given him the power to provide products to his customers at very competitive prices with the added benefit of offering full UK coverage via the national network of IBA member outlets.



It is interesting to examine Jon Bishop's sales philosophy, "The quality of service is so important", he says, "As the cost of labour is normally far higher than materials, you mustn't keep your customers waiting either on the counter or on site. React quickly and positively to any problems and train your staff intensively to ensure they are far more than order takers.

Connect look to their Sharp-Ax system to help them with this. They use product images on screen and quotations, put the boss's knowledge into the system for alternative products and performance indicators that monitor, advise and alert.

It is important that the system can be readily changed and developed, and as Jon's worldwide experience means he knows exactly what he wants he looks to Sharp-aX to provide it.

Connect plans continued growth in Newbury, and intends to expand into other geographical areas by opening branches on a shared local equity basis, this will give an opportunity to use Connect's credibility while providing full administration and accounts from their head office.

