

# Asta Powerproject Case Study: H&J Martin

## ASTA POWERPROJECT STANDS THE TEST OF TIME AT H&J MARTIN

H&J Martin Limited provides a complete construction and property management service. From private clients to major public sector contracts, the Construction Division of H&J Martin leads the UK and Ireland construction industry in responsible and sustainable development. It builds, maintains, fits out and develops offices, shopping centres, housing and municipal buildings all over the UK, Ireland and Europe.

It works closely with its clients and has earned a reputation for consistently meeting or exceeding targets. Delivering value to its customers is very important to H&J Martin, whether that is the value of a budget or the added value it brings to the projects. It keeps an eye firmly on the big picture to support business objectives and to deliver to programme and to budget.

### ► BUSINESS WITH INTEGRITY

H&J Martin believes that a reputation for doing business with integrity must be earned, and it makes every effort to behave responsibly through every step of a programme. In practice, this can only be achieved by frequent and effective communication with all stakeholders. Since the early '90s H&J Martin has been using Asta Powerproject from Asta Development to achieve this. It uses the planning software to develop its series of programmes for the



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execution of works, to keep a Master Works Programme, and to report on progress against the programmes to everyone in the chain. A long-time user of Asta Powerproject, H&J Martin has found nothing to compare with it.

Ian Birch has been a Project Planner with H&J Martin for four years, and has extensive previous experience of all sizes of fit out,

industrial, traditional, and design and build projects. “Throughout my career I have always used Asta Powerproject above any other software, I wouldn't use anything else,” said Ian. “When I joined H&J Martin Asta Powerproject was already in use, it is pretty standard in the industry especially for the larger firms – most contractors have used it before and expect to be using it in their next company.”

### ► WITH ASTA POWERPROJECT COMMUNICATION IS MADE EASY

Over the past few years the company has been focusing on design and build and fit out projects in the education sector. One of H&J Martin's main success factors is how closely it works with its teams on site; all members of the teams need to be able to see the programme of works and Asta Powerproject allows them to do this easily.

“We use Asta Powerproject because it is easily understandable and the data transferable,” said Ian. “Not everyone onsite will have access to the programme but they will have access to MS Office; so we can simply paste the table from the programme into Excel making it quick and easy for them to see. I can give them just their key project data, tailored to that site and those people. This will typically be the columns that show task name, a start date and an



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end date and a field for progress update. They can update their progress and that can be pasted back into Powerproject giving me data that is current and from which I can judge progress.”

## ▶ TRAFFIC LIGHT FUNCTION SAVES TIME

Ian uses a traffic light system as the primary indicator in the programmes. The table columns are colour coded dependent on priority; if a job is a priority it might be red, ranging through to amber and green. The colour codes change according to changes in schedule, when the duration, start or end date of a job are at risk or have altered, the colour codes are amended accordingly. At present this job is a manual one, and is quite time-consuming. Ian is about to take advantage of the function within Asta Powerproject that automates this process.

“Asta Powerproject is capable of automatically integrating the colour coding system for us. I can set the cells up to be red, amber or green and the spreadsheet will react to certain criteria. If scheduling changes, the priority indicator will automatically change, according to the new development, indicating whether it’s early, late or on time. We are looking forward to implementing this feature as it will save lots of time and free up resources.”

## ▶ ASTA POWERPROJECT’S VERSATILE REPORTING ADDS VALUE

Reporting is an integral part of Ian’s job, and is used for far more than just completion and reporting to senior management. One very



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useful function of Asta Powerproject is its ability to tailor and filter information to each stakeholder’s requirement.

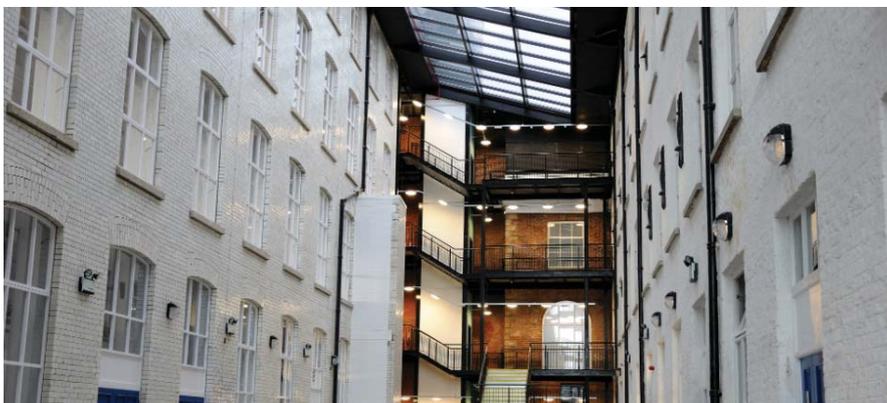
“Each subcontractor receives his own programme of works which is derived from the master programme in Asta Powerproject,” explained Ian. “Asta Powerproject is so adaptable. Rather than confront the subcontractor with the whole chart of works to navigate, I can produce a report that shows just the jobs they are contracted to do and their completion dates. I can also tailor it to show how their progress impacts the progression of the entire project, and when a reschedule is necessary I can give them an accurate picture of delays in the programme.”



Ian supplies progress reports on a regular basis to clients and subcontractors. From the information stored in the software he can produce reports that are not only tailored but presented in a clear concise format that customers can easily understand.

“In Asta Powerproject my plan is presented in a bar graph; it identifies every job – the name of the task, the start and end dates, the period of time it will take, the status, and so on. The information is clearly presented and is easy to manipulate: I can adapt it for my own reporting requirements. I can run a filter on the data to see who is responsible for which jobs, I can then filter on that table to show each individual contractor and what they are contracted to do, I can filter that information to show progress and the colour coding, and so on. The filtering function allows me to pull out of the master programme only the data I’m interested in or need to report on. It’s a very useful function and only takes a few seconds, and once that filter is set up it stays there, saved and stored for future use on a similar report.”

“What Asta Powerproject is particularly good at is presentation, which is exactly what you need for good reports. With a very small amount of effort, the user can easily produce a very presentable and professional-looking report.”



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## ▶ TEMPLATES ELIMINATE DUPLICATION OF TIME AND EFFORT

The filters, codes and colours that are set up are saved and stored in Asta Powerproject's Code Library. Asta Powerproject allows you to create templates easily and incorporate any functions that have been set up ready for use in subsequent projects. Ian explains: "We have created a programme template which we use for all programmes. Each time we make a project plan, we just choose an existing template and change any bits that are different or new. This template has become the company standard. It looks good and is easy to use. Each time we get a new project we don't have to reinvent the programme schedule – we can adapt the template to meet the needs of each programme. It's a very powerful feature that can easily be carried out in just a click – saving large amounts of time."

H&J Martin is proud of its status as an innovator in the industry.

"Using Asta Powerproject to create useful tools like this has helped us to take the lead in programme management. I have worked for other NI contractors and seen other programmes, but none have been as presentable as Powerproject."

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## ▶ ABOUT ASTA DEVELOPMENT

Asta Development is a leading international developer of project, portfolio and resource management software which provides solutions for managing any size and any type of project.

Since its launch in 1988, the company's core product, Asta Powerproject, has evolved and improved driven by regular feedback from users and the use of the latest technologies available. It has proved its capabilities over the years on high-profile projects throughout the world and is now used by thousands of planners in a wide variety of industry sectors in the UK, Europe, Asia Pacific and the US. Asta Development supports customers directly from its offices in Oxfordshire and Shropshire. Outside of the UK, Asta Development has a network of distributors who supply, train and support customers, with the software available in up to seven different languages.

Asta Development is a part of Eleco plc, a holding company focusing on software and advanced off-site building systems for the construction industry. The company is listed on the London Stock Exchange's Alternative Investment Market (AIM). More information about Asta Development and its products can be found at [www.astadev.com](http://www.astadev.com) and information about Eleco plc can be found at [www.eleco.com](http://www.eleco.com)

## ▶ ABOUT H&J MARTIN

H&J Martin, founded in 1839, builds, maintains, fits out and develops offices, shopping centres, housing and municipal buildings all over the UK, Ireland and Europe.

H&J Martin is an innovative, sector-led company. From private clients to major public sector contracts, its Construction Division leads the conversation in responsible and sustainable development. With safety and excellence always at the forefront, it works closely with clients to ensure best value – and that all of its performance targets are consistently met or exceeded.

H&J Martin delivers major projects through co-ordinated and carefully planned collaboration. Its working practices are guided and supported by ISO Certified integrated management systems. It develops all sorts of projects and services for all types of people. It works on partnership-based projects that include Private Finance Initiatives, Public-Private Partnerships, Design and Build, Performance Related Partnerships, Frameworks or Measured Term Contracts.

More about H&J Martin can be found at [www.hjmartin.co.uk](http://www.hjmartin.co.uk)