

A hand is holding a white model of a commercial airplane. The model is positioned over a world map that is partially visible on a surface. The background is a blurred image of a person's face, suggesting a focus on travel and human interaction.

Travel Research Advisors Gains Visibility and Efficiency Across Entities With Sage Intacct

CASE STUDY

armanino 

At A Glance

Customer Profile:

Wherever business executives in the Fortune 100 go, that's where Travel Research Advisors goes. Specializing in executive transportation, executive security and event logistics, Travel Research Advisors is a large company with three separate entities that were still using financial software for small businesses. By upgrading from QuickBooks to Sage Intacct, the company experienced a major leap in efficiency, scalability, accuracy and flexibility.

Software & Services

- Sage Intacct
- Armanino Sage Intacct implementation and integration services

Benefits

- Reduced monthly close from 25 days to 10 days, on average
- Accelerated reporting time and dramatically reduced the need for spreadsheets
- Improved data integrity by integrating Sage Intacct with other systems

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-Brandon Wiechmann

Challenge

Travel Research Advisors (previously Savoya Holdings) is a holding company for three entities offering executive transportation, executive security and event logistics. Its flagship company, Savoya, is an end-to-end, secure ground transportation solution that is trusted by the world's most discerning travelers and their teams. Savoya has completed more than 1 million missions in 300 markets across six continents.

When Brandon Wiechmann accepted the role of corporate controller at Travel Research Advisors, the company was still using software, such as QuickBooks, that was better suited to smaller businesses. "The processes and systems we had in place were mostly the same ones we had when the company was just getting started," says Wiechmann. "An upgrade to enterprise-level software was long overdue."

In short order, Wiechmann began an initiative to replace the core accounting system that the company depended on with a more robust, scalable and flexible solution. "In looking at new financial systems, we only considered best-in-class, web-based software, because we wanted near-infinite scalability as well as the ability to work from anywhere," says Wiechmann.

At the same time, the company intended to replace or upgrade other critical systems as well, including human resources management, fixed assets management and the company's proprietary platform for everything from booking to billing of its services.

Solution

After evaluating solutions from several vendors, Travel Research Advisors chose Sage Intacct, the leading provider of cloud enterprise resource planning (ERP), financial management and accounting software. Wiechmann was impressed by Sage Intacct's ability to support the growth and future needs of Travel Research Advisors, as well as its flexibility and ease of integration with other systems.

Sage Intacct recommended Armanino LLP to help Travel Research Advisors implement the new software. Armanino is one of the top 25 largest independent accounting and business consulting firms in the United States and is Sage Intacct's largest certified value-added reseller partner for software and consulting. "Before starting this project, I got wise advice that the choice of implementation firm is as important as the software," says Wiechmann. "That's why I chose Armanino."

"While everyone warned me about the risks of changing multiple systems at once, we really had no choice because we had pushed our previous software to the breaking point," says Wiechmann. To that end, Armanino helped Travel Research Advisors deploy Sage Intacct in parallel with other software changes, adjusting the project schedule to stop and start as resources and priorities shifted to other launches.

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“We could not have been luckier in our choice of implementation partner or the consultant we had on our project,” says Wiechmann. “Our consultant learned our business, understood how to translate our needs into the new software and guided us in creating a system that truly supports what we do.” The solution had a number of complexities and integrations, with Armanino helping with some of the integration effort, and the in-house developers within Travel Research Advisors integrating the company’s proprietary platform with Sage Intacct.

Results

Now that Travel Research Advisors has its enterprise-class financial software in place, Wiechmann is reaping the many benefits he envisioned at the start of the project—from automatic consolidation across the three entities, to the ease of handling intercompany transfers; from improved data integrity due to integrations with other systems, to greater efficiency across the board. “Everyone’s job is much easier,” says Wiechmann. “Our inefficient processes have all been improved or removed, with the result that we’re able to do everything in a fraction of the time it used to take.”

The monthly close is one example of the efficiency gains with Sage Intacct. Previously, it took Travel Research Advisors 25 days to close the books. Now the close takes 10 days, on average. Another example is management and oversight of fixed assets, which used to take four hours for Wiechmann to review manually in a spreadsheet. Today it takes him just 10 minutes to review fixed asset data. Likewise, reporting speed is much faster.

In addition to efficiency gains, Wiechmann appreciates the ability to close the month from anywhere he happens to be at that moment. “That option wasn’t available to me before,” he says. “We also now have a team member who works remotely full-time. Sage Intacct has allowed our team to stay together despite this individual moving to a new location.”

Next Steps

Wiechmann believes that Sage Intacct is not just a step up from QuickBooks, but a solution that puts his firm on a completely different level. “We may never have to change software again, because we’ve gained the operating leverage we need to scale far into the future,” he says.

Now that all the core systems have been upgraded or replaced, Wiechmann is planning to focus on what he calls the last frontier—reporting and dashboards. “Currently many of our reports are created out of our proprietary system,” says Wiechmann. “We want to move more reporting into Sage Intacct to gain greater insight for improved decision making.” He plans to task Armanino with helping with the new effort.

About Armanino^{LLP}

Armanino provides an integrated set of accounting services—audit, tax, consulting and technology solutions—to a wide range of organizations operating both in the US and globally. You can count on Armanino to think strategically, to provide the sound insights that lead to positive action. We address not just your compliance issues, but your underlying business challenges, as well—assessing opportunities, weighing risks, and exploring the practical implications of both your short- and long-term decisions. When you work with us, we give you options that are fully aligned with your business strategy. If you need to do more with less, we will implement the technology to automate your business processes. If it's financial, we can show you proven benchmarks and best practices that can add value company-wide. If the issue is operational, we'll consult with your people about workflow efficiencies. If it's compliance, we'll ensure you meet the requirements and proactively plan to take full advantage of the changes at hand. At every stage in your company's lifecycle, we'll help you find the right balance of people, processes, and technology.

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