

Sage hand-picks migration experts

Doug Woodburn

Sage has inducted 19 partners into a new programme designed to smooth the transition for end users migrating from Sage 50 to 200.

Piloted last year with 29 partners, the Customer Development Centre (CDC) programme offers to assist SMEs that have outgrown its flagship product.

Partners won their place based on six criteria, including their migration track record, customer feedback

and sales, implementation and support expertise.

Nick Tucker, sales and marketing director at CDC member FD Systems, admitted customers that outgrow the out-of-the-box Line 50 offering sometimes have "fear in their eyes" as they ponder their options.

"CDC reassures people who are looking to change that partners have gone through a filtering process and that they are in a safe pair of hands," he said.

Sage 200 is deployed at about 1,000 UK sites a year, with half of those migrating up from Line 50, Steve Attwell, general manager of Sage's Business Partner & Channel division, revealed.

Attwell said CDC is mainly about "improving the customer experience", but argued it would also give Sage an edge over rivals who play in the Sage 200 space, such as Microsoft, Pegasus, Access and IRIS Exchequer.

"Sage has a huge amount of

loyalty at Line 50 and CDC gives us an unrivalled position against the competition," he added.

Jo Fulton, sales and marketing director at CDC member Datel, said she had lost very few Line 50 customers to competitors, but admitted that some "stayed on Line 50 too long".

"Sage has recognised that businesses cannot stay on Line 50 forever," she said. "Transitioning to a much bigger system is challenging

Steve Attwell: CDC will give Sage an edge over its rivals

for them and Sage 200 looks similar but works differently, so they need hand-holding."

Sage gives CRM its own unit

■ www.channelweb.co.uk/2258928

