



GOETZMAN
GROUP

Customer: The Goetzman Group
Web Site: www.goetzmangroup.com
Customer Size: 115 employees
Country or Region: United States
Industry: Financial services
Partner: Plexus Communications

Customer Profile

The Goetzman Group provides financial and accounting consulting services. The Woodland Hills, California-based firm sought to increase efficiencies, boost market outreach, and reduce IT costs.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Office
 - Microsoft Office Small Business 2007
 - Microsoft Office Access 2007
 - Microsoft Office Excel 2007
 - Microsoft Office Outlook 2007
- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft Exchange Server 2003

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www.microsoft.com/casestudies



Financial Services Consultancy Boosts Bottom Line Using Software Integration

“It takes two hours instead of two days to get out an e-mail promoting consultant availability. If only one hit in 4,000 lands someone at a project for just half a year, that’s \$100,000 in revenue.”

Jason C. Crawshaw, CPA, Chief Financial Officer, Goetzman Group

The Goetzman Group, a financial and accounting consultancy, used the software integration in Microsoft® Office Small Business 2007 to help automate the core processes of payroll, invoicing, and managing accounts receivable. The results are a 90 percent reduction in aging accounts receivable, streamlined marketing outreach, and IT cost savings of 40 percent. The company’s CFO estimates that the improvements equate to U.S.\$750,000 in revenue.

Business Needs

The Goetzman Group, a financial and accounting consulting firm, provides clients with a high-quality, cost-effective alternative to temporary agencies and “Big Four” accounting firms. In addition to 15 management and administrative employees, the company employs more than 100 financial and accounting professionals.

Jason Crawshaw, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Goetzman Group, was concerned about the company’s outstanding accounts receivable balance, which he partially ascribes to manual, paper-based processes. Says Crawshaw, “It took four days

to collect consultants’ time records, enter them into a spreadsheet, prepare and print the payroll, and create invoices to print and mail.” He continues, “Often when we contacted clients about an outstanding invoice, they had trouble locating it. So we had to find our copy of the invoice and signed timesheet, copy it, and mail it again.” At one point, the company had over U.S.\$1 million in receivables 120 days past due.

Ninety percent of the business derives from consultants producing billable hours, with payroll and invoices based on those hours. “Keeping consultants on assignment is one of our highest priorities,” says Crawshaw.



"We pay our consultants a salary; they get paid whether they're working or not." Goetzman sends promotional e-mail to prospective clients every three to four weeks. "Readying a clean, filtered, targeted client list for sending could take two days," says Crawshaw.

In addition to his CFO duties, Crawshaw handles internal IT support. He responds to help-desk calls, resolving small issues and routing challenging ones to the company's IT vendor. Crawshaw estimates that he spent 20 hours each month on help-desk issues such as those arising from e-mail volume and attachment file size, a particularly vexing problem for the CEO, who relies heavily on e-mail. Crawshaw says that the company spent approximately \$2,000 each month on external IT support costs.

Solution

"One of the first actions taken to address IT issues was finding a new technology support partner. That's when we began working with Charlie O'Hearn at Plexus Communications," says Crawshaw.

First, O'Hearn moved the company from Lotus Domino Server to Microsoft® Exchange Server 2003. Later, O'Hearn suggested the company transition from Microsoft Office Professional 2003 to Microsoft Office Small Business 2007. Of the software deployment, O'Hearn says, "The deployment needed to be seamless, so I ran an installation logon script on the network over a weekend."

Prior issues due to e-mail size aren't a problem in the Microsoft Office Outlook® 2007 messaging and collaboration client, thanks to the use of Open XML Formats that compress size. Crawshaw observes, "We were pleasantly surprised to find Outlook 2007 was even faster than the previous version. Our

CEO likes that he's not constantly archiving e-mail." Crawshaw also notes that updates happen automatically and do not affect the user.

With Office Outlook 2007 on Exchange Server, the company attains the full integration that it was unable to achieve with Domino Server. Goetzman uses Microsoft Office Excel® 2007 spreadsheet software and Office Access® 2007 database software together with Outlook 2007 to streamline payroll and billing processes. "With full integration capability, we've automated timesheet reporting and verification with clients and consultants," says Crawshaw.

The finance department now has time to focus on accounts receivable management. "Using Outlook, we now send out invoices electronically," says Crawshaw. A client's invoice and a snapshot report created in Office Access 2007 are sent in e-mail through Outlook 2007.

Crawshaw credits another improvement to the firm's use of the straightforward integration between applications in the Microsoft Office suite: "A simple, two-step process gets our CRM [customer relationship management] data into Access, and one click imports the e-mail addresses into Outlook. It's much easier to send e-mail to a large mailing list now."

Benefits

The integrated functionality in Office Small Business 2007 helped the Goetzman Group achieve its objectives for IT budget reduction, market outreach, and streamlined payroll and invoicing. Says Crawshaw, "With Microsoft technology, if there's a particular task you want to do, inevitably you'll find the right tool to help you accomplish it."

Saved Money

Shifting from manually created invoices that had to be printed and mailed saved the company reams of paper and several thousands of dollars in postage, annually. Crawshaw also says that the company reduced IT spending by 50 percent, a monthly savings of \$1,000. Overall efficiencies have helped the company improve the bottom line by up to 25 percent, which Crawshaw equates to 5 to 10 percent in revenue.

Saved Time

Crawshaw finds that the change to Microsoft Office 2007 has meant fewer help-desk calls, saving him roughly an hour each day. Verifying consultants' billable hours with clients takes only an hour instead of two days. Also, Crawshaw says, "Payroll and invoice preparation take two days instead of four."

Reduced the Accounts Receivable Backlog

"Over \$1 million in past due accounts receivable has shrunk to no more than \$100,000 at any given time," says Crawshaw. He credits that figure to the improved invoicing process as well as the time his team now has to whittle down aging invoices. Crawshaw continues, "It takes minutes, not days, to resubmit an invoice. Sending an e-mail with the file attached cut collection time by 50 percent."

Increased Marketing Outreach

Sending promotional e-mail is now 90 percent faster. "It takes two hours instead of two days to get out an e-mail promoting consultant availability," says Crawshaw. "If only one hit in 4,000 lands someone at a project for just half a year, that's \$100,000 in revenue. And it doesn't cost us a thing!"