



Discovering the missing link

Just as heavy fog can ground a passenger flight, impaired visibility of job costs and profit position has the potential to blind a business. So when fast-growing enterprise technology integrator Key Information Systems sought out a system that would provide end-to-end visibility of its largely project-based business, it chose Job Costing for SAP Business One.

Challenge: Keeping track of complex projects

Key Information Systems President Leif Morin has a pragmatic view of doing business well. He says while never losing sight of customer needs is hardly revolutionary, it requires a finely tuned combination of technology, technical expertise and customer focus. The approach has worked well for the Newport Beach, California-based integrator, which has experienced 30 percent compound revenue growth for the past eight years.



Architecting and implementing complex IT infrastructure solutions for medium sized businesses, Key Information Systems had grown to the point where it required better financial information. While a basic accounting package had served it well, Morin knew that continuing his company's stellar growth required a level of functionality and business intelligence beyond the realm of basic profit and loss reporting. It was clear the company needed an enterprise-grade business management and accounting system, and soon adopted SAP Business One.

However, a significant problem remained. Integrators, like Key Information Systems, sell consulting time and a diverse portfolio of equipment – such as servers, storage appliances, networking gear and a galaxy of computing peripherals. The ability to track individual products and related time-based costs for specific client projects is absolutely critical. While SAP Business One had introduced a strong business and financial management platform, Key Information Systems was still without a job costing system and specific lot identification so critical to professional services businesses like their own.

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Solution: The missing link – Job Costing for SAP Business One

Quick to address the issue, technology partner and SAP integrator Tryarc LLC introduced Key Information Systems to SAP ISV award winning application Job Costing for SAP Business One – a SAP certified and fully-embedded project management and costing module for project and service based businesses.

Key Information Systems administration and finance personnel use the following functions, which all seamlessly integrate with SAP Business One; source transactions, reporting and alerts management, Job Management, Estimating, Timesheeting, Inventory, Purchasing, and Service Call Integration.

Morin says the tight integration between the two systems was critical. More than just the ability to "load and go" he says the uniform look and feel accelerated adoption and acceptance. Job Costing for SAP Business One now serves as the primary interface for the company's administration team.



Payback: The measure of business performance, to the penny.

Morin says the transparency he now enjoys has been a revelation and is quick to point out that he now knows to the penny how much each job is making, or not, as the case may be.

"We're now able to understand what's going on in the business on a particular job, across multiple jobs, and how that impacts the business – what's selling and not selling and, more importantly, what's selling profitably. It's an important piece of the puzzle, which until now has been missing," says Morin. "Before, all we could see was how much a job had made – that's all. There was no additional visibility of what was going on or the ability to track a job from estimate through to sales order, purchase order, inventory and so forth. That's an important element to managing our business."

Job Costing for SAP Business One has also introduced a new level of robustness, which Morin says you don't get with a low-end accounting package. "Previously, nothing was tracked and we could change invoices on the fly. It might have been convenient, but it certainly wasn't robust, which is a big deal from an accounting and job costing perspective."

Morin says the new information and reporting now at his fingertips has considerably added to his business decision-making ability. He says that while the right business fundamentals will get a business to a certain point, taking it to the next level requires a certain depth of information to make the right proactive changes – something he says is only getting tougher as integrators cope with lower margins and broader product portfolios.

"With Job Costing for SAP Business One and SAP Business One we certainly have the platform to take our business to the next level," says Morin. "I can tell you to the penny how much my jobs have made."

Highlights

Customer

Key Information Systems

Head office

Newport Beach, California

Sector

Enterprise technology services

Key Business Challenges

Insufficient financial and job information; and addressing a crucial missing link – specific lot reporting

Solution

Job Costing for SAP Business One – a SAP certified and integrated management and accounting module for project and service based businesses. Features critical to Key Information Systems include Job Management, Estimating, Timesheeting, Inventory, Purchasing and Service.

Payback

- True business transparency
- Granular view of individual jobs, product/service component contribution and profitability
- Window on entire job lifecycle – from estimate to completion
- Gauge true cost of delivering product and time-based solutions
- Improved accounting robustness and auditability
- Rich reporting and intelligence supporting strategic business decisions

Key Business Benefits

The key to growing a successful technology integration business – other than having the right people, technology and process – is business management software that is able to track individual products, account for related time-based costs, and track what happens to a product over time, from purchase to project completion.