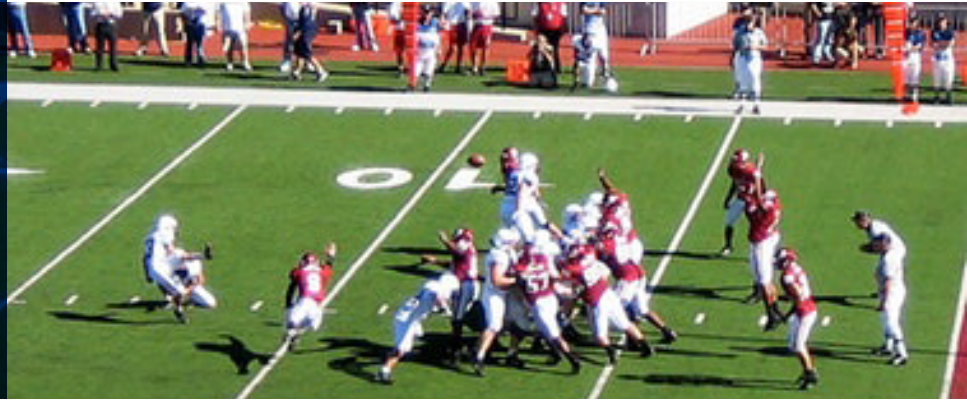


Real-Time Reporting Drives Organization- Wide Financial Visibility

Big Ten Conference



Challenges

Gaining Flexibility and Reliability with Cloud ERP

Known as one of intercollegiate sports' most successful undertakings, the Big Ten formed over a century ago in the Midwest United States. Today, its conference office manages 28 different championships and tournaments, offers legislative and compliance services, oversees the production and distribution of nearly 1,400 events annually, provides staff services to coaching and administrative personnel, and services media and fans interest for information on the Big Ten.

Previously, the Big Ten Conference back office used on-premises accounting software, but struggled to keep up with its growing transactions. Because the system required a complicated chart of accounts and several manual workarounds each month, it had become error-prone. The finance team also had little confidence in the reliability of the older software, which had to be housed on physical servers with limited remote access. They went in search of a more flexible, cloud-based general ledger that could offer anytime, anywhere availability and reduce the IT department's burden.

Solutions

Best-in-Class Financial Automation Boosts Productivity

After selecting and implementing Sage Intacct's cloud ERP solution, the Big Ten transitioned all of its financial processes onto the intuitive system. Replacing a hard-coded structure, Sage Intacct's flexible dimension capability helped the organization refresh and dramatically simplify its chart of accounts—giving the team an entirely new way to track and report on financial data. Julie Suderman, associate commissioner of finance at the Big Ten Conference, commented, "With Sage Intacct's dimensions, we can map things to how we practically manage our business. Once we create a dimension, we can use it to categorize any transaction – general ledger, receivables, payables, etc. – and as our business changes, it's quick and easy to add the dimensions we need and re-classify things accordingly, so we can monitor what's most important to us."

The biggest efficiency improvement the Big Ten has seen with Sage Intacct is in its financial reporting. This whole process is much faster and more accurate now that report preparation is done right in the software, as opposed to in Excel. With Sage Intacct dimensions, Suderman can tweak and configure the reports just the way she wants them. Not only does this speed up the financial close, it saves a lot of time come the annual audit, when reports and details need to be compiled for the auditors.

BIG

Company Overview

More than 120 years after its inception, the Big Ten remains a national leader in intercollegiate athletics on and off the field. Big Ten programs have combined to win more than 450 team and 1,800 individual national championships, consistently taking home individual honors for athletic and academic accomplishments and fulfilling the Big Ten's mission of academic achievement and athletic success.

Executive Summary

Results with Sage Intacct:

- Software paid for itself in <6 months
- Streamlined financial processes for greater efficiency
- Gained ability to track budgets and other financial trends in real-time
- Eliminated need for hardware and IT support

"Our finance team at the Big Ten Conference is very small, but since Sage Intacct is so intuitive, we're able to get more done in less time. We feel confident that if someone new came on board, they could get up and running immediately," shared Suderman. "Sage Intacct will free us up more and more in the future, and give us the bandwidth to do forward-looking, strategic work. With all of these improvements, we estimate that Sage Intacct paid for itself within the first 6 months after deployment."

Results

Real-Time Reporting Drives Organization-Wide Financial Visibility

Suderman also notes that Sage Intacct's reporting capabilities have brought the Big Ten's financial visibility to a whole new level. Now she can run a trial balance at any time to see a current snapshot, and drill down for more details as needed. Dimensions let the organization slice and dice its financial data across specific locations, departments, or vendors for more granular reporting and deeper analysis.

"The reports we have in Sage Intacct are much more robust, allowing us to analyze our data better and instantly compare year-over-year, actuals-to-budget, actuals-to-projections, year-to-date figures, and more," Suderman said. "This helps us see important trends that were invisible to us before, because we couldn't look just at our legal services, for example. Prior to Sage Intacct, all of our services costs were lumped together and we couldn't break out individual areas to see key trends by category."

For instance, Big Ten's building manager can review expenses separately for the organization's locations in New York City and Rosemont, Illinois. The marketing team can log into Sage Intacct with a read-only view, and have all the custom reports and transparency they need to better manage their department budget in real-time, rather than repeatedly going to Suderman with adhoc requests.

"After comparing Sage Intacct with NetSuite, we chose Sage Intacct for its best-in-class financial solution that was built by CPAs to meet specialized accounting needs. We especially love Sage Intacct's dimensions-based approach, which has greatly simplified our chart of accounts, and is flexible enough to track all of the detail we need and evolve with our organization over time."

Julie Suderman, Associate
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