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COOK INLET TRIBAL COUNCIL

People. Partnership. Potential.

Customer: Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.
Web Site: www.citci.com
Employees: 300+
Constituents: 12,000
Location: Anchorage, Alaska
Industry: Social Services
Partner: Arctic Information Technology

Customer Profile

Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC) provides social, educational and employment services to Alaska Natives and Native Americans living in the Cook Inlet region. Established in 1983 by Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (CIRI) as a nonprofit social services organization, CITC administers 35 culturally appropriate programs designed to assist individuals and families achieve their endless potential. These programs serve an average of 12,000 Alaska Natives and Native Americans annually.

Product Solutions

- Microsoft Dynamics GP Financials - 26 users
- Microsoft Dynamics Purchase Order
- Microsoft Dynamics Payroll
- Microsoft FRx
- Arctic IT Grant Revenue Receivables
- Arctic IT Indirect Revenue Recovery
- Integrity Data Payroll Enhancements
- Mekorma MICR

Non-Profit Organization Improves Reporting Processes by Switching to Microsoft Dynamics

"We have very stringent reporting requirements due to the receipt of government stimulus funds, and we needed a complete system that enabled us to comply with those requirements. We also needed a partner who understood how grants and accounting work in a non-profit agency."

- Amy Fredeen, Chief Financial Officer, CITC

Business Needs

Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. (CITC) provides social, educational and employment services to Alaska Natives and Native Americans living in the Cook Inlet region and needed an integrated, industry leading software solution to quickly and accurately process their payroll, provide daily company financial reports, and monthly compliance reports they could submit to the governmental agencies. CITC engaged with Arctic IT, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, to quickly replace their outdated accounting system. With an aggressive timeline of just 4 months, Arctic IT implemented and trained CITC on Microsoft Dynamics GP giving them the control and oversight that they needed to grow their organization's capabilities, allowing them to better serve their 12,000 constituents.

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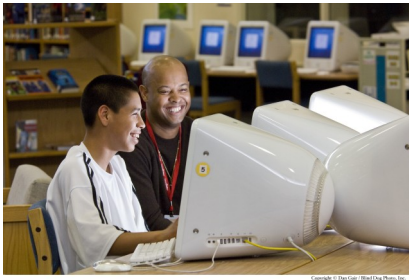
By the Numbers:

	1997	2009
Budget	4.5M	43M
Employees	15-20	300
# of Companies	1	5
# of Grants	50	65
# of Users	4	26

Situation

Established in 1983, CITC administers 35 culturally appropriate programs designed to assist individuals and families achieve their endless potential. Offering a variety of social services under five main divisions of child and family services, community shared services, educational services system, employment and training services, and recovery services, CITC serves an average of 12,000 Alaska Native and Native Americans annually.

CITC had been operating with Fundware software since 1997, but found that the software could not handle the necessary capacity. On any given day the system would break down, not allowing them to cut checks for example. Also, Fundware kept getting sold to a new owner (now BlackBaud Internet Solutions), which created a lack of local customer support and consistent technical support. CITC could not get the assistance needed when the system was down or get the upgrades to install properly.

Given the constraints of Fundware, CITC filled the gaps by using Excel spreadsheets and other internally created manual processes which was a time consuming and frustrating system. With the volume of customers that they were providing services to, CITC realized that in order for them to continue to grow and service their community, they needed not only a reliable and robust system, but a reliable and knowledgeable partner that they could work with.

Solution

Eager to grow and expand, CITC met and engaged with Arctic IT to implement Microsoft Dynamics GP. CITC was initially referred to Arctic IT by their auditor. Arctic IT then invited CITC to a conference where CITC was able to speak with another Arctic IT customer that had previously used Fundware and was now using Microsoft Dynamics GP. This conversation helped to confirm that Microsoft Dynamics GP and Arctic IT were the right combination for CITC. The implementation plan was mapped out in December 2008 and the work started on January 1st. CITC was live by May 1st.

Although it was four months of hard work, the extensive preparation up front to map out the implementation plan was well worth it. Melissa Wolfe, Director of Accounting for CITC commented that "Jackson Lum, Project Manager for Arctic IT, was a "slave driver" at times, which ensured that the entire project was on time and on budget. There was a big sigh of relief and joy when the first payroll ran and the first AP checks were issued without a hitch."

The CITC solution from Microsoft Dynamics, Arctic IT and its ISV partners include:

- **Microsoft Dynamics GP** financials, purchase order and payroll to replace the antiquated Fundware solution.
- **Microsoft FRx** for financial statements, reporting on budget vs. actual expenses, and encumbrance reporting.

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Microsoft Dynamics GP 10.0

- **Grant Revenue Receivables** is a software tool created by Arctic IT that automates the creation of revenue and receivables entries based off the client's expenses. The tool allows CITC to forgo manually inputting extensive grant data for each of their 65 grants.
- **Indirect Revenue Recovery** is a software tool for non-profit organizations created by Arctic IT that automatically generates financial entries based upon CITC's different indirect cost recovery rates.
- **Integrity Data Payroll Expense Splits and PTO Manager** provides unlimited flexibility to track and manage leave time benefits. The software allows CITC to save significant time with mass updating, balance sharing and transfers. CITC also uses Employee Accounts and Splits from Integrity Data which allows CITC to split an employee's expenses across multiple departments and grants.
- **Mekorma MICR** enables CITC to manage multiple checking accounts in a secure manner, add sorting and configurations capabilities, and to increase security around the check printing function.

Benefits

Robust core financial capabilities with automated processes

The differences between the former Fundware solution and Microsoft Dynamics GP were evident from the beginning. "We were so used to working outside of Fundware it did not occur to us all the ways we could use Microsoft Dynamics GP, giving us a complete solution", states Melissa

Wolfe. CITC was able to dispense with the manual processes and automate the core accounting and business management functions, as well as integrate some functions with the appropriate ISV solutions. The ISV solutions were specifically selected to help CITC establish routine procedures that didn't consume precious time and to streamline their standard daily/weekly/monthly processes.

Improved reporting processes

With Microsoft FRx, financial reporting data is pulled directly from the general ledger and reduces error-prone double entry. CITC uses dimensional reporting to report on different departments without having to rewrite the financial report. By using the security in Microsoft FRx, CITC can email departmental reports to appropriate mangers. This enables them to make well informed decisions to positively impact CITC as a whole. Reports can be scheduled or created on an ad-hoc basis.

For non-financial reporting, CITC uses SQL Reporting Services to expand its operational reporting. CITC is able to choose from over 60 reports and 13 report models that are built on SQL Server Reporting Services. SQL Server Reporting Services (SRS) pulls the data directly from Microsoft Dynamics GP 10.0. These reports are published on a timely basis so all appropriate staff can analyze specific projects and tasks against business goals. SRS is flexible, so as CITC grows and their reporting needs change they still have a reporting solution that will work.

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As a non-profit, CITC is dependent upon grants and other similar sources of revenue. They are now able to be prepared for stimulus funds from the government by having the reporting capabilities through Microsoft Dynamics GP. With more control and oversight they can also be eligible for additional funds as they become available.

"Matt Borkowski, Sr. Consultant for Arctic IT, has sped up our processes and our ability to generate reports by assisting us in creating reports using Microsoft FRx." Melissa Wolfe.

Process improvement with custom development software

As with many non-profits, CITC has specific compliance requirements, and specific accounting processes that must be followed. Arctic IT pulled together their team of experienced developers to produce tailored software to meet the needs of this non-profit. With **Grant Revenue Receivables** and **Indirect Revenue Recovery**, the development team was able to add significant value to the existing capabilities of the software solutions to meet the needs of CITC.

Improved collaboration between HR and Payroll

A great benefit of the Microsoft Dynamics solution is that CITC no longer worries about the system crashing and consequently, the need to write payroll checks manually. With 300 employees, any system downtime was a significant (and stressful)

problem. They can now handle the influx of staff and complete the payroll runs with speed and accuracy. Under the Fundware system, processing was time consuming and prone to system errors. Now, with Microsoft Dynamics GP, the processing is more streamlined with the detailed reporting, GL posting capability, and ability to easily create an export file such as a 401K file for upload using SmartList is easily done. CITC is planning on implementing a time and attendance software application as part of Phase II of the project which will further streamline collection of time and erase the need to enter hours into Microsoft Dynamics GP to process payroll.

Common interface of Microsoft products

Microsoft Dynamics GP has a tight integration to other Microsoft products such as Office 2007 and Microsoft SQL Server 2008. When printing reports to the screen, they can be emailed in PDF format to others at CITC. CITC is now able to manage information from within Outlook. Using SmartTags functionality, an employee can drill back to the account and see the current balance right from an email. Reporting, budgeting, and forecasting is no longer exhaustive and time consuming. SmartList allows users to create ad-hoc reports on the fly and then export to Excel with one click of a button. Now, CITC can share Microsoft Dynamics data with non-system users by using Excel and Outlook. It is also noteworthy to

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Cook Inlet Tribal Council Mission Statement:

To work in partnership with Our People to develop opportunities that fulfill our endless potential.
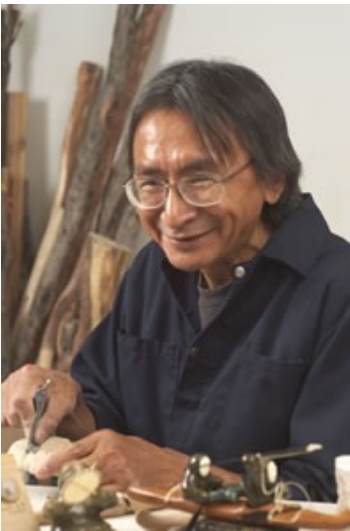
mention that CITC is on Microsoft SQL 2008, which has an 18% performance increase from SQL 2005 when performing benchmark testing.

Ability to handle more accounts and staff

CITC is now able to handle more government grants, which greatly expands the services they can offer to their constituent base. At the beginning of this process they had about 50 grants. With the new system implemented they have been able to increase the number of grants they can accept and now have approximately 65 grants.

However, with more grants comes more reporting requirements, which increases complexity. Microsoft Dynamics GP has a flexible/robust definable GL structure allowing CITC to easily account for additional grants as they become available. CITC is able to manage funds more efficiently by putting data in a centralized location. With current information at their fingertips, the staff can produce timely reports unencumbered by information bottlenecks.

Ability to implement quickly and within budget

"One of the strengths of the entire process was that Arctic IT mapped out our implementation process really well. They did not miss a thing." Amy Fredeen, Chief Financial Officer, CITC.

At the end of phase 1, Arctic IT invited the CITC team to a celebration

(including champagne and sweet strawberries). Although the atmosphere was festive, the objective of the meeting was to bring together CITC with the implementation team to review the implementation plan, ensure all deliverables were met to the complete satisfaction of CITC and demonstrate what had been accomplished in the first phase. CITC is very happy at this stage of the project, and they will soon be ready to begin phase 2 of the Microsoft Dynamics implementation.

Quality service and training from a trusted, knowledgeable business partner

An advantage Arctic IT can offer clients is expert training capabilities. Amy Fredeen says "Arctic IT's training is so organized, they made it so easy for us to learn. Very impressive."

The training facility is conducive to learning, with room for 30 people, 12 computer stations, and complete audio visual equipment. Customers can also take advantage of other learning opportunities such as Arctic IT's monthly lunch n' learns and other informational sessions to help them better utilize the capabilities of their software.

It was very important to CITC to have a partner who understood their type of business and it was reassuring to know that Arctic IT had other customers similar to them. "We chose Arctic IT because they understood both accounting and IT requirements. We have very stringent reporting

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About Arctic IT

Arctic Information Technology has been offering a unique balance of industry specific Business Solutions and Network Infrastructure exper-tise for more than a decade. As a highly regarded Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Arctic IT provides Microsoft Dynamics GP, Microsoft Dynamics CRM and Microsoft Dynamics RMS software solutions to mid-size and enterprise-level organizations throughout the nation.

Arctic IT also offers its specialized services in network infrastructure design and installation, security solutions, strategic enterprise planning, managed services, 24/7 technical support and training resources. Proudly serving all private, public and non-profit sectors, Arctic Information Technology provides a complete spectrum of IT services to help companies improve efficiencies and streamline operations. Arctic IT has offices in Anchorage, Seattle and New Jersey.

Arctic IT Competencies

- Business Intelligence
- Microsoft Business Solutions
- Microsoft Dynamics CRM
- Microsoft Dynamics GP
- Microsoft Dynamics Point of Sale
- Mobility Solutions
- Networking Infrastructure Solutions
- Server Platform
- Small Business Specialist

requirements due to the receipt of government stimulus funds, and we needed a system that enabled us to easily comply with those requirements. We also needed a partner who understood how grants and accounting work in a non-profit agency", Amy Fredeen states. Melissa Wolfe adds "We required a company that was big enough to support us and Arctic IT supported us 24/7."

Summary

The programs provided by Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc. are crucial in the lives of the Native Alaskan and Native Americans in the Anchorage area. CITC is dedicated to serving the community as effectively as possible, and the implementation of Microsoft Dynamics GP allows them to make better informed decisions, automate formerly manual processes, and comply with reporting requirements. All of those benefits – and more – ensure the CITC will fulfill their mission in a big way to their constituents.

"So many participants of the services at CITC started out with nothing and are now employees. It's wonderful to see them get help, grow in their jobs and now they can help others." Melissa Wolfe.

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