



EXPRESS

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Case Study:

Applied Mechanical

Background

Applied Mechanical is a worldwide team of field engineers, managers, and technicians who have become number one in their industry because they are experts in process based systems and clean environments. They are the leading provider of on-site engineering, technical, and logistical service to the semiconductor and other high-tech industries. Year after year, customers worldwide send notes of their appreciation for their exceptional performance not only because of their uncompromising personal commitment to each customer and the success of their mission but also for their breadth of experience, depth of available resources and years of field-derived strategies, methods, and procedures. More high tech companies use Applied Mechanical for their on-site engineering, management, technical, and logistical support than any other service provider in the industry and because of this they have come to be known as the experts that people count on.

Situation

Like many developing companies Applied Mechanical had quickly outgrown QuickBooks and began to rely heavily on excel spreadsheets to get information to their executives, project managers and customers. With engineers all over the world working on high profile accounts and a weekly billing cycle in place there was an immense need to focus on Time & Materials for each project. This meant that they had to rely on the information coming to their central office from the field. Time sheets and expense reports were being sent in via fax, phone, email

and postal mail. By the time all the timecards and expense reports were received they were weeks behind in billing and accessing project performance.

Soon they became uncomfortable with their project reporting performance from both a resource and financial perspective. Project managers were not able to provide information back to customers regarding the status of the projects in a timely or accurate manner. They began to fear that they would lose not only employees, due to being over-worked, but also customers due to credibility and performance issues.

On top of that corporate policy was to perform a soft close of the books each week but reporting was un-reliable, un-timely and they were losing confidence in their ability to manage projects responsibly.

Solution

Realizing they needed a solution that would both deliver a top notch performance and could be implemented quickly they began their search. Soon they narrowed their options Gold Certified Partner Express Information Systems (EIS) to implement Microsoft Dynamics GP Core Accounting along with Project Accounting and a browser based Time & Expense solution with 300 portals.

“Express Information Systems was so much more responsive than their competitors and took more time to understand our needs. They helped to identify where we would realize the largest impact on our investment with GP and also had the deepest knowledge of and with the product.”
– Jan Hainbach, Director of Finance

Results

Before GP Applied Mechanical was keying in timecard information in at least 6 different timesheets including excel spreadsheets, the payroll system and the general ledger. They were also soft closing their books once a week which balanced out to 52 times a year. With GP there could now be a more efficient and better integrated way to one time data entry with workflow so that information flowed smoothly and swiftly through the organization.

“With Express’ expertise and GP Project Accounting modules we were able to capture project billing information weekly, increase our cash flow, provide timely information to our project managers, executives and more importantly our customers. One source of data entry coupled with tight integration across project, payroll, accounts payable and general ledger and an integrated portal time & expense solution for the end users we were able to achieve incredible results.” – Jan Hainbach, Director of Finance

Over time their project managers began to understand how to make projects more profitable due to the now accurate and timely information. They utilized the business portal to roll out a one data source entry for timesheets and expenses where the information would route back to the financials with workflow approval which helped to eliminate mistakes and be more efficient. Billing information was available first thing Monday morning and by Tuesday there was a

snapshot of how the project progressed from the prior week. Clients now receive invoices more timely and questions to the call center have reduced. Accounting experienced a 50% increase in operational efficiency. On average, their days outstanding dropped from 90+ to the low 50's. Cash flow increased providing them with more operating capital than ever before. Their books now close each week with ease and their executive team is extremely happy with their ability to turn information around and their staff is much more focused on the projects at hand rather than spending vast amounts of time on redundant tasks.

Long Term Improvements

Since GP was able to provide such valuable and meaningful information Applied Mechanical enhanced their business model to become more competitive. They now issue Fixed-fee proposals for projects rather than Time and Materials projects and are able to acquire more customers as a result.

“We would recommend the entire Express team and the Microsoft Dynamics GP solution to anyone who is looking for a quality partner and integrated financial solution.” – Jan Hainbach, Director of Finance