

## BACSTEL-IP

### Steady Progress or Wishful Thinking?

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#### RESEARCH NOTE:

This report is derived from a January 2005 study incorporating the telephone interview of 100 senior influencers and decision makers involved in BACSTEL-IP projects. Respondents were from a cross-section of industries and ranged from smaller companies of £20m turnover, to larger enterprises of £150m turnover and above. In addition, a number of interviews were conducted with major banks and solution providers, to derive contextual information for the report.

*There are positive signs of progress in the BACSTEL-IP rollout, in particular most companies are aware of the need to do so. It is equally clear however, that it is behind schedule. While the end-2005 switch-off of BACSTEL is still achievable in theory, good intentions now need to be matched by concrete action and commitment. The danger is that companies will leave things too late, and there will not be enough migration resource from the software suppliers.*

- **There is general awareness and intent to migrate**

There is a general awareness of the need to migrate to BACSTEL-IP – over 95% of respondents know the principle if not the detail. The end-2005 deadline is accepted to be necessary by the majority of respondents (66%), although of the remainder similar proportions see it to be inconvenient or unwelcome.

Incidentally, a far greater awareness and will was indicated by the larger companies surveyed. Responses indicate that the migration is felt as more of an imposition by Tier 2 and Tier 3 companies.

- **Benefits are seen as more significant than business impacts**

The respondents are generally positive about the business impact of the migration. They see business benefits across the board, not least higher software quality, reduced payment costs and better security. Less than 10% think there will be a major impact on existing business practices, and over 60% think the impact will be negligible. Meanwhile, over 60% of companies have taken or are planning to take the opportunity to re-engineer or improve their payment processes.

Companies who have completed their migrations are indicating they have achieved more benefit than expected, which is encouraging.

- **However, intent is not yet matched by concrete action**

Despite this awareness, only a quarter of respondents have begun or completed their migrations, but a further 47% intend to begin over the next three months. The remaining quarter intend to migrate later, with a small proportion opting not to migrate, presumably choosing to make their own arrangements instead of relying on banks and third party solution providers. For the majority who intend to migrate however, migration budgets are a good indication of concrete plans. Only 38% of companies indicated that budget will be made available this quarter (10% already had budget available), and 41% plan to make budget available at some time in 2005.

Nearly 20% have no budget at present.

- **The deadline is not seen as hard by BACSTEL customers, as it is by the banks**

A full 21% of respondents were not fully aware of the fact that BACSTEL would be switched off at the end of the year. Less than 40% feel confident that they will have migrated to BACSTEL-IP by the deadline, but another 22% feel they will do so soon after – many have the impression that this is good enough. By far the biggest reason (58%) seems to be a lack of time and resources, with another 18% saying that they will not have got round to it.

- **The X.400 deadline is seen as too much, too soon**

16% of the survey sample (who had not completed a migration from X.400 reporting) was asked about their position relative to the March 31st deadline. Of this subset, while all of the respondents involved in migrating from X.400 (16/100 of the survey sample) were aware of the deadline, only 17% considered it to be understandable, and the vast majority saw it as an imposition. Only one quarter of this subset was fully confident of meeting the deadline.

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# 1. Introduction

BACSTEL is the name of the technology to support the Banking Automated Clearing System (BACS), which makes possible electronic transfers between companies and individuals.

For a number of reasons, not least increased security and reduced ongoing costs, the banks making up the BACS consortium (now known as VOCA) saw fit to replace the technology underlying the transfer system. The replacement, known as BACSTEL-IP was first announced in 2003, and a two-year deadline was set for the end of 2005. At this time, it was stated, the old BACSTEL system would be switched off. A second deadline was set for customers of X.400 reporting for BACSTEL – for March 31<sup>st</sup> 2005.

We are now half way through the intended migration period, and it is a good opportunity to take stock and understand what potential issues might lie ahead. Also the March deadline for X.400 is approaching fast: how are affected parties dealing with the switch-off?

The remainder of this report presents the research data we have collated, and draws some conclusions as to the major concerns expressed by all parties involved in the research.

While the study was commissioned by solution provider Bottomline Technologies Ltd, it has been designed and analysed by Quocirca Ltd on a completely independent basis.

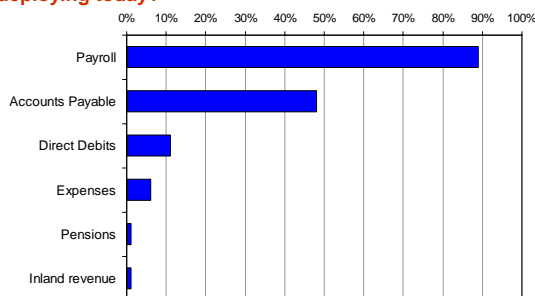
# 2. Understanding the Migration

In order to understand the perceptions and opinions in this area, Quocirca conducted interviews of 100 decision makers and influencers from UK corporates in December 2004 and January 2005. These companies are *direct* customers of BACSTEL – that is, they run their own BACSTEL solutions, rather than outsourcing to a bureau service (referred to as *indirect*).

First, we asked what kinds of applications were using the BACSTEL service. As shown in Figure 1, 89% of respondents said they would be migrating a payroll application, and nearly half expected to migrate accounts payable applications.

**Figure 1** Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

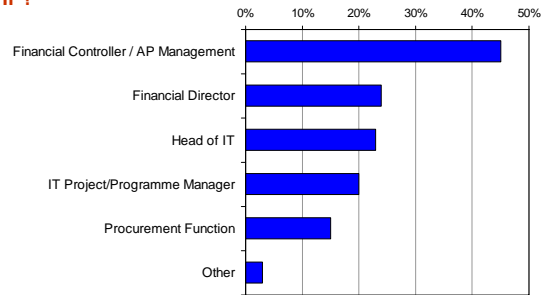
**Which directly connected BACS applications are you deploying today?**



We also asked who companies expected to be involved in the decision to move to BACSTEL-IP (Figure 2). In the majority of cases this was a financial role.

**Figure 2** Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

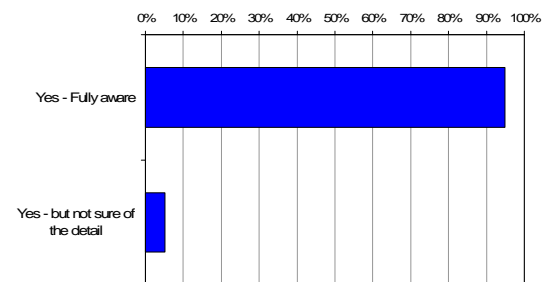
**Which of the following were or will be involved in approving the decision to move forward with BACSTEL-IP?**



An important opening question, was to determine the level of awareness of BACSTEL-IP. Figure 3 shows that the level of general awareness is very high – 95% fully understood the general need.

**Figure 3** Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

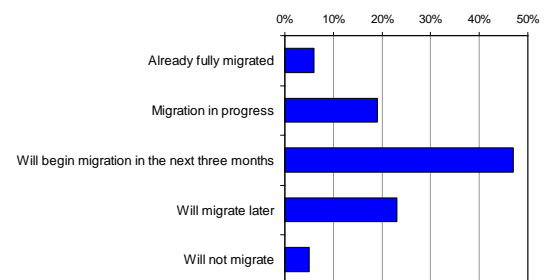
**Are you aware of the general need to migrate from the existing BACSTEL network to BACSTEL-IP?**



So, has this need been translated into concrete action? According to the respondents, only 6% of companies surveyed had completed a migration, and a further 19% had migrations underway. Even if these were relatively far advanced, the resulting total (25%) is way behind the industry expectation (of roughly 50% complete) at this point (Figure 4).

**Figure 4** Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

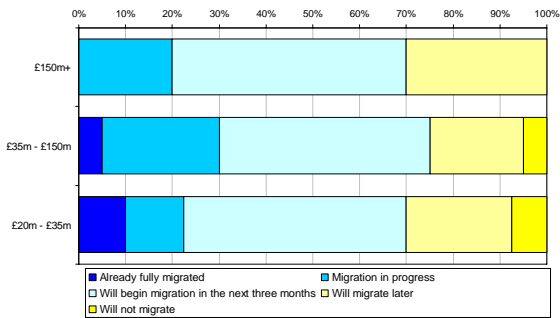
**What is the status of your migration to BACSTEL-IP?**



On the more positive side, 47% of respondents stated an intent to migrate at some point over the next three months, giving a total of two thirds of companies with migrations underway or intent to start in the current quarter. We shall come back to this figure later.

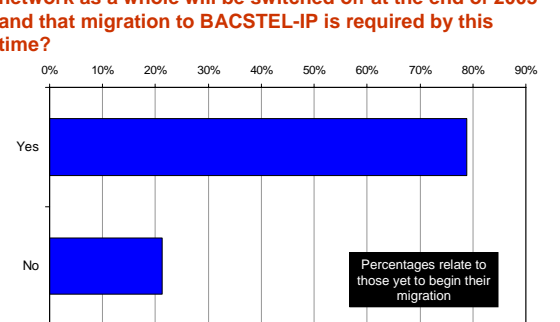
It is interesting to break these findings down by company size. According to Figure 5, the laggards would appear to be the larger companies, and we shall see later what reasons they give.

**Figure 5**  
What is the status of your migration to BACSTEL-IP?



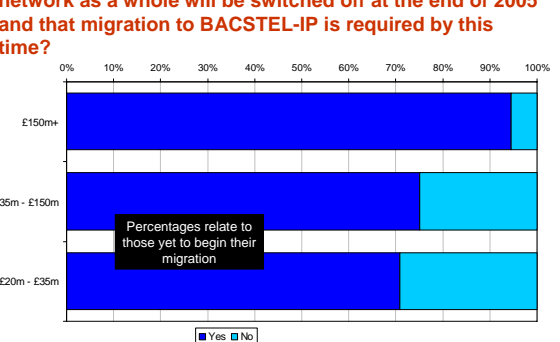
For now however, let us consider specifically the group that have not yet started a migration. As shown in Figure 6, a significant proportion (21%) does not fully understand the implications of the end of year deadline, even though they may understand its existence in principle.

**Figure 6**  
Are you aware of the announcement that the BACSTEL network as a whole will be switched off at the end of 2005 and that migration to BACSTEL-IP is required by this time?



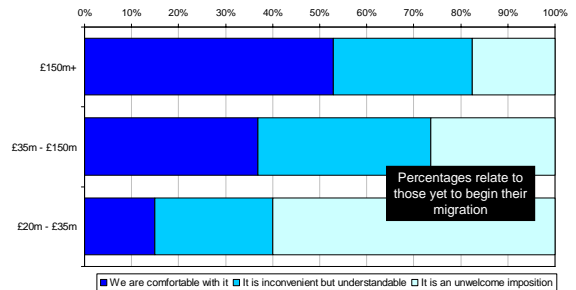
Specifically it is the smaller companies that are behind the larger companies in awareness terms (Figure 7). Nearly 30% of smaller companies lack awareness in this area, which is a significant issue.

**Figure 7**  
Are you aware of the announcement that the BACSTEL network as a whole will be switched off at the end of 2005 and that migration to BACSTEL-IP is required by this time?



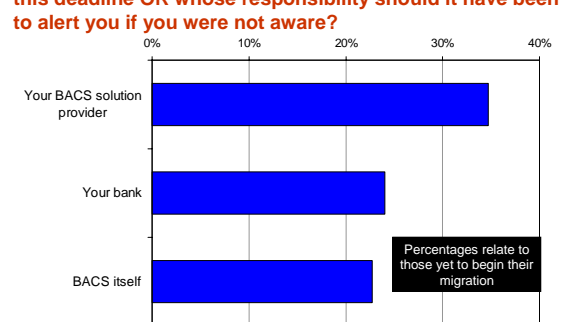
Equally significant perhaps, is that these companies are the least keen to migrate – 60% of smaller companies see it as an unwelcome imposition (Figure 8).

**Figure 8**  
How do you feel about the end of 2005 deadline?



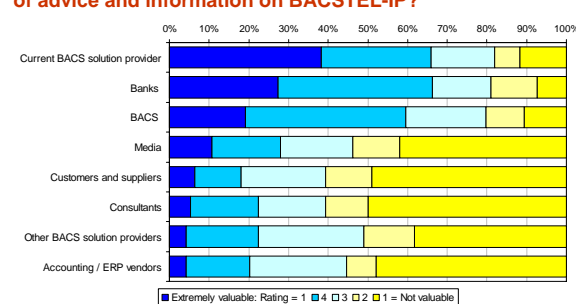
As a final note in this section, companies see responsibility for awareness split between all of the BACS-side providers, with a higher proportion (35%) falling on the shoulders of the solution providers (Figure 9). This is appropriate, as we have been told by a number of BACSTEL-IP providers that they are being given a more influential role than in the past.

**Figure 9**  
Which of the following were key in making you aware of this deadline OR whose responsibility should it have been to alert you if you were not aware?



Other sources of information have also been useful (Figure 10), not least the media but also consultants, application software vendors and other suppliers.

**Figure 10**  
How valuable have the following been to you as sources of advice and information on BACSTEL-IP?



Businesses have not necessarily been receptive to the information, despite the good efforts of banks and others. We have heard of BACS-organised seminars being cancelled due

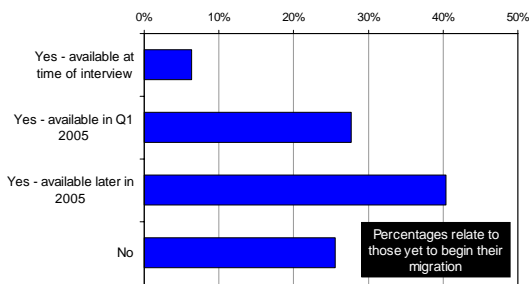
to lack of interest. This may be a result of too much information rather than too little: some providers have commented on the potential for information overload – citing for example the production of wordy and jargonised guides by the banks.

Also, it has been common practice for service providers to use “scare tactics” in order to impress the deadline on their customers. At this stage in the game the time for such tactics is past and something more is now required.

### 3. Awareness into Action

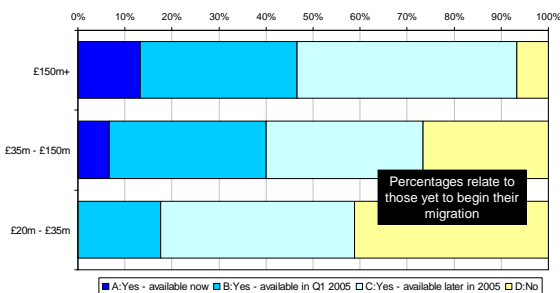
So much for awareness, what about action? A good indicator perhaps is how budgets are being allocated, which gives perhaps a truer picture of concrete plans than more qualitative questions. We saw in Figure 4 how two thirds of all the companies had already started a migration, or intended to do so this quarter. Figure 11 begs the question, why then have only 34% of companies allocated any budget to this activity, this quarter?

**Figure 11** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd  
Is the budget for your migration already allocated?



One explanation perhaps, is that smaller companies do not have as formal budgetary processes as larger ones, and therefore don't have to worry as much about allocating the money. This might be borne out by Figure 12, which shows a higher proportion of larger companies have already allocated the necessary budgets for Q1 2005.

**Figure 12** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd  
Is the budget for your migration already allocated?

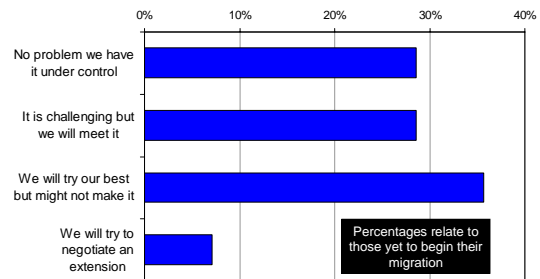


Perhaps however, this is being over-optimistic, especially given (as we have already seen) that smaller companies feel uncomfortable about having to migrate. In all cases however, there is less allocation of funds than there is desire to act. The discrepancy between the two should be indication enough that there is a level of wishful thinking relating to the BACSTEL-IP migration.

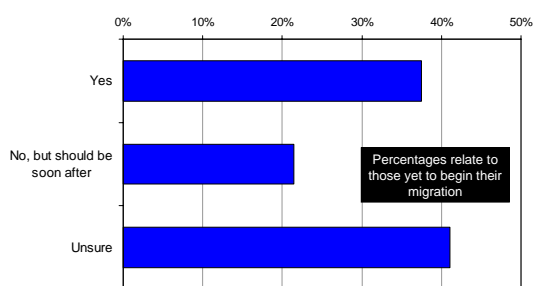
This view of over-optimism is confirmed by the banks, who fear that customers do not understand the complexity of the migration. While it does not involve a major deployment of infrastructure, it is more than a simple switch-on and requires lead time from both the banks and the solution providers. Some kind of testing is also recommended, with some solution providers suggesting at least a month of parallel running of the two solutions.

This view may be further clarified when we look at perceptions of achieving the deadline in more detail. We asked two questions, one indirect (Figure 13) and one direct (Figure 14), and it is interesting to compare the responses.

**Figure 13** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd  
Where do you stand in relation to the end of 2005 deadline?



**Figure 14** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd  
Will you have migrated to BACSTEL-IP by the December 2005 deadline?



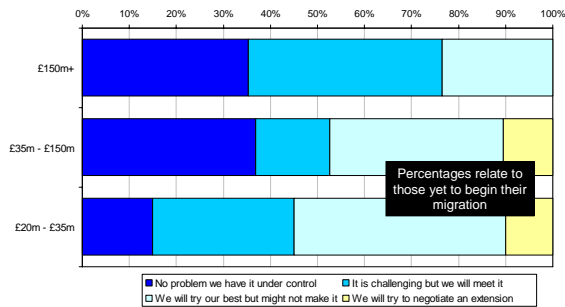
When asked indirectly about progress, 56% of respondents were prepared to state that meeting the deadline was achievable, and a further 36% were planning to make a best effort to do so. When asked the direct question however, only 38% of companies were prepared to state they would meet the deadline. This is a strong indicator of a lack of confidence – best endeavours will be made, but few companies are prepared to say outright that they have things in hand. Worse – it may confirm the level of false confidence and optimism.

Interestingly given that the migrations should be easier, smaller companies are looking more worried about achieving the deadline than larger companies Figures 15 and 16), perhaps this is to do with the fact that they feel imposed upon.

**Figure 15**

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

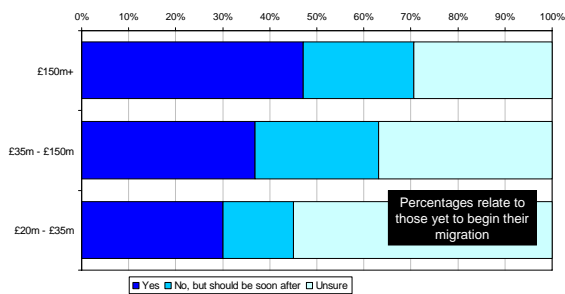
**Where do you stand in relation to the end of 2005 deadline?**



**Figure 16**

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**Will you have migrated to BACSTEL-IP by the December 2005 deadline?**

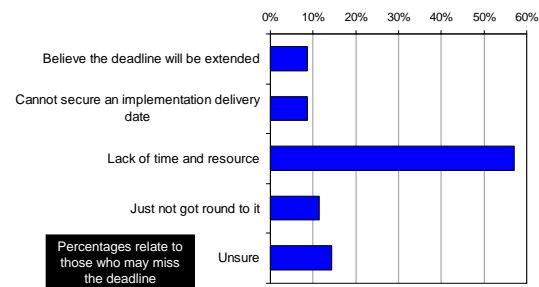


Respondents were unanimous in the main reason why they would not achieve the deadline – a lack of time and resource was indicated by 58% of respondents (Figure 17).

**Figure 17**

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

**If there is a chance of you not having migrated by this time, why is this?**

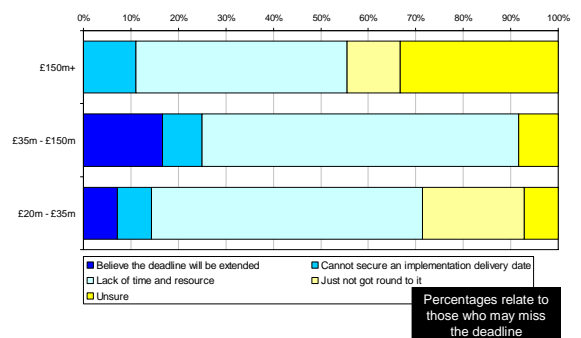


9% of respondents believed that the deadline would be extended in some way – interestingly, these responses did not come from the largest companies, rather the medium and smaller companies. This suggests that the awareness of the deadline in these groups has not been presented as well as it could have been (Figure 18).

**Figure 18**

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**If there is a chance of you not having migrated by this time, why is this?**

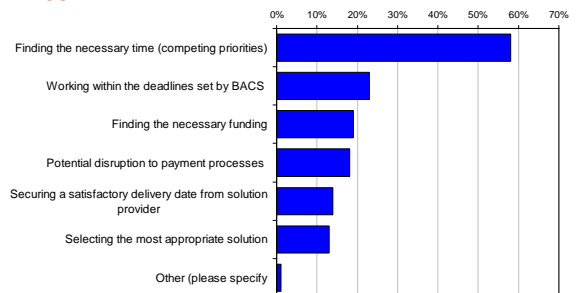


We can gain more insight by looking at Figure 19, in which respondents reported it was more about competing priorities than any absolute time or resource issue.

**Figure 19**

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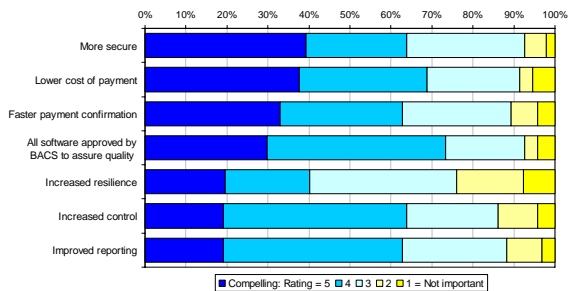
**Which of the following would you regard as significant hurdles or challenges when considering a migration to BACSTEL-IP?**



## 4. Practicalities and Plans

Let us turn now to the business of BACSTEL-IP, its potential benefits and the plans around deployment. Despite the negative elements relating to the deadline, we have already seen that most companies understand that the migration is necessary. Respondents were also able to identify a number of benefits, as shown in Figure 20. As well as the quality assurance from BACS, over 60% of respondents saw the key benefits as security, speed and reduced ongoing costs.

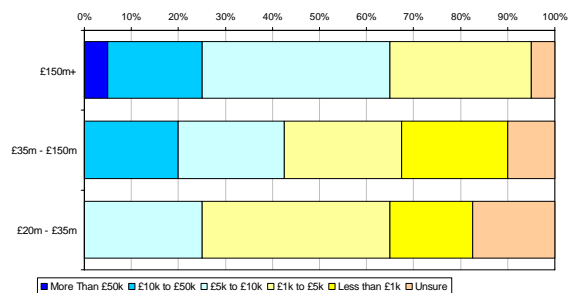
**Figure 20**  
How would you rate the following potential benefits of BACSTEL-IP to your business?



It is noteworthy however, that the highest ranked “benefit” (looking at the number of respondents scoring 4 or 5) was considered to be the fact that software quality was certified – probably a comment on the quality of some past solutions.

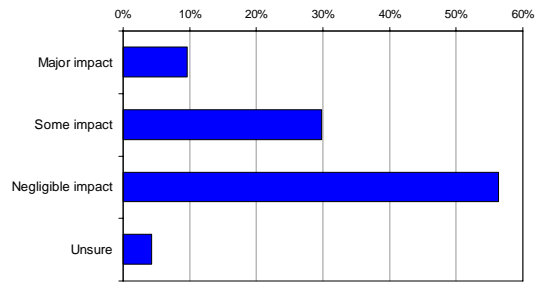
Figure 21 considers costs associated with the migration. These varied from company to company, with a general correlation between the size of the company and the cost of the migration. Companies up to £35m turnover expected to spend less than £10k on the migration, and companies up to £150m turnover, less than £50k.

**Figure 21**  
Which of the following bands would you say the total cost of your migration project falls into?



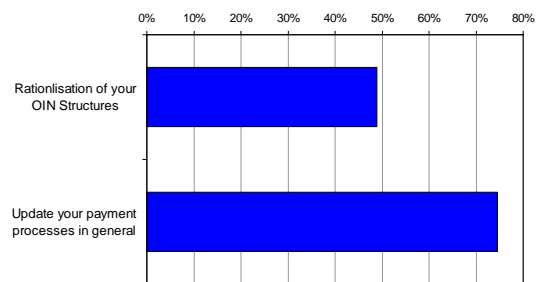
While there was seen to be some impact on payment processes, this was not seen to be hugely significant. Under 40% thought there would be an impact, and only 9% thought this would be of major consequence (Figure 22).

**Figure 22**  
How much impact on your payment processes are you experiencing or anticipating as a result of the migration?



Some of the impact would be self-inflicted, as three quarters of respondents were taking the opportunity to improve their payment processes (Figure 23). Nearly half were planning to rationalise their OIN structures in some way.

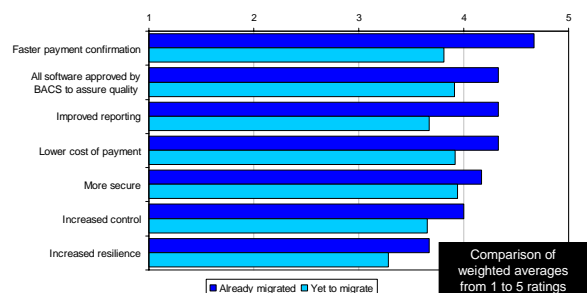
**Figure 23**  
Will you take, or have you taken the opportunity to make the following changes as part of the migration project?



(Note to Figure 23: each BACS connection is allocated an OIN number. In some companies that have grown by acquisition or have otherwise restructured, the OIN numbers for the company relate to old parts of the organisation.)

Quite clearly, perceptions can change during the course of a project or at the end. It is very interesting to relate the benefits actually experienced, relative to the benefits considered at the outset (Figure 24).

**Figure 24**  
How would you rate the following potential benefits of BACSTEL-IP to your business?

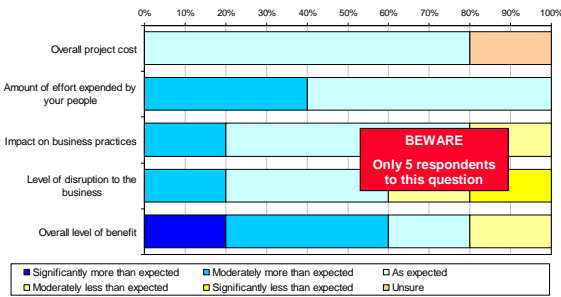


According to respondents who have completed the migrations, the actual benefits of the BACSTEL-IP rollout are higher than the level anticipated prior to migration. This is shown in Figure 25.

**Figure 25**

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**If you have completed your migration, how did the following compare with your expectations?**



While this information should not be treated quantitatively due to the limited number of responses, it makes a number of interesting points. While it is positive that the overall costs of the migration project fall in line with estimates, a couple of respondents found they needed to put in more effort than they had planned. Also, relative to expectations, the level of disruption (either caused by the migration or in terms of resulting impact on business practices) was seen as minimal.

## 5. X.400 Approaching Fast

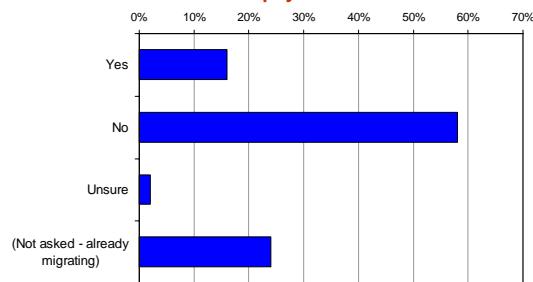
To conclude, we looked at the X.400 deadline of March 31<sup>st</sup>. The X.400 element of BACSTEL is involved in delivering reports about what amendments have been made to transactions.

For this part of the research, we asked only those respondents who had not started their migrations, which equates to 16 companies (Figure 26).

**Figure 26**

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

**Do you use the BACS (X.400) automated messaging service to provide details of amendments and cancellations of direct debit payments?**

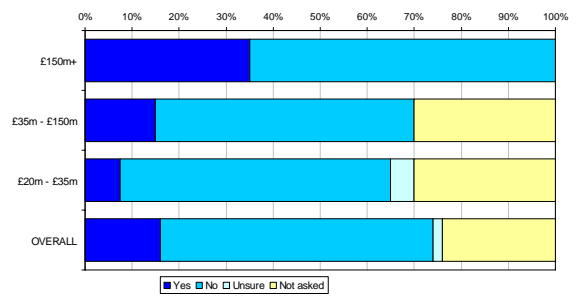


As shown in Figure 27, this equates to 35% of the largest companies in the survey, 15% of the medium sized companies, and 8% of the smallest companies surveyed. Note that all of those implicated were aware of the 31 March deadline for the migration – this is not shown as a graph.

**Figure 27**

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

**Do you use the BACS (X.400) automated messaging service to provide details of amendments and cancellations of direct debit payments?**

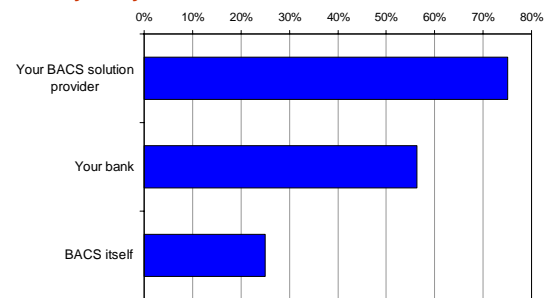


We asked who took responsibility for awareness of the deadline (Figure 28). Three quarters said it was down to the solution providers, and over half also thought the banks should play a part.

**Figure 28**

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**Which of the following were key in making you aware of this deadline OR whose responsibility should it have been to alert you if you were not aware?**

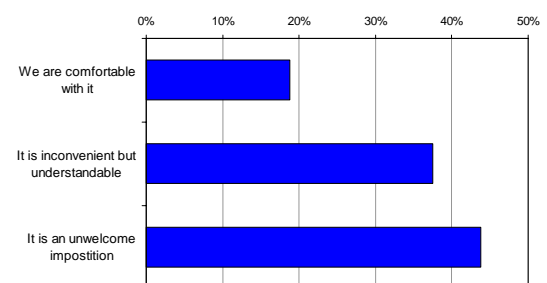


The impending deadline seems to have an effect on the opinions of its importance, with fewer than 20% of companies being comfortable. The vast majority consider the deadline to be inconvenient or unwelcome (Figure 29).

**Figure 29**

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

**How do you feel about the March 31st deadline?**



More importantly perhaps, over 60% of respondents are not sure they will hit the deadline (Figure 30). Of these, 18% felt they would migrate soon after (Figure 31).

Figure 30

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

Where do you stand in relation to the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline?

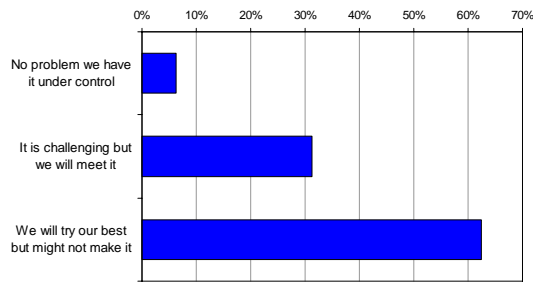
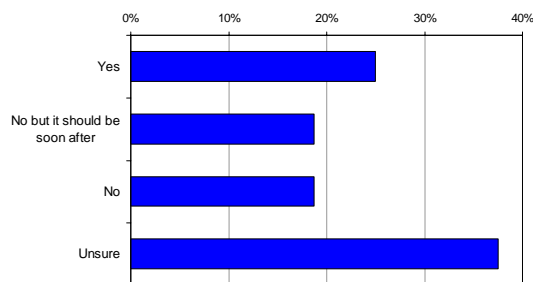


Figure 31

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Will you have migrated to BACSTEL-IP by the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline?

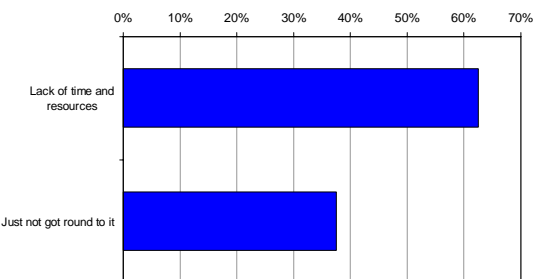


Lack of time and resource is once again the main reason for this, coupled with not getting round to it (though it could be argued that both are symptoms of the same issue – lack of priority) – this is shown in Figure 32.

Figure 32

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If there is a chance of you not having migrated by this time, why is this?



Overall in the X.400 responses, the results give a general impression of a mounting pressure. This may be an indication of what is to come, as the end-of-year deadline arrives for BACSTEL-IP.

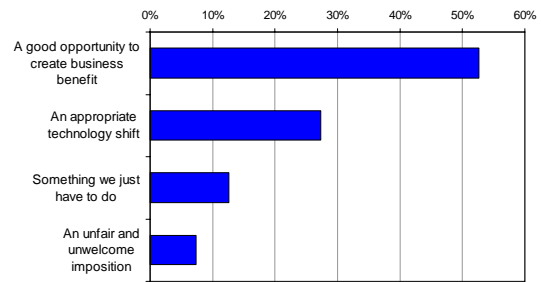
## 6. Discussion

Banks and solution providers can take some comfort from the overall level of positivity from the respondents, about the migration. To demonstrate this we considered it useful to ask respondents for a second time what they thought of the rollout in general, once a discussion had taken place about benefits. From this perspective, respondents were quite upbeat, with 80% saying it was appropriate and/or good (Figure 33).

Figure 33

Copyright 2005 Quocirca Ltd

Overall, how do you view the move to BACSTEL-IP?



No company exists in a vacuum however, and there are many projects that vie for the IT department's time. The BACSTEL-IP migration for example, is only one of several externally imposed migrations – there is the electronic submission of forms to the Inland Revenue for example, or the numerous projects that are springing up around corporate governance.

While the intention to upgrade to BACSTEL-IP might be there, many companies are not yet taking the necessary actions to drive through the migration. It could be argued that this is to be expected, as one solution provider commented, "It's been a classic graph of initial trendsetters followed by complete apathy." While this view is not strictly accurate, it illustrates the point.

We have a situation where progress is being made therefore, but things could be better. It is worth highlighting some areas of risk that can be drawn out of the research as a whole.

Firstly, there is a marked difference between the perspectives of the larger companies surveyed, relative to the medium and smaller organisations. Larger companies seem to have things more in hand, and also are less worried about the migration; they also feel less put upon than medium and small companies. This may be due to a number of factors – not least, they are more used to change programmes, and this will just be one more project that has to be scheduled.

Perhaps also, they have been given more of a direct touch than smaller companies, either by the banks, solution providers or other consultants. It is worth considering perhaps, what additional help could be made available to medium and small companies that are required to migrate. Note that this does not include indirect customers, who are handled via bureaus.

Secondly, when the responses are put together with the contextual information, there appears to be a growing question of "orphans". These are customers whose traditional BACSTEL-IP solution provider does not have a certified BACSTEL-IP solution, and who therefore need to find an alternative provider: there exists an estimated 15,000 of these. A number of solution providers have expressed how they have been communicating the need for BACSTEL-IP migration with their existing customers only, which suggests that "orphans" might not be as fully aware of the migration as they should be.

The major banks are helping resolve this issue, by communicating with all of their customers about the need to migrate. However some of the smaller banks (for example, agency banks) do not yet have BACSTEL-IP solutions in place for their customers, and may have been lax in their communications as a result. While the subset of "orphan customers of agency banks" may be a small percentage of

BACSTEL customers overall, it may be sufficient to prevent a switch-off of BACSTEL-IP at the end of the year; worse still, it may start a trend of “dispensations”, where customers are given extra time to migrate.

Understandably the major banks are doing everything they can to treat the end-2005 deadline as a hard stop, and each is reliant on the others to maintain this position. There does not appear to be any real agreement as to what happens after this time, if there are contingency plans nobody is revealing them at this stage.

Thirdly and finally, all banks and providers interviewed, expressed concerns about resourcing the migrations, particularly if there is a glut of late arrivals towards the end of the year. A method to ensure sufficient capacity is to pre-book implementations with solution providers, and both parties (banks and solution providers) are setting a June or September deadline to have everyone “booked in”. While all parties are acting proactively to achieve this (and clearly it is in the solution providers’ interests to do so), there is a latent fear that demand will outstrip supply of available resource, if things are left until after this time.

## **Acknowledgements**

This kind of research is crucial to all of us in the business and ITC community - suppliers and customer organisations alike. As illustrated, respondents appreciate the need for the migration, so any help companies can get in migrating their own systems, benefits the wider community.

We would therefore like to thank all of those participants who contributed so generously towards a better understanding of issues in this important area.

We would also like to thank the banks and other software suppliers who agreed to discuss this area, and who therefore helped to set the overall context for the report.

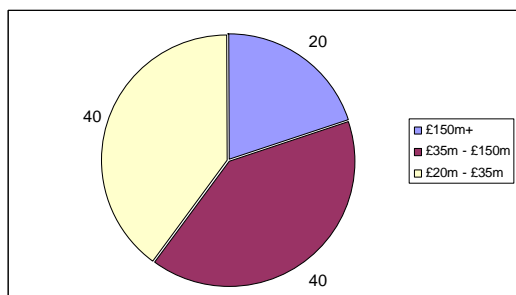
## Appendix A – Interview Sample Distribution

The primary research data presented in this report is from 100 responses to telephone interviews with UK companies, taking place in December 2004 and January 2005.

The 100 respondents were broken down by company size as follows:

**Figure 34** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd

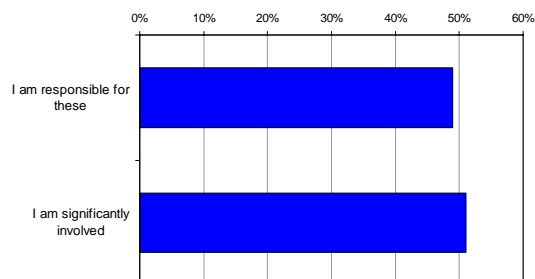
**Respondents by Company Size**



The following charts illustrate the roles of the respondents (Figure 35) and show the bank who handles their business banking (Figure 36).

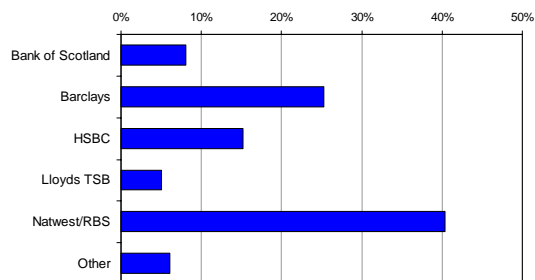
**Figure 35** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd

**What is your personal involvement in the management of BACS payment processes?**



**Figure 36** Copyright 2005 Quocira Ltd

**Which bank is this in association with, i.e. who handles your business banking?**



## About Quocirca

Quocirca is a UK based perceptual research and analysis company with a focus on the European market for information technology and communications (ITC). Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with first hand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry in the following key areas:

- Business Process Evolution and Enablement
- Enterprise Applications and Integration
- Communications, Collaboration and Mobility
- Infrastructure and IT Systems Management
- Utility Computing and Delivery of IT as a Service
- IT Delivery Channels and Practices
- IT Investment Activity, Behaviour and Planning

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## About Bottomline

Bottomline Technologies (Nasdaq: EPAY) is a leading global technology provider of Financial Resource Management (FRM) software and services. Founded in 1989, Bottomline has grown into a global organisation with over 380 employees worldwide. We maintain our corporate headquarters in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and international headquarters in Reading, England. Bottomline also has satellite offices located in most major U.S. cities.

Our comprehensive set of FRM offerings enables businesses and financial institutions to more effectively manage their critical financial transactions, cash decisions and trading partner relationships, using online solutions. FRM applications include Payables Management, Payments Management, Treasury Management, Automated Collections, Electronic Invoice Presentment and Payment and Receivables Matching. Our Banking Solutions include Cash Management, Foreign Exchange and Outsourcing Services.

Our FRM products extend and link corporate financial systems to provide better communication, information and fiscal control within an organisation. Bottomline provides organisations with a choice of software licensing or outsourced services to fit with their strategic business goals.

Bottomline supports over 9000 customers worldwide, including 50 of the Fortune 100 companies in the US and 90 of the FTSE 100 in the UK. We have formed strategic relationships with IBM Business Consulting Services, Citibank, FleetBoston, Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds TSB. Our customer portfolio of premier organisations includes State Street, Dartmouth College, Cisco Systems, General Motors, and the House of Commons.

Since March 2003 Bottomline have achieved accreditation from BACS for all of its BACSTEL-IP products. They have been developed to suit all sizes of organisation and cover most requirements be they basic, departmental or complex. Most importantly they provide an immediate return on this necessary investment, through increasing business efficiency, whilst maximising your control and security of all your Payments and Collections.

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