



Welcome to Ironbark's quarterly newsletter, designed to keep you up to date with all the latest from **fresh produce software development specialists**, Ironbark. There's been a lot for us to shout about recently including new functionality, new customers and exciting projects both in and outside of Australia. I hope you enjoy this newsletter and we'd appreciate your feedback and comments on this or any aspect of Ironbark –please send them to [newsletter@ironbark.com.au](mailto:newsletter@ironbark.com.au).

Chris Findlater, Managing Director

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## Ironbark listed in the 2004 Q400

Ironbark are very proud to have been included for the second year running in the prestigious 2004 Queensland Q400 awards listing of the state's top 400 privately held enterprises.



The listing was unveiled by State Development and Innovation Minister Tony McGrady at the 2004 Queensland 400 Business Summit held on Friday July 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Businesses listed in the Q400 are being recognised for their outstanding achievement in business and contribution to the economic growth of Queensland.

## Keep your Customers Happy with Ironbark's Fresh Produce Solution ....

Fresh Produce companies are subject to increasing pressure to provide their customers with more than just their produce. Retailers are required to provide complete traceability for the products they sell and that means only trading with suppliers who are capable of providing the level of information they require.



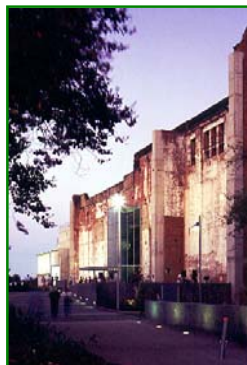
Ironbark has many years of experience in providing business information systems to fresh produce companies at all stages of the supply chain – growers, packhouses, wholesalers and distributors – to do just that and more.

Ironbark's Fresh Produce system also includes eCommerce functionality to provide electronic information flow along the entire supply chain using the latest RF technology, which in turn cuts down on manual sales order processing saving valuable hours and significantly cutting costs.

## Better Late than Never!

It may be two years late but we won't let a little detail like that stop us. Ironbark will be holding a 25th Birthday Celebration at the Brisbane Powerhouse on **Thursday March 24 2005.**

It's the perfect opportunity to learn how Ironbark's fresh produce solutions can help you to maximise your business so, keep your diaries free and your eyes peeled as more information will follow...



## **Ironbark Innovation – our upgrade to Microsoft C#**



Microsoft C# is a compiled language developed from Visual C++ and part of Microsoft's .NET environment. It is the most current and future proof computer development language – and will be for the next ten years at least!

Microsoft .NET is a framework of systems that allow for efficient communication of data and events. Examples of this could be XML processing in eBusiness, web development and MS SQL databases. Programs developed in .NET are quick and easy to integrate with other applications.

Why would you want to migrate from COBOL? After all, it works perfectly well and lots of large organisations still run key programs written in COBOL. Ironbark have been migrating Windows programs from COBOL to C# over the past 3 years for several reasons:

### **Support**

The suppliers of software tools that help develop and maintain software (such as compilers) are now focused on C#. Few, if any releases are now available for COBOL support.

Additionally, graduating students now have little or no COBOL knowledge and a great reluctance to use what they view as an outmoded programming language. Migrating to C# has allowed Ironbark to continue to employ high level graduates.

### **Development Speed**

The speed of development for simple programs is not significantly different to COBOL. However, larger and more complex programs show large productivity gains. The ease of re-use of objects (code) and integration with other software (such as Excel/Word) also speed up the development.

### **User Interface**

The headache of grid entry in COBOL is cured by C#.

With its spreadsheet data entry methods, it is more readily adapted by users familiar with MS Excel. In addition, the use of tabbed screens and toolbars aid acceptance and usability. Using C#, we are able to offer you additional output report formats in MS Excel, HTML and PDF which also offer the functionality of direct faxing and emailing.

### **Common SQL Database**

The older COBOL based systems used C-ISAM. This database was not easily accessible from web based applications or third party products such as MS Excel, Crystal Reports or MS Access.

Our new C# systems use SQL based databases such as the Ironbark preferred MS SQL server, Oracle and MySQL. Data in any of these databases is easily transparent to other systems or software. Additionally, the use of XML allows the electronic transfer of documents (EDI) between systems.

### **Re-engineering**

Ironbark have taken this opportunity to totally redesign certain key modules and in the case of input into the General Ledger, new 'roll back' facilities ensure accurate balancing in case of either system hardware or software failure.

The menu system has been re-designed to allow better navigation and customisation by the user. The menu and printer security have also been enhanced with both user and group access privileges.

### **Long Term Commitment**

This migration is part of the ongoing commitment of Ironbark to provide the latest, most efficient, cost effective solution to ERP systems. C# and .NET represent the latest cutting edge tools and platforms that are best positioned for the next 10 to 15 years.

If you would like more information on the Microsoft C# platform upgrade, please [click here](#) to email us.

## **Meet the Ironbark Team**

### **Name:**

Natalina Ford

### **Job Title:**

Administrative Assistant (part-time)

### **When did you start working with Ironbark?**

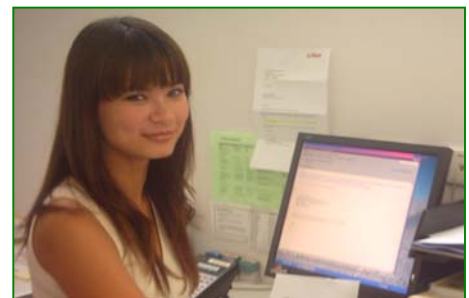
March 2003

### **What are your main responsibilities?**

As an administrative assistant, my duties consist of reception and general administration such as data entry, mail and banking. A large part of my day is spent on the telephone – I am the first point of contact many people have with Ironbark. I really enjoy talking to and meeting new people so it's perfect for me. The part-time nature and flexibility of my position at Ironbark is great as I also work as a model. Most of my modelling assignments are here in Brisbane, but at times I have had the opportunity to travel interstate.

### **What do you enjoy most about working at Ironbark?**

The people. Our recent Ironbark ski trip was really enjoyable and a great opportunity to get to know my colleagues better outside of the office environment.



## **Ironbark in Action – Carter and Spencer**



### **Company Profile**

Carter & Spencer is a leading supplier of quality fresh fruit and vegetables, produce logistics and marketing services to Australian and international markets. Its unique produce sourcing capabilities allows it to maintain long standing domestic as well as building international relationships. Buyers partnering Carter & Spencer are assured of quality, world class competitiveness and integrity.

### **Business Issues**

As a growing company back in 1992, Carter and Spencer recognised that their existing business systems were not providing them with the levels of control and information flow needed to accommodate their plans for expansion and growth.

They required fully integrated, robust and scalable systems from a vendor with complete understanding of their requirements and the capability to respond to those specific requirements. Put simply, they were looking for a company who could offer them *software to grow with...*

Today, Carter and Spencer are a dynamic organisation, constantly looking for ways to improve their business processes while at the same time, expanding the nature of their business. With ever-changing systems' requirements, the ability of Ironbark to provide customised solutions to meet their needs is paramount.

### **The Solution**

Having identified information flow and control as the key for future growth of the company and a source of greater efficiencies, Carter and Spencer selected Ironbark's Financials and Supply Chain Management systems. Both systems have been customised over time to suit Carter and Spencer's changing but nevertheless specific requirements as the company grows.

More recently, eCommerce functionality has been integrated into the system allowing Carter and Spencer to seamlessly transact business with central markets and their supermarket clients without the need for manual input and any loss of control.

In 2004, our most recent project with Carter and Spencer was the implementation of the Ironbark Logistics system for a new distribution centre based in New Zealand, a joint venture with the Foodstuffs chain.

As with former implementations, the industry proven Ironbark Logistics system, developed in C# and SQL

server was implemented alongside constant consultation and the development of unique customisations.

It is of fundamental importance to Ironbark that Carter and Spencer are equipped with a system that completely accommodates the needs of their operation and consequently, one that they are happy with.

### **Why Choose Ironbark?**

Carter and Spencer have identified their reasons for choosing Ironbark as:

- Flexible Approach
- Seamless Integration of Modules
- User Friendly Systems
- Cost Effectiveness
- Improved Efficiency and Service Levels
- Trouble Free Implementations

### **The Benefits**

Ironbark has become an integral part of the Carter and Spencer business model. The Ironbark Financials system is key in the company's ability to run the financial aspects of their business effectively while the Ironbark Supply Chain and Logistics systems are crucial in providing the end to end information flow required to manage their relationships with growers, customers and third party users.

Carter and Spencer have demonstrated their belief in Ironbark's future by twice upgrading their Ironbark system: from UNIX to Windows, and now with their New Zealand operations, into our latest platform using C# and SQL Server.

### **What the Customer Says:**

*We value the flexibility that Ironbark Software provides, making necessary adjustments for the ever changing requirements of our business.*

*It takes little effort for us to make changes. Features and functionality that have been added can be transferred to other areas of our business.*

*The total module integration allows information to flow effortlessly through the system.*

*Our package is user friendly and satisfies all our reporting requirements, improving our efficiency and consequently our service levels.*

*Our custom-written, fully integrated computer system provides for intelligent distribution systems, ensuring arrangements are workable for every link in the supply chain.*

*Kevin Mahon, Group IT Manager*

