

Editors Note

Welcome to our special 30th Anniversary bumper edition of embraceTALK – in which we pay tribute to those who have made this possible - our staff and clients! Thanks to you, ACS-Embrace has had an amazing and successful 30 years, delivering beyond solutions.

We invite you to join us on a journey through the past 3 decades of ACS-Embrace as we expose you to glimpses of some of the highlights, great achievements and fun times we have experienced and enjoyed together.

It is with great pride that we share messages and testimonials from some of our clients who implemented Embrace during our first decade of existence and today are still successfully running on our world class, end-to-end Embrace ERP solution.

We also look back at the significant contributions our Outreach team have made at the Ikhwezilokusa Home during the past decade.

"The purpose of life is to contribute in some way to making things better."

Robert F. Kennedy

As we take the first step of our journey into the next decade, we plan to continue along the path of growth, excellence and success!

Thank you for your valued and continued support.

Jeannette



30 Years of Innovation

ACS-Embrace is 30 years young and continues to grow and thrive in our industry and thanks to our employees, clients and partners, ACS-Embrace has had an amazing and successful 30 years.

Looking back, a lot has been accomplished but we are nowhere near done and cannot wait to see what the next 30 years will bring.

There have been many projects and each project presented challenges that we successfully overcame, and this is what has made ACS-Embrace the strong and vibrant company it is today.

Technology, software and in fact, the entire IT industry, has changed significantly over the past 3 decades, and despite all those changes Embrace continues to be a critical element of the IT fabric in many Southern African companies.

This is quite remarkable, considering that in our business a few years is a lifetime! What did we do to ensure that the Embrace ERP Software solution would remain relevant and world class over such a long period of time? We attribute this to six significant factors:

- A robust and solid foundation
- A loyal customer base
- Win-Win Partnerships
- A fully integrated, end-to-end business solution
- Evolving Embrace to meet changing requirements
- A strong, committed and local Research and Development Division

A critical aspect to Embrace's longevity is that the architectural foundations of the product are rock solid, enabling the development team to easily extend Embrace's capabilities to meet our customers' quickly evolving business and system requirements. The authors and developers of Embrace had the foresight to realise that long lasting software needs to be easily maintainable and extendable.

Embrace continues to succeed because it has adapted over the years to rapidly changing technology and business

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requirements and is well positioned to continue in this mode for years to come.

Another reason Embrace is still an essential product is because of an extremely loyal and enthusiastic user community and many have worked closely with the developers to work out solutions to the technology and business challenges they face, with these often ending up as product enhancements in the next release of Embrace. It is this tight interrelationship with our customers that enables Embrace to meet the business needs of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

In today's business environment, companies must ensure optimal performance for their software solutions. Embrace operates extremely efficiently in terms of both hardware and networking resources on Unix, Linux and Windows, while the efficient thin-client architecture ensures that Embrace can be run from PCs, Terminals, Windows Terminal Services or the Web, with minimal bandwidth requirements.

Embrace can be tailored to meet the specific needs of any client while ensuring all customisations are done in such a way as to allow for easy upgrading to future new releases.

There is no doubt that Embrace will be around for a long time because it is extremely reliable, flexible, cutting edge, and rand-for-rand, less expensive than its competitors.



A South African Success Story - 3 Action Packed Decades

1985 – 1995



“Founding Fathers” From left to right: Gavin Fairon, Viv Stefanski, Martin de Bruin, Mike Stefanski, Steve Wookey

Join us on a journey through the past 3 decades of ACS and Embrace as we expose you to glimpses of some of the highlights, great achievements and fun times we have experienced and enjoyed together.

It all began in 1984 when a group of young entrepreneurs, namely Mike Stefanski, Steve Wookey, Martin de Bruin, Gavin Fairon and Viv pre-Stefanski met at a pub in Blairgowrie and had this great idea to start a Software House to support the software packages running on Prime Computers. At that time Mike and Gavin were Salesmen at Prime while Martin, Steve and Viv were Mike's customers. Plans were put in place and customers canvassed.

On the 1st of January 1985 ACS officially opened its doors, albeit garage doors, with Viv as Managing Director, and Martin and Steve as Project Directors. An analyst programmer, the very first employee, was appointed, namely Marlene Murfin and shortly after that, a half day Girl Friday was employed.



Frustrated with the American software he was supporting, neither of which was a good fit for South African Companies, Steve, much to the disbelief of the rest of the team, started writing a software package which would embrace every aspect of a South African Company's business requirements.

In 1986, the entire team became convinced that “Local is indeed Lekker” and R & D on the fledgling package moved up a notch as the Software Factory was relocated to more convivial surroundings – namely the pub at the Stefanski home in Arlington Drive, Bryanston.

Julie Bubb (now Suddaby) and Christine Louw were employed and together with Steve they programmed frenetically and Embrace was born.

In October, Wiggins Teape paper merchants purchased Embrace with a Prime Computer. ACS had just achieved their first Embrace site! All were ecstatic but at the same time terrified, as there was still a lot of development to be done.

The team frantically wrote the final modules, user training began and Embrace was successfully implemented.

In 1987 Mike left Prime, formed ACS Marketing and started selling Embrace exclusively. Another programmer was hired, namely Marcel Kitay. That same year ACS moved Embrace firmly into the Motor Industry and Mike bought a brand new BMW 5 Series, forcing ACS to move out of the garage at number 4 Arlington Drive and relocate to the up and coming Sandton CBD.

ACS moved into plush new premises on the 2nd Floor of Bute House in Sandown. The furniture was burgundy and the bank balance was red but the team was excited, motivated and having loads of fun and along with the other techno kids on the block, enjoying the sweet taste of success.

More people were employed, the company grew and over the next two years ACS consolidated its position in the Motor Trade with the addition of Invicta Bearings (CEG), Clevite, Leyland Truck and Bus, Unipart, Land Rover (AAD) and Babcock Triplejay.

In 1990 ACS branched into the Electrical Distributors market with sales to Powerpoint and Frank & Hirsch and the team officially said "goodbye to the American packages and hello Embrace".

ACS-Embrace did more than excel – it flourished! So did staff loyalty and their strong company spirit made it one of the most exciting places to work.

Marcel Kitay moved into project management with Bowthorpe Hellermann (HellermannTyton) as his first site while Kevin and the team were implementing Embrace at Putco.

A lot happened in these first five years - PI/Open was launched, Martin and Gavin moved on, Nelson Mandela was released and economical and political analysts were predicting a somewhat uncertain future.

In 1991 Viv decided to have her 2nd baby; she called it "Manufacturing". This module was soon fully integrated into the Embrace ERP Package and proved to be a perfect fit for Land Rover (AAD).

Business started getting tough so, in 1992, ACS joined the big boys. It was a sad moment for the founders, but ACS was competing in a difficult market and had big ambitions for exporting Embrace, which needed big money. ACS joined the Siltek fold and Mike became Managing Director of the new ACS.

25 - 30 Years Service

From left to right: Steve Wookey, Laxmi Natha, Julie Suddaby and Marcel Kitay



Marlene Murfin

1985 - First ACS-Embrace employee

Being part of the Siltek Group brought ACS opportunities within the computer distribution sector of the market with clients such as Tarsus, Comztek and SDD, implementing Embrace.

At the same time we launched into the pharmaceutical sector, when Merck purchased Embrace with our fully integrated lot and batch control which Marcel had a "tough time finding". Merck sold a wide range of chemicals, from routine to speciality, all of which had to be classified, controlled and tracked within Embrace, including hazardous chemicals and "fridge" stock, which needed to be stored separately. The Embrace Manufacturing module was also implemented.

During 1993 and 1994, ACS continued to grow and expand, especially on the manufacturing side with prestigious accounts such as MAN and The Dunlop Group implementing Embrace.

Wabco, part of the Sturrock and Robson group also implemented Embrace, and Embrace was subsequently implemented throughout the group.

A young man, namely Ian Foster joined the fold, totally oblivious of what the future held for him. Ian joined the R&D team as an analyst programmer but one could soon see he wasn't exactly inspired by the old texted based green screen technology.

1994 marked a significant milestone in South African history, when our first free and democratic election took place. Against this backdrop ACS-Embrace was preparing to take their first step into their second decade.

1995—2005

In 1995 our very first black President was elected and sworn in – the much loved “father of our nation”, Nelson Mandela, with his vision of a peaceful, successful “Rainbow Nation”.

This was also the year that Graphtec alias Wiggins Teape, alias First Paper House, alias Arjo Wiggins, alias Antalis, lost their mind and gave ACS six weeks to design and write a fully integrated, fully automated, radio controlled warehouse management system. Well they were our first Embrace client, so what could we say, but “sure – of course we can”!

The team worked day and night, programming, driving forklift trucks and counting stock. Whatever it took, our ACS team did it!

This was probably our biggest software challenge ever but the whole project was successfully completed on time, in budget and was a world first for on-line, real-time radio controlled warehousing, making it one of our best references. Antalis continue to be loyal customers and a great reference site.

In 1996 Samantha Blignaut joined ACS as a Project Manager in the Support Division, bringing with her a wealth of business knowledge, IT skills and Embrace experience having been the in-house Project Manager at both Merck Pharmaceuticals and MAN.



20 - 25 Years Service

From left to right: Ian Foster, Joyce Graham and Viv Wright

1997 brought with it a year of significant change for Embrace as we were forced to say goodbye to a trusted friend... the Freedom terminal.... and *hello* Windows and GUI!

Ian had started some prototyping work with third party products but we soon realised that we needed to develop a proper solution ourselves. Ian was assigned to the new technology team and very soon became the team leader and main developer.

The new Embrace Desktop was launched with much fanfare at the Park Hyatt. Today most, if not all Embrace clients have standardised on the GUI version. However, for all the die-hards, terminals are still supported.

This was also the time when ACS decided to venture into the Business Intelligence arena, believing that Cognos would be the “next big thing”! Sam was very inspired by the product and volunteered to head up a pioneering division of ACS that would specialise in Business Intelligence both for the Embrace user base and non-Embrace sites.

The division grew rapidly under Sam's leadership and with a large staff compliment soon made a big impact in the manufacturing and mining sectors of the economy.

AS Y2K approached, ACS finally said goodbye to another trusted friend, PI/Open, as version 10 of Embrace was released on the Universe relational data base. This was also the year that ACS went international again, all be it “down under”.

ACS Australia sold its first Embrace site - a 50 user licence to SANWA in Sydney. This saw the team packing their suitcases and heading to the airport. After many sleepless nights, for the Embrace team, SANWA went live and are today still successfully running Embrace. This was our first GUI site, first Version 10 site and of course our first Australian site.

That same year ACS was bought back from Siltek and resold to Glotec - don't they ever learn!

Dawn broke on 1st January 2001 and the Y2K or Millennial bug problem was averted. Our client computers did not crash, information was not lost, the world did not end and Embrace effectively and efficiently continued into the next century. The much-hyped Y2K crisis -- which had come in with a long, sustained roar -- went out with a whimper.

“It was the day that was supposed to finally prove what tech haters had been saying for so long: computers — not sin or religious prophecy come true — will bring us down. For months before the stroke of midnight on 1st January, 2000, analysts speculated that entire computer networks would crash, causing widespread dysfunction for a global population that had become irreversibly dependent on computers to hold, disseminate and analyse its most vital pieces of information. The problem was that many computers had been programmed to record dates using only the last two digits of every year, meaning that the year 2000 would register as the year 1900, totally messing with the collective computerized mind. But it just wasn't so. The New Year arrived with nothing more than the expected hangover.”



As part of the Glotec Group, 2001 saw ACS embrace banking and move into what was believed to be a new era. Embrace was implemented at Swazi Bank and Botswana Building Society and today both are still running on Embrace.

The MBO - "This was made possible by the tremendous support and encouragement we received from our staff, clients and business partners." - Steve Wookey, Managing Director

The team started developing the much anticipated Embrace Rental Module. At the same time "VSIFax" was fully integrated into Embrace, enabling clients to fax and email invoices, statements and any other documents directly out of Embrace.

In 2001 ACS broke into the Hudaco Group with Embrace being implemented at ABES Technoseal. Within the next 3 years Embrace was implemented at Deutz Diesel Power and Belting Supply Services.

This was also a sad time for the ACS family as Glotec took the decision to close the ACS Business Intelligence Division as they already had their own BI Division, with a competitive product, i.e. Hyperion. Sam and her team left ACS and launched a new company – ABS. We remained close and in contact as ABS continued to support Embrace clients.

In 2002, a mild sense of panic erupted at ACS as Glotec's financial health was not looking so good. The ACS team rallied together and decided to buy itself back from Glotec. Staff who had moved to Glotec premises were welcomed back to ACS House and the decision was taken to forge ahead with the Management Buy Out (MBO).

In 2004 the MBO was completed and the new ACS was born – a staff owned, staff empowered company, with all staff members being shareholders. Mike and Viv Stefanski resigned and moved to the Western Province. The time was finally right for Sam and her team to return to the ACS family. As part of the MBO, ACS



15 - 20 years Service

From left to right: Dave McBride, Keith Pillay, Lydia Bruggeman, Johan Van Rooyen, Donovan Bedford, Samantha Blignaut, Marlene Murfin and Shireen Chasmawala.

acquired ABS and ACS-Intelligence our BI Division was back in place.

Sam Blignaut, Ian Foster, Marcel Kitay and Siki Choonara were appointed to steer ACS-Embrace to success. As we commence our 4th decade, it has to be believed that they are achieving what they were appointed to do.



Launch of the new Embrace Desktop at The Park Hyatt - 1997

From left to right: Ian Foster, Delene and Steve Wookey, Marcel Kitay and Samantha Blignaut.

2005—2015



ACS-Embrace Directors

From left to right: Ian Foster, Steve Wookey, Samantha Blignaut and Marcel Kitay.

Our third decade kicked off to a busy start and big changes!

The Rental Module was completed, we began rewriting the Service & Workshop module and the Cognos BI Tools were integrated into Embrace.

Our Partner Program commenced with compact Computer Solutions (CCS) being appointed as our first VAR. CCS currently successfully supports one of our largest client sites - Invicta Holdings Group.

The Embrace Service, Maintenance Contracts and CRM modules were written and Version 12 released. That same year ACS received their first BEE rating, which was framed and proudly displayed.

Now it was time for a complete rebranding! An outside company was enlisted to assist with this project; they interviewed many staff members and clients and received extremely positive feedback. Our vision and mission statements were reengineered and redefined and the ACS "rubric cubic" logo of 21 years was replaced with the "sphere". Corporate colours remained burgundy with a colourful "splash" added to our desktop and document covers.

2007 saw the introduction of the Service Pack process, enabling quick fixes to be deployed to client sites. In that same year our graduate internship program was started and 10 students were enrolled. After graduating, many were snapped up within the client base while others stayed on and were employed by ACS. William Hill, in our R&D department and Mannie Lucas in the custom development team were two of those interns and are currently making significant contributions to their divisions. During this time our Academy premises, comprising 2 large training rooms were set up upstairs.

AgriNet, another valued client, moved to a new and bigger warehouse, the team toured warehouses overseas, evaluating

trends, gathering ideas and the Embrace Warehouse Management module was significantly enhanced, ensuring it remained a world class and state-of-the-art solution.

During this time, South Africa was voted as the most romantic country in the world. "They eat supper by candle light – every night!" Rolling black outs were introduced and our romantic nation learnt a new phrase, i.e. "load shedding", forcing ACS to purchase and install a generator. Amidst all this, we had our own "rolling out" program with Embrace being rolled out to all the MAN dealers and branches. At the same time the Embrace Retail Point-of-Sale Module was integrated into Embrace and implemented at Union Tiles, while The Combustion Group (TCG) implemented Embrace with the integrated Projects module with progressive invoicing for long term projects. With TCG being part of the Fer-Min-Ore Group it was not long before head office, along with the other group companies, implemented Embrace.

Management took the decision to sell our Business Intelligence to I Centric and to put all our focus into our core Embrace ERP software solution. Taking our customer support to a whole new level, service level agreements (SLA's) were offered, which would further ensure our delivery of "Service Beyond Excellence!"

Keeping abreast of the latest ERP trends and technology, the Embrace General Ledger was rewritten, enabling full drill down through to source document, a significant achievement and something that again set Embrace apart from our competitors.

In 2009 the ACS-Embrace Academy was awarded their SETA accreditation and a new version of Embrace was released, enabling clients to take advantage of all the new enhancements.

Value Logistics took the decision to purchase Embrace as their ERP solution, a comprehensive needs analysis was completed and Phase 1 implemented. This was to become a multi-phase project over a number of years.

2010 World Cup Fever hits ACS-Embrace

In 2010 World Cup Fever hit ACS and South Africa's nine provinces with great intensity as the euphoria of hosting the greatest show on earth climaxed in reality. The red carpet was rolled out to the world's best 32 teams and their supporters, ranking this as one of the proudest moments for the inhabitants of the Rainbow Nation. Confidence levels in the streets reached a 10-year high as the country prepared for what many South Africans described as a "second miracle," after our country's dramatic conversion to democracy. Our national flag was hoisted high and a team flag attached to all our cars as our whole country was united by one goal.

During all the excitement, Value Logistics (Phase 3) was implemented and went live. Web Services and Connection Pooling were released, with Agrinet being one of our first clients to take advantage of these new enhancements.

Later that year, the Embrace Retail Point-of-Sale system was rolled out to Agrinet's Landmark shops.

Development steamed on ahead and the Embrace Workflow and Output Management modules were completed and included in a new version of Embrace which was soon released, bringing us to Version 13.

Marketing and Communication became a new priority with the launch of embraceTALK and the hosting of Embrace "User Forums". One of the User Forums was hosted by Agrinet, where they showcased their warehouse management system and how it was implemented as well as their on-line trading, using web services and connection pooling.

Embrace was implemented at Bustque and it was a sad day, in 2011, when Sike left ACS-Embrace to join his brother at Bustque.

ACS hosted a "Kite Day" in Sunninghill. The event was advertised on Radio 702 and was well supported by staff, clients and the community.

10 - 15 Years Service:

From left to right: Jeanette Teles, Delene Wookey, Angela Krige, Su-Anne Kruger, Paulina Shabalala and Emmanuel Mashele



There was a kite making workshop, competitions, professional kite flying demonstrations and good old fashioned games.

Our "Support Ikhwezilokusa Home and School" hamper raffle was won by a member of the Ceva Logistics Embrace support team, which might explain why they are actively encouraging us to host another Kite Day.

We hit the ground running, implementing Embrace at Astore, a member of the Hudaco Group, with Astore being the fourth group company to implement Embrace.

2012 saw the team head towards Namibia to implement Embrace at Blue Marine, which has since become part of the Taeuber & Corsen Group, which falls under the Bidvest Namibia umbrella. Meanwhile back home, Value Logistics Phase 4 was successfully implemented.

In 2013 ACS was awarded the contract to implement Embrace at Westcon and MAN PDC implemented the Embrace warehouse management system.

In 2014 we set aside time to have some fun, invited special guests and hosted an exclusive ladies high tea, celebrating National Women's Day. Harry Sideropoulos was our "celebritea" and showed all our guests how to gain 10kg in 10 days in 3 easy steps.

Getting back to business we took part in the Smart Procurement World Expo and earlier this year participated in the "Proudly South African" Buy Local Summit.

2015 raised the curtain on the launch of our brand new Embrace web site but what makes 2015 really special is that this is the year we celebrate our 30th Anniversary!

The ACS-Embrace team remains united by one goal – keep Embrace a world class, best of breed ERP solution, remain passionate and ensure the company's continued growth and success.

We thank our staff and clients for their valued support. We would not have achieved this significant milestone without you.

Testimonials from our first eight ACS- Embrace Clients



Antalis South Africa (Pty) Ltd is a leading distributor of traditional printing, office and digital papers, as well as a supplier of Visual Communication including digital printing equipment, software and consumables. In addition we provide Protective Packaging and Logistic solutions. Wiggins Teape, as Antalis was first known, was one of the first companies to use the ACS-Embrace ERP system, which was implemented in 1986. Since then Embrace has grown, evolved and adapted to the ever changing business requirements of Antalis. Embrace was and has remained a world class ERP software solution.

Antalis South Africa (Pty) Ltd forms part of Antalis International which is fully owned by Sequana, listed on the Premier Marche of the Paris Stock Exchange. It operates in 44 countries worldwide and facilitates access to world-class paper manufacturers. Included in the group are the Arjowiggins Paper Manufacturing divisions.

We employ almost 390 people in eight sales and warehousing facilities throughout Southern Africa as well as an export arm that services Sub-Saharan Africa, all running on Embrace. Service and support from ACS-Embrace has been exceptional, ensuring 100% uptime.



Our 28 year partnership with ACS-Embrace - ensures we remain competitive within our industry!

Invicta Holdings is a South African based investment holding and management company which has been in operation since 1989. A Top 100 company listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, Invicta Holdings currently manages assets in excess of R12bn. Its subsidiaries include the leading distributors of capital equipment, spare parts and engineering consumables in Southern Africa.

Invicta Holdings is the only JSE listed company to achieve Top 100 Performers status for 20 consecutive years, evidence of an attentive and driven management team. Invicta Holdings has recently been ranked in the elite Top 20 Companies as determined by Financial Mail's expert writers as an indication of a company's "investability".

Invicta Bearings purchased ACS-Embrace in 1987 being only the 2nd ACS client and has since been consolidated into BMG.

The Capital Equipment Group (CEG) is a division of Invicta Holdings Ltd headed by Tony Sinclair, CEO, which consists of a number of divisions and companies focusing on the importation and distribution of Capital Equipment with a distribution network of over 152 outlets covering all aspects of distribution in the different sectors of the markets in which it trades.

Antalis was the very first company in South Africa to implement a full warehouse management system with RF barcode scanners, enabling us to keep track of everything and meet our promise of delivering within 3 to 4 hours of an order being placed. Along with full control, streamlined business processes, minimal shrinkage and fast delivery, we were also able to do away with our "night shift".

We recently implemented the Embrace Service Module in our Digital Printing Equipment Division, which has helped us monitor profitability and provide excellent service to our clients.

Antalis South Africa offers a range of Packaging, which includes bubble wrap, tapes, cartons and a host of other products. In addition to this we offer logistic solutions which include storage and distribution, all running on Embrace.

ACS-Embrace has been instrumental in assisting us to streamline our business processes and consolidate financial reporting. It provides access to consolidated real-time information for on-demand decision making.

ACS-Embrace has been pivotal in the controls it provides from a financial and ledger point of view and has assisted us to provide accurate and on-time figures to our local board as well as reporting to our parent company in Paris. The streamlined debtors module gives us the assurance that our client statements will be correct and delivered on time via email or faxing.

One of the major benefits to us is the drill-down capabilities of the ledger and the "downloads" into Excel.

Congratulations ACS-Embrace on 3 decades of shared success!



The Capital Equipment Group has within its fold the largest agricultural equipment suppliers in South Africa and represent many well-known world brands. CEG (Capital Equipment Segment) of Invicta Holdings Ltd has adopted ACS-Embrace as the preferred ERP System in order to manage their Dealer network and after sales support operations.

For the past 28 years we have partnered with Associated Computer Solutions to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing business systems/ERP and to remain competitive within our industry.

CEG Dealers "self-service" their Stock Ordering and Warranty claims with ACS-Embrace software, streamlining the management of the Dealer Network. CEG's parts stock replenishment has been automated ensuring excellent stock fills and low excess stock levels.

During this time CEG has acquired various companies and grown in leaps and bounds. We have added companies and users to ACS- Embrace easily, with the new company's being fully operational within short lead times.

It is not an everyday occurrence that a company achieves 30 years in operation.

Congratulations ACS on 30 years of success!



The AAD Group - celebrating with ACS-Embrace - a 27 year partnership!

Our journey began in 1988 when Associated Automotive Distributors started the search for an ERP software system that could efficiently cater for its ever evolving business requirements. ACS was revolutionary in developing an overseas shipment module that made their ERP system stand out far above other industry developments.

ACS has played a critical role in our organisation throughout the years. Embrace's dynamic ability to evolve has allowed our partnership to grow as we have entered into new ventures and industries. For every challenge, ACS has provided a tailor-made solution.

The AAD Group is a service-focused company providing specialised transport solutions predominantly in the medium and heavy automotive sectors. Our philosophy is based on customer satisfaction being the best foundation on which to build a business.

The AAD Group has a portfolio of dealerships and distributor franchises for world-class vehicles, components and vehicle parts. These are supported by diagnostics and workshops which maintain vehicles in perfect running order to optimise the cost of ownership throughout the vehicle lifetime.

The AAD Group also offers warehouse, logistics and cargo handling solutions. ACS is playing an integral role in developing logistics software that can streamline our warehousing processes.

ACS understands the key performance factors driving our business and provides us with a software solution that supports it.

Congratulations ACS on 30 years of success!



A member of the Larimar Group, 2015 marks 70 years in which PUTCO has been part of the South African passenger transport history.

The Company was founded in 1945 as the Public Utility Transport Corporation. Carleo Enterprises acquired 51.6% of the shareholding in 1971 and the name was formally changed to PUTCO Limited in 1972.

In 2005 after being listed on the JSE for 60 years, PUTCO delisted to take on empowerment partners. The Company achieved a milestone in the history of the transport industry by completing a BBBEE Scheme, empowering more than 3300 employees as shareholders. PUTCO is now 42.6% black owned, 11% of which are black women.

PUTCO has established itself as the largest commuter bus operator in South Africa. The company employs more than 4 000 people, has a fleet in excess of 1 900 buses which travel approximately 90 million kilometres per annum in the transportation of over 230 000 passengers daily.

Embrace is used not only by PUTCO, but also by other member companies within the Larimar Group. Our utilization of Embrace is not restricted to only the operation and accounting of our passenger service, but also provides the facility to engineer and manufacture products used in the service and maintenance of our bus fleet.

PUTCO's partnership with Associated Computer Solutions (ACS) began in 1990 when the decision was taken to implement a fully integrated real-time software solution to meet the company's business requirements. ACS was a fledgling company back then but has, in the course of our 25 year relationship, continued to meet the challenges facing our industry. ACS-Embrace is able to offer standard and/or custom solutions to meet the evolving nature of the Larimar Group of companies' requirements. Embrace being a South African developed ERP System offers the added benefit of understanding the South African market as well as facilitating support to its clients.

Our years with ACS-Embrace have afforded both companies the benefit of developing good interpersonal relationships. Their willingness to go the extra mile, especially when times are tough, is testament to that.

PUTCO and the Larimar Group congratulate ACS-Embrace on their 30th Anniversary and look forward to many more years in partnership.



HellermannTyton

ACS-Embrace - an integral partner to HellermannTyton for 25 years!

HellermannTyton Group PLC is a leading global technologies group operating in 36 countries worldwide, supplying high quality products and solutions to the electrical, automotive and communications industries.

The South African subsidiary has been in operation for 49 years and manufactures, procures, markets and sells a wide range of electrical products to the electrical and automotive industries across sub-Saharan Africa. Our offering to these markets include products and solutions for cable identification, protection, routing, securing and termination, interconnection components, enclosures, hand tools and test instruments.

For the past 25 years our company has successfully partnered with Associated Computer Solutions to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing and developing landscape in the business systems/ERP space. During this time both businesses have undergone massive change and yet the partnership has endured in a beneficial way for both of us.

This is, no doubt, a feature of the strong interpersonal relationships which have been forged amongst our respective teams and the ongoing ability of ACS to meet our requirements.

"Every business has unique systems' needs which it believes must be met to fulfil its strategies, differentiate it from its competitors and successfully underpin its market dynamics. It is in this specific quarter that ACS has been able to excel as a partner to our company, consistently, and over a long period of time." Rod Dewing - Managing Director

"The Embrace product, and the fantastic account managers and behind-the-scenes programmers have assisted tremendously in the growth of our systems. The intuitiveness and full integration of Embrace, teamed with the ease of use and customisation for individual requirements means we can continue to grow and adapt to the continuously changing needs of business. We are currently investigating the service module to assist with the new requirements in the organisation - and it's great to know that this functionality already exists, we do not have to look for third party products. A huge thank you to everyone at ACS who have invested so much to make Embrace a great all-round system that has been an integral part of HellermannTyton for the last 25 years." Alison Frankleyne - IT Manager

It is not an everyday occurrence that a company achieves 30 years in operation. A milestone such as this underlines the creativity, quality and dedication of the people who work in the business.

To the ACS staff - the HellermannTyton team congratulate you on your accomplishment and wish you every success as you set your sights on achieving the magical half-century.



Tarsus Technologies distributes the world's leading IT hardware brands to the Southern African reseller channel. Tarsus, a member of the MB Technologies group, was established in 1985 and with three decades of operation, it is the longest-established IT distributor in South Africa.

Tarsus is uniquely positioned to meet the channel's needs for credit funding, stock availability and efficient logistics to ensure that resellers are able to deliver the best possible service, support and overall solutions to their end user customer base at the lowest possible cost. Not only does Tarsus provide excellent service but also world-class logistics.

Tarsus implemented Embrace in 1992 and since then has grown from a small operation of 32 users to its current size of 522 concurrent user licenses. Over the years Tarsus has made significant changes to their Embrace System, so as to cater for the ever changing, fast paced IT Distribution environment.

Tarsus has grown their Embrace system and has operations in Southern Africa (Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia with branches spread across South Africa, all of which run on the Embrace ERP system, across the WAN.

The integrated Embrace Point-of-Sale system, with touch screen was implemented in the retail outlet to further streamline business process and ensure control as well as customer satisfaction.

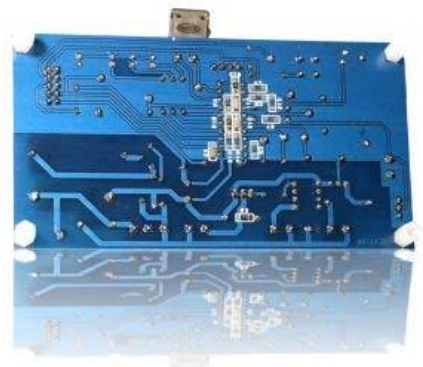
The Embrace Warehouse Management system with RF Scanning has been critical in enabling Tarsus to improve picker performance, reduce shrinkage and deliver excellent service.

Two years ago the Tarsus management team decided to switch from Unix to the Windows platform as most other third party software is centered around Microsoft. The changeover was smooth and successful, thanks to the support of the ACS-Embrace team.

Tarsus has successfully integrated data from suppliers as well as customers and via Web Services and are able to process purchase orders and generate sales transactions seamlessly. This was necessitated by customer demand for real time orders. Customers no longer have to phone through orders, wait to verify stock availability and expected delivery. The system to system integration has streamlined the process, saved time and ensured accurate information.

The Embrace System is agile, flexible and cost-effective and allows for on-demand customisation as required.

Tarsus congratulates ACS-Embrace on 30 years of excellent service!



WestconGroup[®]



Celebrating a 16 year mutually beneficial and successful partnership!

WestconGroup Southern Africa, a member of the global WestconGroup, is a leading value-added distributor of technology and converged communications solutions for customers in the enterprise, SMB and consumer markets, in South Africa and across the SADC region.

The company is made up of a series of niche business practices that include: Comstor (Cisco business), Consumer Solutions, Unified Communications and Collaboration Solutions, Mobility Solutions, Security Solutions, Cloud Solutions, a Government and Service Provider practice, as well as Services, through which it offers a host of value-added services to resellers.

Today the WestconGroup, has a presence in 60 countries, across six continents, it boasts over 100 offices and ships to 100 countries with

25+ logistics/staging facilities all of which is backed by 3,000+ associates and 20,000+ transacting customers globally.

Westcon Southern Africa has just passed its 15 year partnership with ACS and Embrace, and it has been a strong and mutually beneficial partnership all the way.

The ACS/Westcon partnership started during 1999 when Comstek became part of the Mustek Group. The then small partnership had successfully endured all the upgrades, expansions into Africa, complex re-structuring and the latest major project - the merger of the old Westcon SA and Comstek Groups.

Today – Embrace is the base of a R2,5bn distribution business, operating in all SADC countries and managed out of the WestconGroup Southern Africa's Midrand offices.

The partnership survived all of the above due to the commitment of all parties involved. What was seen as a major customisation 10 years ago – is part of the Embrace offering today.

Well done on reaching your 30 years, ACS-Embrace! WestconGroup Southern Africa wishes you all the success and growth that you deserve going forward. You have an amazing team of people who strive to make each partnership with your customer base a mutually beneficial and successful partnership.

WABCO

WABCO Automotive South Africa is a division of the Sturrock and Robson Group and a joint venture with the global company WABCO Vehicle Control Systems based in Germany. WABCO is a leading producer of safety and control systems for heavy duty commercial vehicles, having pioneered breakthrough electronic and mechatronic technologies for braking, stability, suspension and transmission control.

WABCO Automotive South Africa has been trading in South Africa and the Southern African region for over 45 years and has branches in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. The company offers a comprehensive range of braking components, training and support to vehicle manufacturers, components distributors and fleet operators.

The association between WABCO Automotive South Africa and ACS and the Embrace ERP system goes back to the early 1990s. As it was then, Embrace is still today an integral part of the operations of the company and has ensured stability and consistent reliability of the daily functions of the business over the years.

The type of operation that we run involves a range of operational functions from warehousing, financial and counter parts sales to complete brake system assembly and production, all involving a host of small peculiarities to our specific business.

Embrace ensures stability and consistent reliability of the daily functions of the business!

Embrace has met all the challenges we have thrown at it over the years. The strength of the Embrace system has been its adaptability to the customer requirements yet still maintaining simplicity of function for the user.

We wish ACS all the best for the future and look forward to a long and mutually beneficial partnership going forward.



The tree of life

Our ACS-Embrace Outreach Team continues to make significant contributions at the Ikhwezilokusa Home. Food and other necessary supplies are delivered regularly. Added to that we embarked on a program to enable the residents to become self-sufficient – by planting and growing trees and crops, as well as installing borehole pumps and water tanks. Improvements were made to the buildings, i.e. painting and roof repairs, a fence erected as well as a structure to provide “shade” .

“I have one life and one chance to make it count for something... My faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference.”

Jimmy Carter

Last Word

“We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your hands to make a difference.”

Nelson Mandela

embraceTALK

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Ikhwezilokusa Home Timeline



beyond solutions

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