

ORFIVAL *Crossover*

Making a mark in fixed-interest investments

Financial IT provider Orfival has some ambitious plans for expansion on European financial markets. Its financial software offers certain key management abilities that are unique on the market. And for its next phase of expansion, the company is specifically targeting the UK.

Based close to Louvain-La-Neuve University, Orfival has developed a portfolio management system for financial institutions that has some unique investment capabilities. While the system offers global portfolio management and what is known as full 'front-to-back' processing facilities, it is the fixed-interest investment management abilities that are so interesting to potential clients. Focusing on a niche aspect of investment management known as 'fixed income attribution', the system offers a method of performance analysis and management for fixed-interest securities that few competitors can match.

Proven on the market

'What is unusual about our software is that it is not new and unproven, but has been developed, tested and in use on the market for over nine years,' says Philippe Gregoire, Orfival founder and member of the management board. 'And one of its key abilities is that it allows us to define a model to fit every management process – top-down, bottom-up or any other.'

For the larger financial investment firms, it is the system's performance management abilities in fixed-interest investments that are so attractive. Orfival's system enables such firms to analyse and see clearly which investment decisions, made by which investment manager, have brought value to a financial portfolio. These abilities are especially valuable in fixed-interest

instruments such as gilts and corporate bonds, where investments tend to be held for longer periods.

Building a market presence

Established in 1995, Orfival has an established clientele in Belgium (including Dexia and Fortis) and is already building a reputation in France, where customers include the French national bank Banque de France. The company now plans a strong marketing campaign for the UK.

'The UK is particularly important for us because it is the second largest asset management market in the world,' says Gregoire. 'And unlike the continental European countries, UK financial markets have traditionally been biased towards equities. But with changing investment attitudes and the growth of interest in

fixed-interest investments, we believe that there is an important niche opening up for us in the UK market.'

To this end, the company is launching a new UK subsidiary, Orfival UK, in Shipley in January 2006. And if all goes well, Orfival's 20-strong core staff should soon find themselves welcoming further colleagues.

⇒ Philip Hunt

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