eCMS Cloud ERP Software

JOE BLAND CONSTRUCTION, L.P.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR

"Today, with eCMS Cloud ERP, we can easily see how and where money is spent and income is received, placing our teams proactively in charge of monitoring cash flow and controlling costs, while still remaining compliant. Equally as important as the cost savings, we can now monitor our performance and see what is needed to remain successful and competitive."

—Stephen Pack, CFO, Joe Bland Construction

Company: Joe Bland Construction, L.P.
Industry: Commerical Builder/GC
Construction Services: Full service general contractor
Corporate Headquarters: Austin, TX
Territory/Locations: Central Texas
Client Information: Joe Bland Construction is a general contractor located in Central Texas that specializes in subdivisions, site improvements, apartment site work, highway and bridge construction, utility distribution systems, earthwork and concrete.

- Founded in 1996
- Annual Revenue $85M+
- 320 Employees
- # of Equipment: 350-400

Software Applications:
eCMS, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Equipment Accounting, Equipment Maintenance, General Ledger, Human Resources, Job Cost, Payroll, Business Intelligence & Analytics, Content Management and Workflow

Technology Environment:
Hosted, Cloud eCMS

Challenge: Joe Bland Construction may have just celebrated its 20th anniversary, but they refuse to show any signs of slowing down. In fact, the company has great plans for the future and has been fast-tracking its recovery since the commercial construction market plummeted in 2011. The economic downturn was a significant threat to Joe Bland Construction because of their role as a general contractor in a very competitive geographic market in Central Texas.

One of the most important lessons that Joe Bland Construction learned from the recession was that they needed to continue to build an IT infrastructure that could better adapt to the unpredictable ebbs and flows of the industry as well as the company's evolving business needs. Those challenging times also brought opportunity, as current business practices were ripe for reevaluation for more efficient and effective methods that would heighten competitive advantages and protect profit margins.

As the company examined existing processes and technologies, Joe Bland Construction quickly realized that some of the challenges they faced were a result of limited business intelligence and analytics capabilities, as well as their restrictive and costly IT and ERP infrastructure.

Prior to moving to the cloud, Joe Bland Construction had one full-time person dedicated to managing the onsite ERP system, including running manual back-ups, taking daily back-up tapes to remote locations, and performing ongoing OS and software updates, which typically had to be done during offhours or weekends. The ERP platform also required specialty expertise that sometimes had to be outsourced at an added expense.

Another area of concern was the difficulty to run reports and make financial and operational data available to office and field personnel. The IT team had to generate reports, export them to Excel and then send the documents to all parties via email or to place them on a shared drive. Users quickly realized that as soon as the data was exported to Excel, it became stagnant, as any update in the database would not be reflected in the report. Emails would also often get lost and the standalone files ended up being archived in multiple places. Multiple versions of information and segregated processes caused confusion, wasted resources and duplication of efforts.

Since Joe Bland Construction self-performs 90% of its jobs, Project Managers at the field level needed to see current productivity levels as well as forecast future outcomes. In addition, the firm owns and operates a large fleet of equipment, so it is critical to measure the performance of related expenses, productivity and impact on the company's bottom-line. Working with paper-based documents (capturing data, mailing and carrying documents, collecting approvals) was just not acceptable to manage all the labor, materials, equipment and other job cost related transactions. Standalone and manual processing for AP invoice approval had to be automated in order to become quicker and more efficient when paying vendors, collecting receivables and more.

Solution: After some careful thought and consideration, Joe Bland Construction decided to implement Computer Guidance Corporation's browser-based, hosted cloud eCMS v.4.0 ERP with Interactive Data Inquiry (IDI) and Cognos Business Intelligence and Analytics.

The hosted cloud solution eliminated the need to purchase additional hardware and software required for new applications and enhancements that would allow strategic planning and real-time decision making. Users across the organization and in the field were given ubiquitous access to business-critical and integrated data. Joe Bland Construction also enjoyed the flexibility to scale the ERP system as the business or marketplace demanded. And, the full-time person dedicated to the old platform was reassigned to business-centric activities.

The introduction of IDI and Cognos Business Intelligence applications gave Joe Bland Construction a 360-degree view of job costing and project performance, including labor, materials and equipment. With easy-to-use, drag-and-drop BI capabilities, users can quickly create custom dashboards and reports, and manage their area of responsibility with real-time data. Single-source data and accurate, integrated information has brought new levels of productivity, efficiency and profitability to the firm.

eCMS Cloud ERP Software
with Business Intelligence & Analytics and Content Management

Solution (cont.): Some of the most impactful dashboards and reports used by Joe Bland Construction include custom equipment performance and usage, job cost vs. overall budget, income forecast statement, monthly equipment usage, ACA payroll, monthly income and expense, and many more.

Not only these reports are available to all those who need them, they are protected by advanced role-based and user-profile security settings.

The general contractor also rolled out Content Management and Workflow with eCMS that was far more advanced and easier to use than their previous system. These applications automated AP invoice approvals and payment processing, making the contractor more competitive when working with subcontractors in the marketplace.

Lessons Learned: As the company looks to the future, Joe Bland Construction believes the cloud will play an integral role in managing business applications and supporting growth. Business Intelligence will also be critical to stay ahead of the competition, improve overall operations and strengthen profitability. Joe Bland Construction knows that manual processes and paper-intensive tasks are part of their past and they have proudly made the leap into integrated and digital workflows to succeed.

Results:

- Eliminated several manual processes and associated document creation, dissemination and storage
- Reduced administrative staff by a single headcount estimated at 25 hours per month equaling at least $9,228/year
- Eliminated maintenance and management costs associated with on-premise ERP estimated at $10,000 annually
- Saved thousands of dollars by not purchasing new hardware for ERP upgrade estimated at around $70,000 (includes all hardware and software expenses)
- Saved thousands of dollars by not purchasing disaster recovery program because of inclusion in cloud-based solution (estimated at $10,000 annually)
- Improved visibility into financial and operational performance
- Gained efficiency through automation, standardization and fact-based decision-making
- Increased cost controls company wide
- Extended equipment life by approximately 5%, totaling close to $225,000 in costs
- Improved project margins and overall productivity with the use of Business intelligence as it allows the company to provide a lot of ad hoc reporting on various aspects of the job

The Parking Spot located at 2935 East State Highway 71, Del Valle, Texas

Harper Park in Austin, Texas

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