

Adopting a Best-in-Class Foundation for Business Growth

Smith System Driver Improvement Institute, Inc.

Challenges

Adopting a Best-in-Class Foundation for Business Growth

For over 60 years, Smith System has provided training for professional driver fleets. Over time, the company developed multiple revenue streams: driving instruction services and materials, vehicle monitoring devices, and cloud software that helps fleets manage their drivers. After several years of accelerating growth, Smith decided to shift towards a best-in-class IT strategy, however its previous financial software – an on-premises ERP system – did not integrate with the company's new Salesforce CRM software.

"We were tired of having our data in multiple places and arguing over which data was right; we needed a single source of truth to get everyone in the company on the same page," said Doug Boughton, CFO at Smith System. "After using NetSuite at my last company, I knew we wanted something better suited for a services-oriented business like ours, and Sage Intacct was the perfect fit. It gives us full insight to our profitability across multiple dimensions, and can expand with us as our company grows."

Solutions

Seamless Salesforce Integration Provides Trusted, Accurate Data

Smith System worked with Sage Intacct partner Leap the Pond to implement the Sage Intacct software and connect it with Salesforce using the Sage Intacct CRM Integration. This quickly eliminated duplicate data entry and resolved previous inconsistencies that had sometimes caused improper customer billing. Now, an order is entered once in Salesforce and automatically flows into Sage Intacct for seamless invoicing, and details about invoices and payments flow back into Salesforce. As a result, the sales and finance teams are better aligned, have more accurate information, and have confidence in making decisions that better serve customers.

Boughton noted, "Instead of worrying about keystrokes, our finance team now spends more time understanding the business and our customers. We look to Sage Intacct and Salesforce as the backbone of our customer acquisition, sales processes, training delivery, customer support, billing, financial controls, and more – together, these systems provide a solid foundation for improving and accelerating our business."

The company also uses Sage Intacct Project Accounting to ensure that all billable expenses related to its training classes are captured appropriately and can make their way onto a bill at the end of the day. Sage Intacct's automated expense reporting and project billing have been a big cost and time saver for Smith, ensuring that billing gets completed earlier in the month.



Company Overview

Smith System Driver Improvement Institute, Inc. was founded in 1952 as the nation's first fleet driver safety training organization with on-road, hands-on education for experienced drivers. Smith System delivers behind the wheel instruction to more than 35,000 fleet drivers each year and has presented its program in 100 countries and in 22 languages.

Executive Summary

Results with Sage Intacct:

- Software paid for itself in <6 months
- Improved decision-making
- Eliminated duplicate data entry

Results

Granular Visibility Improves Decision-Making

Sage Intacct's reporting and dashboard capabilities allow Smith to monitor profit and loss in each of its product or service lines. The finance team leverages Sage Intacct's dimension capability to tag transactions with details such as the project, customer, vendor, or employee to filter, group, and organize their data for more granular reporting. "With Sage Intacct, we can easily track our total costs for each class or product line and get a clear picture of the levers that make one market more profitable than another," shared Boughton. "We would never have dreamed of looking for specific training class profitability measures in our prior systems – it would've required IT resources or a consultant to track down the appropriate data."

In addition, the finance team can find quick and easy answers for ad hoc business questions, such as whether it is more cost-effective to buy, lease, or rent vehicles for each market. When this topic came up, they were able to use Sage Intacct's flexible reporting to make a confident decision in a couple hours versus the full week that type of analysis would have required before. "The thing I like best about Sage Intacct is being able to go in anytime I want from wherever I am and get the information I need," concluded Boughton. "Whether I'm working from home, or on the road visiting vendors or customers, I can turn to Sage Intacct and get the answers I need instantly."

Sage Intacct also helps Smith report key statistical information and performance indicators to its board and ownership group, including metrics like total training days, number of SaaS users, e-learning visitors, etc. As a result, the company's leadership and product line managers have gained important trend information that drives better decisions about how to manage and grow the business.

"Thanks to all of the efficiency and visibility benefits we've realized, our investment in Sage Intacct was paid off in less than 6 months," concluded Boughton. "We've recently added a third-party expense reporting tool and prepaid amortization functionality, and look forward to further optimizing our processes to increase Sage Intacct's impact on our business over time."

“In our organization, the finance function is really evolving. Sage Intacct has shifted the perception of our team – from being seen as scorekeepers, or the ‘black box’ in the corner, towards being seen as experts that truly help the business grow and are integral to the conversation.”



Doug Boughton,
CFO, Smith System