

EPICOR®

Focused on Growth

Epicor Service Enterprises
Customer Success Stories





\$180,000

\$160,000

\$140,000

\$166,572

\$182,000



Service Enterprises

In a fast-paced world where quality, responsiveness, accuracy and loyalty are often the difference between success or failure, the opportunities and challenges for service sector companies have never been greater. From financial and professional services organizations to advertising, entertainment and nonprofit organizations, Epicor service solutions provide a foundation to drive even greater success. With bid management, project accounting, engagement delivery, time, expense and resource management applications, you have not only a complete view of project and resource utilization, but the tools to streamline all aspects of your services organization. Through groundbreaking adoption of leading-edge Web services technologies, Epicor service solutions provides enterprise functionality at a midmarket total cost of ownership (TCO)—combining a rich user experience with absolute flexibility and intense performance. The following pages include just a few of our many success stories.

“With this solution, we spend half as much time managing our system. This has allowed us to focus on increasing our sales. The company increased sales by five percent in the first six months alone.”

— Merlin Knott
Head of Sales and Marketing
Ké Concepts

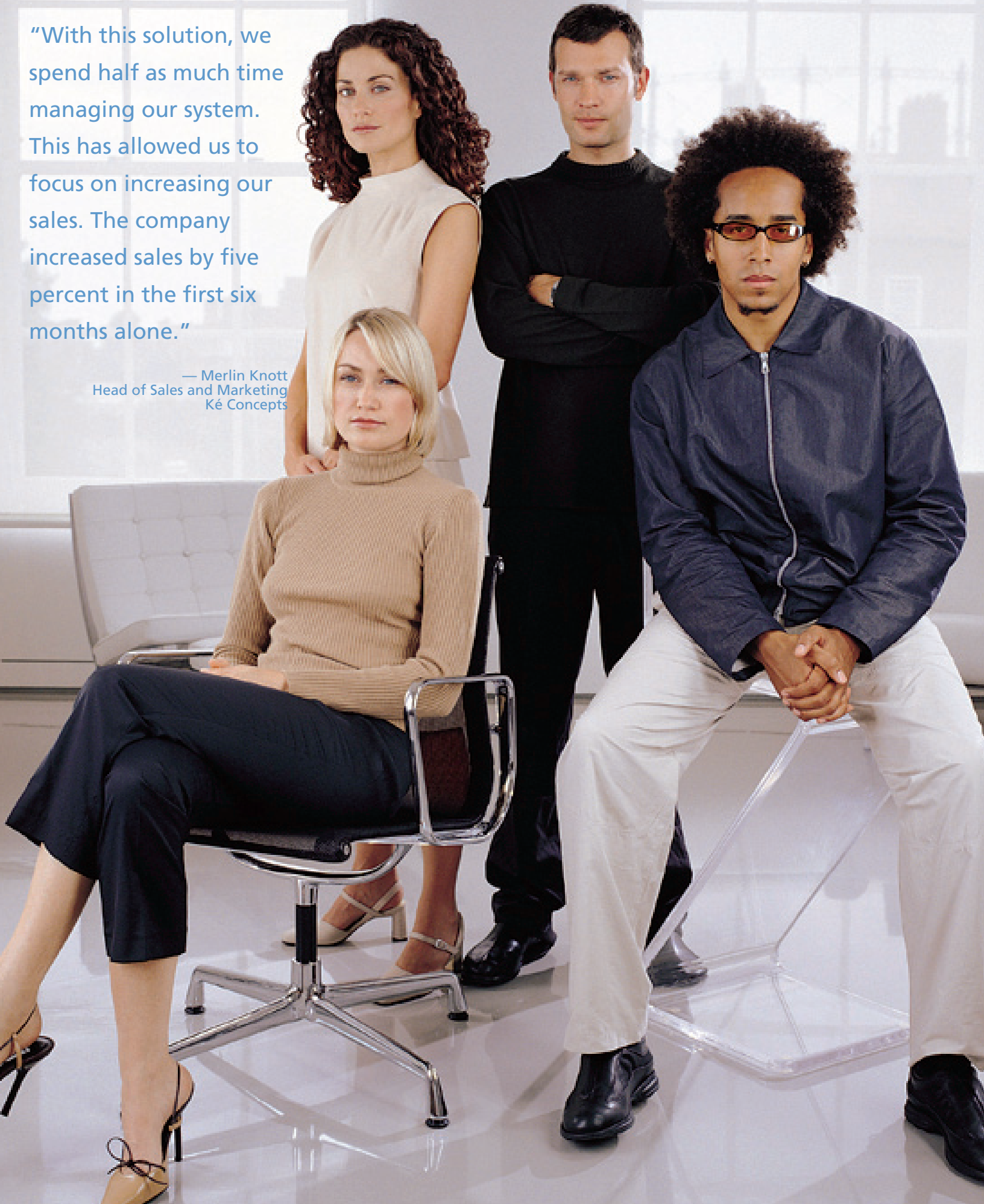


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Barry-Wehmiller Design Group

Industry

Consulting and Engineering

Headquarters

St. Louis, MO

Employees

350 Employees

Epicor solution

Epicor for Service Enterprises

Business Challenge

Consulting-focused business required solution that could support specific business needs while enabling consolidation of financials

Solution

Integrated solution with strong financial functionality for consulting practice, capable of being accessed from remote locations and built on a scalable technology foundation

Business Benefits

- Consolidated picture of financial and operational data provides strategic advantage
- Single-source solution for financial and project-related data minimizes the time spent compiling financials into the general ledger
- Easy Web-based access for all employees
- Electronic approvals and Audit Trail
- Billing rule/rate flexibility to meet customer requirements
- Increased efficiency in month-end reporting processes
- Provides single solution for managing Epicor time and billing for full-time, temporary workers and contractors
- Integration with company credit card issuer controls expense entry and enables electronic reconciliation

“Without an overall view at the organization we couldn’t fully understand the financial aspect of our business. Epicor for Service Enterprises provides a consolidated picture of our financial and operational data.”

— Jim Meier
Partner and CTO

Barry-Wehmiller Design Group (The Design Group) is a world leader in manufacturing automation and consulting services, providing industrial automation and engineering services to a wide variety of industries. The Design Group is a professional services division of parent company and conglomerate Barry-Wehmiller Company, one of the largest equipment automation companies in the world. The company’s highly-specialized consultants work with customers to provide services ranging from feasibility studies for packaging design to validation work for the consumer product, pharmaceutical, biomedical, and medical device industries.

Founded in 1986, the company has undergone controlled and consistent organizational growth over the years with nine locations in the U.S. and Puerto Rico today. As the company grew, business and technology needs matured and the company realized the manufacturing solution that was utilized across the Barry-Wehmiller companies was not a fit for The Design Group’s project-focused business. Specifically, The Design Group needed to use a multi-tier rate structure based on their business and client requirements.

The Design Group evaluated ChangePoint from Compuware and PeopleSoft from Oracle, but selected Epicor for Service Enterprises primarily because of its usability and flexible technology foundation.

Managing the People-Driven Business

The Design Group invests in its project managers and engineers, recruiting highly-trained professionals with direct industry experience that bring engineering and operational background that will relate directly to its customers' needs. The Design Group uses Epicor for Service Enterprises to manage its diverse project portfolio and serves as the go-to resource for its projects engineers and managers.

Operating in a business where time is money, the company was already proficient in its time reporting processes. The Design Group leverages the straightforward time capture functionality in Epicor for Service Enterprises which enables its project managers to focus on contributing expertise to client projects rather than administrative work.

Using Epicor for Service Enterprises, managing expenses is more streamlined now. Each of The Design Group's professionals are required to pay for project-related expenses such as travel and meals with a corporate credit card. The Design Group integrated Epicor for Service Enterprises with its employee credit card issuer. On a daily basis, The Design group downloads a list of charges from the issuer and the user assigns them to different projects based on the project associated with expense.

Tighter Project Accounting

The Design Group often bills with variable charge rates and required a solution that would allow them to set up project-specific rates. The Design Group may bill 20% on project initiation for a down payment and then follow up with time and materials billings. "Previously we struggled with setting up billing rates for time and materials the way our business demanded," said Meier. "Epicor for Service Enterprises provides a much better tool for project managers to run the business by automatically handling multi-tier rates and billing caps."

Using Epicor for Service Enterprises, The Design Group has improved financial control and the consolidation processes. The ability to run all of its financial and project-related data through a single application greatly minimizes the time spent compiling financials into the general ledger, which used to take a combination of several different applications to complete. The Design Group built custom reports based on its precise business needs. Collecting information from Epicor for Service Enterprises, the reporting process is more streamlined than it was previously. "When it comes time to report project financials, everything is compiled with a click of a button or scheduled for delivery in an e-mail."

Developing Strategic Advantage from Reliable Information

In addition to improving the efficiency of compiling financials, Epicor for Service Enterprises provides a comprehensive view of The Design Groups business which provides a strategic advantage. "Without an overall view at organization level we couldn't fully understand the financial aspect of our business. Epicor for Service Enterprises provides a consolidated picture of our financial and operational data," said Meier.

ClinPhone Group Ltd.

Industry

Pharmaceutical and biotechnology software and services

Headquarters

Nottingham, England

Employees

480 Employees

Epicor solution

Epicor for Service Enterprises

Business Challenge

Current systems were strained by rapid growth and could not provide the automation capabilities desired

Solution

Integrated multi-currency enterprise service automation (ESA) solution to accommodate strategic, technical and operational processes and goals

Business Benefits

- Dramatic time-savings through automated billing and approval processes
- Ability to evaluate profit and loss for future project planning
- Improved controls and procedures and increased consistency in data
- Increased revenue by 50 percent from 2002 to 2004 while maintaining comparable staffing levels in the accounts and project administration teams. 80 percent growth is budgeted from 2002 to the end of the 2005-2006 financial year
- Reduced invoicing to within one-to-two days from four-to-six days
- Saving two AR days per month at both the UK and US facilities

“Epicor for Service Enterprises gives us visibility into project profit and loss so we know which types of studies are the most profitable and which require the most time and resources. This enables us to align our go-forward product and sales strategies with reliable historic data.”

— John Whitmarsh
Systems Accountant

ClinPhone is the most trusted name in the clinical technology industry serving most of the world's top Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology organizations. Having managed over 1,380 clinical trials across all major therapeutic areas, supporting over 90,000 healthcare sites in 88 countries and 71 languages, ClinPhone has a proven track record of delivering value-added solutions that directly address the pharmaceutical industry's needs by enhancing the entire clinical process.

As ClinPhone's reputation as an industry leader strengthened over the years, its business grew dramatically making it evident that new technologies and processes were needed in order to accommodate its strategic, technical and operational processes and goals.

“Our previous systems lacked consistency and control. Furthermore, the systems were strained because of the load that was being placed on them,” said John Whitmarsh, systems accountant for ClinPhone. “We needed a technology solution that would automate as many manual processes as possible and would enable us to adapt quickly to growth and invoice more promptly.” Furthermore, ClinPhone wanted to provide project managers with more awareness and visibility on the profitability and operational costs of the client systems.

ClinPhone began evaluating enterprise service automation (ESA) solutions and was introduced to Epicor for Service Enterprises by Epicor value-added reseller (VAR) Epaccsys Ltd. “The primary reason we chose Epicor for Service Enterprises is because of the solution's future roadmap. We felt confident that the solution would support our needs now and in the future,” said Whitmarsh. In what was one of the first installations of Epicor for Service Enterprises, Epaccsys supported the project all the way through, working closely with ClinPhone to meet specific business requirements.

ClinPhone's pharmaceutical customers are fiercely competitive and very protective of their data. As such, ClinPhone follows very strict guidelines to ensure confidentiality and quality in its projects. Working with Epaccsys, ClinPhone modified the project view to restrict certain views based on the project timeline. "If a project is to span three years, we have the ability to hide certain areas and stages so that no one sees them until they are relevant," said Whitmarsh.

"I'm quite impressed with the way we can customize things. Anything we've wanted to do with Epicor for Service Enterprises thus far has been achievable," said Whitmarsh.

Tighter Time and Expense Management

In a project-focused business, effective management of time and expense (T&E) is critical and is often approached differently from company to company. Again, ClinPhone leveraged the built-in functionality along with the flexibility of Epicor for Service Enterprises' business process management (BPM) Director tool to improve T&E management without adjusting current business processes.

Previously, ClinPhone did not have an approval process in place for T&E so if time was entered incorrectly, it was not caught. "Epicor for Service Enterprises sends automated approval request notifications to managers. Now, not only have achieved greater control and accuracy in our T&E reporting, we did it without adding additional labor," said Whitmarsh.

ClinPhone has set up its timesheet reporting to police itself. Every Monday morning it sends an e-mail to anyone who hasn't yet completed their weekly timesheets and then follows up with a second reminder, if needed. The system also reminds managers to approve timesheets that haven't yet been approved. If they still aren't approved by the following day, Epicor for Service Enterprises informs their manager. "These automated notifications are very helpful and save our staff significant time," said Whitmarsh.

Since purchasing Epicor for Service Enterprises, ClinPhone increased revenues by fifty percent from 2002 to 2004 while maintaining similar staffing levels within the accounts and project administration teams.

While invoicing used to take four-to-six days, now that time has been reduced to within one-to-two days. "Using Epicor for Service Enterprises, we have more than halved the time it takes to get our invoices out the door whilst almost doubling our project turnover," said Whitmarsh. "This has improved our cash flow and contributes directly to the bottom line."

Epicor for Service Enterprises also enables the flexibility to invoice on the day a project is due where previously ClinPhone's billing was always held to the last day of the month. With the ability to modify billing rules in Epicor for Service Enterprises, if a study goes live mid-month, ClinPhone can automatically generate the invoice on the scheduled date rather than waiting for month-end. Furthermore, ClinPhone is saving two accounts receivable days per month at both its U.K. headquarters and U.S. facility thanks to the solution's automation capabilities.

Leveraging Key Data for a Strategic Advantage

In addition to improved cash flow through streamlined invoicing processes, ClinPhone is also benefiting from the solution's reporting and analytics. "Epicor for Service Enterprises gives us visibility into project profit and loss so we know which types of studies are the most profitable and which require the most time and resources," said Whitmarsh. "This enables us to align our go-forward product and sales strategies with reliable historic data."

ClinPhone's senior management uses Epicor for Service Enterprises to evaluate the order book. "The billing scheduled is inputted directly into Epicor for Service Enterprises so management always has an up-to-date view of our order book for several years in advance," said Whitmarsh.

Going forward, ClinPhone is looking at using Epicor for Service Enterprises to make project managers accountable for invoice accuracy. Within the solutions Web-based T&E, invoices will be available to managers for review and approval. While this is an added step, the automation capabilities in Epicor for Service Enterprise make it in a minimal work addition, while adding to ClinPhone's overall accuracy and efficiency.

Ké Concepts

Industry

IT Services

Headquarters

Woodsmead, South Africa

Employees

20 Users

Epicor solution

Epicor for Service Enterprises

Business Challenge

Time and billing system required remote workers to return to the office to complete their time sheets, resulting in wasted time, funds, and lost billing opportunities

Solution

Implementation of an enterprise service automation (ESA) solution based on the Microsoft® .NET Framework, allowing consultants to access the system online

Business Benefits

- Easy to integrate into existing Microsoft-based technology infrastructure
- Improved collaboration and communications between consultants
- Reduced systems management by 50 percent; boosted productivity 8 percent
- Eliminated late penalties, and Increased cash flow by 20 percent

“Our consultants are much more effective now that they can log on to the system remotely,”

— Merlin Knott,
Head of Sales and Marketing,
Ké Concepts

South Africa-based Ké Concepts began its business as a value-added reseller of Microsoft® solutions—services that the company continues to provide today. The company's business has increased dramatically since the creation of CreditEase, a modular credit management application built on the Microsoft® .NET Framework that integrates with various enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions, including Microsoft Business Solutions. Financial companies throughout Africa rely both on CreditEase and Ké Concepts consultants to implement the software.

Ké Concepts consultants spend an increasing amount of time at remote clients' offices, leaving the company's outdated time tracking and billing systems strained to keep pace with this growing mobile workforce. Without remote access, the company's consultants had to return to the main office to enter billing hours, which wasted both time and resources.

Employees were also unable to cross-collaborate in real-time or update the system automatically when a project's scope changed—which delayed invoicing and reduced cash flow. In addition, Ké Concepts consultants often spent more hours working on a project than were indicated in the original bid, because the scope of the project changed frequently during the implementation. “After clients see the capabilities of CreditEase, they often expand the scope of work,” explains Gary Green, operations director at Ké Concepts. As a result, consultants often didn't record the different tasks done as part of expanded projects, resulting in much higher labor costs than the client expected. The company also incurred late penalties because without a written record of expanded jobs, it had no way of extending the deadline for completion.

Ké Concepts implemented Epicor for Service Enterprises, a solution based on the Microsoft® .NET Framework. As a result of the implementation, the company has streamlined its project management, reduced operations costs by half and increased the productivity of its consultants.

Streamlining Project Management

Working with Epicor and Gold Certified Partner New Era Solutions, Ké Concepts implemented Epicor for Service Enterprises within four weeks. Epicor for Service Enterprises is an Enterprise Service Automation (ESA) solution that helps service organizations manage everything from opportunities, bids, projects, and resources to financial and accounting information. Epicor for Service Enterprises relies on the Epicor Internet Component Environment (ICE), an environment for building Web service enterprise applications for midmarket businesses.

The Epicor ICE environment was a major reason Ké Concepts chose Epicor for Services Enterprises as a solution. ICE is based on the Microsoft .NET Framework, a set of Microsoft software technologies for connecting people, systems, and devices over the Internet. Because Ké Concepts had built CreditEase on the Framework, the company's developers were familiar with it and knew that the solution would integrate easily with both its current information technology environment and its long-term strategy.

Now, consultants in the field enter their hours either by using a portable computer or smart client Microsoft Windows Mobile™ based Pocket PCs. The data is then synchronized with the main system using Remote Access Services—a feature of the Microsoft Windows Server™ 2003 operating system, which is part of Microsoft Windows Server System™ integrated server software. From there, Epicor for Services Enterprises also records any changes in project scope or plans and updates the files in Microsoft Project Server 2003, which the company uses as a project tracking tool. The integration between Epicor for Services Enterprises and Project Server also helps the company establish rules that dictate items such as the scope or length of each project, time and materials billing, and milestones or specific tasks.

Improved Communication and Collaboration

Ké Concepts saw immediate benefits by updating its time and billing system to Epicor for Services Enterprises. The company implemented a solution that not only was able to integrate easily with its existing Microsoft-based technology infrastructure, but that also could grow along with the company. As a result of improving the collaboration and communications between consultants and the main system, Ké Concepts improved the billing system and customer satisfaction while increasing cash flow.

By automating its project management system, Ké Concepts has drastically reduced the amount of time employees and consultants spend managing their hourly billing—whether it's IT staff running reports manually or consultants flying back to the office to enter their hours. This automation, in turn, gives the company more opportunities to service existing clients or win new business.

"With this solution, we spend half as much time managing our system," says Merlin Knott, head of sales and marketing, Ké Concepts. "This has allowed us to focus on increasing our sales." The company increased sales by five percent in the first six months alone.

One of the biggest disadvantages of the previous system was the length of time required to submit accurate invoices—a vital concern to smaller companies concerned with their cash flow. Now that consultants can enter their hours remotely, they can enter them more frequently—and this, in turn, leads to more accurate financial accounting. In addition, because Epicor for Services Enterprises crosschecks projected costs versus actual costs automatically, project managers can flag and resolve issues quickly and easily without ever having to enter the main office. "With a direct correlation between actual billing and projected billing, the amount of time we need to bill our clients has been reduced," says Knott. "That means we've increased our cash flow by at least twenty percent."

Under its previous PSA system, Ké Concepts often incurred penalties for missing deadlines. Today, the system allows consultants to enter any requested changes as they occur, generating new quotes and due dates based on those changes. New Era Solutions set up custom billing rules to accommodate changing client requests. "The system has comprehensive revision control, explains Scott Mackenzie, managing director for New Era Solutions. "All the time and materials are captured and transferred to the revised project plan." As a result, Ké Concepts has completely eliminated late penalties.

Ké Concepts has seen an eight percent boost in productivity, as consultants no longer have to return to the main office to enter their hours. In addition, the new solution provides flexible options; consultants can either enter their hours by synchronizing their smart client PocketPC devices or portable computers with the main system or by logging on to the SharePoint Portal Server site. "Our consultants are much more effective now that they can log on to the system remotely," says Knott.

Metastorm

Industry

Software

Headquarters

Baltimore, MD

Employees

160 Employees

Epicor solution

Epicor for Service Enterprises

Business Challenge

Company expansion required solution that could provide strong project accounting capabilities and access to real-time data

Solution

Integrated solution with powerful reporting for managing consulting operations and back office financials worldwide

Business Benefits

- Access to real-time data and analytics supports forecasting and resource utilization
- Shift in focus from administrative tasks to strategic initiative
- Increased accuracy and efficiency in business reporting and ability to understand profitability at a granular level
- Deferred maintenance billing enables 25% time savings; helps sustain renewal cycle
- Project accounting efficiencies saves one-full time person
- Streamlined data consolidation enables 10-15% time savings in financial reporting
- Reduced billing time by one week per month

“Epicor for Service Enterprises enables us to drill down and examine the profit margin for each consultant to better understand utilization, which helps us manage resources more efficiently.”

— Steve Scribner
Controller

As the first breakaway business process management (BPM) vendor, Metastorm is a leader in BPM software and best practice methodologies for modeling, automating, integrating, and improving both human and system-based processes. In late 2005, the company tripled its services business, in both revenues and people, through its acquisition of CommerceQuest. It became clear that the company needed a robust resource for managing its consulting engagements and accounting.

Serving customers in all countries, the solution that Metastorm had been using to manage its financials was not adequate to support the company's growth. According to Steve Scribner, controller for Metastorm, the solution was cumbersome and didn't provide the integrated time and billing capabilities Metastorm needed to manage its consulting operations.

“We operate on a global basis and needed a solution to bring together financial information across our global operations. Our previous solution required us to consolidate data from separate databases, which was a time intensive process, and we never had access to real time data,” said Scriber. “We wanted a single solution that could provide project management and reconciliation as well as forecasting and reporting tools in one integrated database.”

Metastorm sought a solution that could accurately manage value-added tax (VAT) rules for its European projects, which account for about 40% of the company's business. Also important was the ability to automate the deferred maintenance billing process and provide powerful reporting and analytics. Metastorm evaluated other solutions, but quickly determined that Epicor for Service Enterprises offered the functionality they were looking for.

Time Savings Equates to Cost Savings

Epicor for Service Enterprises has improved efficiency across Metastorm's accounting and consulting organizations enabling dramatic time savings. Through the automation of Metastorm's deferred maintenance process the company can closely monitor maintenance revenues in real time. When a customer comes up for renewal, Epicor for Service Enterprises pings the renewal manager and automatically generates an invoice for the customer.

"Our customer base is the lifeblood of our organization and being able to efficiently process maintenance renewal is a key asset," said Scribner. "The deferred maintenance billing automation has enabled a 25% time savings and helps sustain our renewal cycle."

Scribner reports that Epicor for Service Enterprises enables a 10-15% time savings in the consolidation of financials. In project accounting, Epicor for Service Enterprises is saving Metastorm one full-time resource and has shortened the billing time for services by one week per month.

"Epicor for Service Enterprises allows our finance people to focus on analyzing data rather than processing data. In addition, our consultants are spending much less time in administrative work and our key consulting leaders are now freed from having to process data in order to bill time," said Scribner.

Leveraging Business Transparency

Epicor for Service Enterprises has also enabled Metastorm to become more transparent in its operations. "We are not a public company, but we operate like one," said Scribner. "Epicor for Service Enterprises provides real-time data which enables management to be proactive rather than reactive." For example, Scriber can look at exchange rate values for projects abroad and determine what the impact could be on revenues as rates fluctuate, rather than at month-end reporting time.

"Overall, the solution provides more accuracy in our business reporting and more efficiency too. We can report on each business segment and understand profitability at a very granular level," said Scribner. "Epicor for Service Enterprises enables us to drill down and examine the profit margin for each consultant to better understand utilization, which helps us manage resources more efficiently."

The Integrated Advantage

Before selecting Epicor, Metastorm considered implementing a third party application to provide project management capabilities, but concluded it was not cost-effective as it would require the added expense of purchasing back-end code, involving multiple parties to complete the coding process and would ultimately place more burden on Metastorm's IT resources.

"As new business and technology needs emerge, companies often look to plug-in third party applications to existing systems. In my experience this approach is never as seamless and often more costly than an integrated solution," said Scribner. "We like that Epicor for Service Enterprises is end-to-end solution."

Scribner also commented on the quality of the implementation services provided by Epicor. "The services can make or break an implementation. You can have the greatest product in the world, but if the services aren't good, the project can be a failure," said Scribner. "Epicor's Signature Methodology for consulting services was certainly effective. The consultants were very knowledgeable and always responsive."

A Company-Wide Resource

Epicor for Service Enterprises is used by the Metastorm finance department and the consulting team on a daily basis. In addition, Scribner along with Metastorm's CFO and vice president of finance use Epicor for Service Enterprises as a strategic tool.

"We can pull current information from Epicor for Service Enterprises on demand. Project managers can have real-time access to job information to identify issues or low utilization quickly so adjustments can be made before problems arise," said Scribner. "We regularly utilize data from the system to serve other areas of the business such as marketing and sales."

Going forward, Metastorm is looking to utilize Epicor for Service Enterprises to manage its help desk and research and development operations.

Parsons Brinckerhoff

Industry

Engineering/Construction
Management

Headquarters

New York, NY

Employees

9,000 Employees

Epicor solution

Epicor Procurement

Business Challenge

Decentralized purchasing systems created inefficiencies and absorbed excessive financial and human resources

Solution

Automated purchasing management solution that helps aggregate spend and reduce purchasing costs

Business Benefits

- Aggregated spending enables better contract negotiation
- Streamlined processes through automated workflow and approvals
- Ability to manage purchasing solution used across multiple locations without the need for on-site administration
- Year over year savings of 40% on average through better contract negotiation
- 24 percent savings on software and equipment compared to retail pricing
- Spend on printed materials reduced to \$51,000 from \$150,000

“By implementing worldwide the processes and technologies that have been successful in the U.S., we aim to more broadly aggregate our spend, further reduce our purchasing costs and make the process easy for our end users.”

— Suzanne Puccino
Vice President
Director of Corporate Services

Founded in 1885, Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB), www.pbworld.com, is an international planning, engineering, program and construction management organization. The company has helped shape some of the world's largest and most important public works projects, from MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) to the Sabiya power plant in Kuwait and the Singapore Deep Tunnel Sewerage System.

As one of the oldest continuously operating engineering firms in the world, PB strives to maintain the culture and qualities established by its founder 120 years ago. Among PB's primary goals is to serve well its clients and the communities in which it completes its engineering projects. Achieving this goal requires a tight technology infrastructure and careful cost management. Previously, PB did not have set IT hardware standards which caused issues from a support standpoint and impacted the company's ability to maximize its IT spend.

“We are a very geographically diverse company and without a centralized, controlled purchasing process in place, we knew we were wasting financial and human resources,” said Suzanne Puccino, vice president and director of Corporate Services for PB. “We needed to re-engineer our purchasing processes and set out to implement a purchasing management system that would get us there. At the same time, we defined rules for IT hardware products so that we could streamline our infrastructure while maximizing our buying power with select vendors.” PB evaluated solutions from Oracle, Ariba and Commerce One, ultimately selecting Epicor Procurement for its price for performance.

Providing the Right Tools for the Best Price

PB began using Epicor Procurement to purchase IT hardware, office supplies and stationery. "Today, there is virtually nothing we don't purchase through Epicor Procurement," said Puccino.

The company has about seven suppliers, such as Dell and Staples, set up on Epicor Procurement's Tap Out feature, which allows buyers to "tap in" to vendor's online catalogs while maintaining the controls in the purchasing solution. In addition, PB has 33 other supplier catalogs available to purchasers.

"As a service-oriented business, maintaining productivity in our human capital is essential. The things we buy need to work, which elevates the level of service my group needs to provide," said Puccino. "Epicor Procurement allows us to put the materials our people need within their reach, yet in a controlled environment."

Bigger Buying Power Leads to Cost Savings

The cost savings PB has realized from the on-contract buying enabled through Epicor Procurement is evident in all areas, and is something that Puccino carefully monitors. "I publish an annual report with year-over-year comparisons and comparisons to retail pricing so I know what the company is saving," said Puccino. Using retail pricing as a benchmark, PB saved 40 percent on average on office equipment and supplies over the year. For purchases of computer software and equipment, the company saw a 24 percent savings.

According to Puccino, the Tap Out feature in Epicor Procurement is favored by employees and suppliers alike. "We find that when we set up a new Tap Out, our usage goes way up. The suppliers know this, which gives us great leverage in our in contract negotiation," said Puccino. "Tap Outs are a win-win for PB and its suppliers."

"Last year, we negotiated a contract with a new vendor for marketing and promotional items and set them up on Epicor Procurement Tap Out," said Puccino. "Compared to our previous vendor, we saw a 42 percent savings because we were able to capitalize on our buying power to negotiate a very favorable contract." Similar savings were seen when PB negotiated a new contract for printed materials. "Our expense for printed materials was reduced to \$51,000 from \$150,000 the previous year," said Puccino.

Global Reach and Accessibility

Epicor Procurement also enables PB to be transparent in its purchasing and supplier relationships. "Conducting our purchasing through Epicor Procurement provides us with total auditability," said Puccino. "We have data at our fingertips, which enables us to provide tax reports by harvesting information from Epicor Procurement."

Puccino also cites improved efficiency as a key benefit. "The automation and accessibility enabled with Epicor Procurement through electronic approvals and online catalogs has enabled significant time savings," said Puccino. "Now, because our business processes are no longer time-intensive, we spend more time doing our project work."

PB currently has about 1,600 requisitioners in the U.S. and is in the process of expanding the use of Epicor Procurement implementation to the United Kingdom. The Australia and New Zealand and Asian regions will follow over the next three years.

"By implementing worldwide the processes and technologies that have been successful in the U.S., we aim to more broadly aggregate our spend, further reduce our purchasing costs and make the process easy for our end users."

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