

Novations

www.novations.com



At A Glance:

- **Company:** A business consulting firm serving such industries as aerospace and defense, energy, financial services, healthcare, media, and telecommunications.
- **Employees:** 300
- **Industry:** Consulting; Talent Development
- **Location:** Boston, MA
- **Challenges:**
 - Disjointed business applications increased the number of manual errors and inconsistencies.
 - Outdated software made system crashes a common occurrence.
 - Revenue reports were cumbersome and unreliable.
- **Results with OpenAir:**
 - Accuracy. Integrated modules eliminate data reentry and manual errors.
 - Security. System crashes and jeopardized data are things of the past.
 - Simplification. Six different companies now operate as one.
 - Efficiency. Reporting is done in minutes rather than eight hours.



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Results

Novations, whose services range from consulting and training to technology and measurement, experienced real-time results with OpenAir right out of the box.

At the simplest level, time and expense tracking was timely and accurate. “With the ability to enter time and expenses online, our trainers keep much more accurate data,” said Shel Schenkler, Chief Financial Officer at Novations.

Online accessibility has also enhanced the performance of Novations’ trainers. “They now have access to their own as well as their colleagues’ calendars and assignments. Before OpenAir, our trainers had to print out this information which could change quickly and unexpectedly.” Now, updated assignments and calendars are available from anywhere there is an internet connection.

With accurate time and expense figures, review of the scope of work within projects is possible and helps to keep projects in check.

Gina DelGaudio, Product Process Manager at Novations, states, “It allows us to monitor the amount of time spent on an initiative in order to keep projects within their original scope or to raise a flag if a project is in jeopardy of scope creep.”

“This is particularly important in Product Development, Project Management Services, and Consulting Services where we bill for our time.”

The Challenges

In 2003, Novations was formed through the melding of several separate companies. As a result, the newly founded organization continued to utilize four different systems to maintain their core business processes as separate business units.

By 2005, it became clear that Novations could no longer operate as separate business units under one umbrella called Novations, so the decision was made to unify the structure into one.

 Find out more: contact OpenAir at 1.888.367.1715 or visit www.openair.com



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“After the sale, Novations inherited a plethora of systems,” said Bette-Ann Hickey, Manager, Global Partnerships, at Novations. “This left us with un-integrated programs for our accounting, scheduling, and project management.” Due to the inefficient nature of their processes, information had to be entered multiple times, leading to errors and inconsistencies.

Furthermore, system crashes were a common occurrence. “Some of these programs were so outdated that our IT department wasn’t familiar with the programming,” said Hickey. “Whenever something broke down, we couldn’t fix it and were forced to develop workarounds.”

Lack of reliability wasn’t the only issue that Novations encountered. The use of multiple unrelated programs brought on serious functionality concerns. “Our weekly revenue reports took eight hours to compile and became difficult to reconcile. I found myself relying on revenue projections that I knew were not completely correct.”

Without an automated and reliable reporting engine, there was a notable lack of confidence in Novations’ financial projections.

Proper time and expense tracking is critical for a consulting and training firm, yet prior to OpenAir, Novations had no automated capabilities. “Our expense reports were completed manually and then we waited for their arrival by mail,” said Schenkler.

“With many of our trainers constantly traveling, this legacy system made it very difficult to quickly and accurately compile expenses, thereby delaying invoicing to our clients.” Additionally, only non-exempt employees were required to submit timesheets. This made utilization tracking and forecasting very difficult.

The Solution

OpenAir has reestablished confidence and accuracy at Novations. OpenAir’s hosted model provides a reliable solution that stays up-to-date with enhancements every six weeks.

Through integration with their financial package, Great Plains, Novations has gained unprecedented automation and visibility into their revenue reporting and general accounting. “We now have the ability to export all our pertinent OpenAir data to the appropriate accounts in Great Plains,” said DelGaudio. “Because of this seamless integration, we can now report with more detail out of Great Plains.”

The automated nature of the integration also reduces the manual errors and time consumption that come with data reentry.

Perhaps the greatest benefit that OpenAir has provided Novations is the apparent change in culture. “Before we brought in OpenAir, the organization still operated like six different companies within one corporation,” said Hickey.

“OpenAir was able to help us break down many of the individual preferences that were deeply entrenched here.” As OpenAir continues to spread throughout the organization, the general consensus is that, more and more, Novations feels like one unified company.

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