



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Customer :** United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
**Website:** www.fco.gov.uk  
**Customer Size:** 3,000 +  
**Country :** Worldwide  
**Industry :** Foreign Diplomatic Services  
**Users:** 500

**Customer Profile :**

Based in Whitehall London, their main activities include:

- Supporting British nationals overseas
- Helping keep Britain safe
- Funding programmes
- Building strong relationships



## Global Strategic Asset Management with PYRAMID Property Management Software

“An intuitive and flexible tool”  
SD JOHNSON –HEAD FCO ESTATE METRICS

*The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office are responsible for 2,300 properties worldwide with a total asset value of £2.1 billion. They rent a further 2,700.*

*They wanted a global Strategic Asset System to manage this vast worldwide estate. Unsatisfied with an off the shelf system to which various customisations were unsuccessfully attempted, and after comparing various alternatives they commissioned UCT to write a fully customisable enterprise system.*

### Business Needs

Prior to PYRAMID property asset records were kept up to date by the various Management Officers located around the world, sending paper based updates to the central repository every six months.

A large number of properties are leased and given up every month. This meant that at any one time the records were woefully out of date.

Key dates would be missed, potentially costing vast amounts of money while an up to date valuation of the estate was almost impossible.

Key areas such as property inspections, health and safety compliancy and inventory tracking were all managed by disparate spreadsheets or localised desktop databases.

An off the shelf property management system was purchased to capture this information. However it did not meet the requirements of the FCO. It was in effect

a ‘cookie cutter’ solution that couldn’t be properly tailored to their needs

In practice what was needed was a property management system that could capture, share and use property data specific to FCO operations for the purposes of Strategic Asset Management.

### Solution

Security was a major criteria of the system PYRAMID provides control right down to user field level on a form.

The ability to tailor PYRAMID was also a key factor as it would allow the various locations around the world to adapt the application to their particular business needs.

Government portfolio managers are able to make the application available to partners such as private



sector valuation companies. These companies are hired to conduct worldwide valuations of the FCO estate and enter the results of these valuations directly into PYRAMID where, the only parts of the system that they can see are the new and past valuations. Only once the new valuations have been quality assured by the FCO property management team is it validated as passed and made available to the rest of the system.

Once the system was established in the UK a worldwide pilot scheme was undertaken with key members of staff visiting the various locations around the world. The pilot scheme served two purposes: 1. To train local staff on PYRAMID and 2. To solicit ideas from the local staff on what customisations would be needed within PYRAMID to make it work the way they worked.

Once these customisations were complete, staff around the world felt that they system was truly designed with them in mind and the buy-in rate was generally high.

Staff around the world now update their own property details from their individual locations, accessing the central database via an internet connection.

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“Not being a great admirer of IT in the past I was pleasantly surprised to see how easy the system was to use and now cannot work without it”

RAY SIME - FCO- ESTATE METRICS

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### Benefits

PYRAMID replaces an inflexible off the shelf package with a customisable enterprise solution that serves **500 users** worldwide.

- **Time Saving**

“The Asset valuation programme has saved **two months of surveyor’s time** per valuation date.

Freedom of Information and Parliamentary Questions are now answered in hours rather than other departments who often cannot answer without incurring disproportionate cost.

- **Visibility**

“Maintenance Inspections are now visible to all users”.  
“Work order recording allows all to see where money being spent on the estate “

- **Offline Health and Safety Module**

Health and safety inspections can be conducted offline on a laptop and the result of the inspector reports imported into the central database and made available for searching, sorting and filtering.

- **Inventory Control**

Keeping track of inventory items within properties has never been easier. The ability to connect to an offline barcode scanner. Stock checks and inventory control is easily maintained within PYRAMID.

- **Diary facility**

Key vital dates are no longer missed. With the property managers diary events like lease renewal dates, lease break dates etc. are tracked and reported.

### Other benefits include:

- Uniformity of data
- Greater estate knowledge for all
- Fewer returns to FCO centre
- Real time information allows comparison of properties
- Easier to justify funding bids with evidence
- Saves staff time (e.g. inventories)
- Extremely user friendly
- Comply with UK & Local Legislation
- Invoice payments
- Utility charges
- Fitness for purpose
- Maintenance module
- Work Order tracking module