eCMS ERP Software with Integrated and Automated Credit Card Payment Processing

"We have eliminated 1,950 checks annually by implementing an automated credit card payment processing solution. We have also reduced potential fraud and manual errors associated with paper payments." —Cassie Warner, SVP/CFO, Weis Builders

Company: Weis Builders

Industry: General Contractor

Construction Services: Full service general contractor

Corporate Headquarters: St. Paul, MN

Territory/Locations: Minneapolis and Rochester, MN; Chicago, IL; and Dallas, TX

Client Information: Weis Builders excels in various markets, including multi-unit residential, senior living, hospitality, retail, commercial and healthcare. The general contractor supports the construction and development needs of its clients by providing delivery methods such as design/build, general contracting and construction management. Weis Builders has earned a reputation for quality workmanship and outstanding client relations which has resulted in continued growth and market expansion, acquiring national clients and expanding Weis' operations with new office locations in the process.

Software Applications:

eCMS, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, BusinessObjects, Imaging eForms, Equipment Accounting, General Ledger, Human Resources, Job Cost, Payroll, Time & Materials, Integration Suite, eCMS Connect for Comdata and eCMS Connect for Textura

Technology Environment:
Cloud / Managed Hosting

Benefits:
- Estimated weekly cost savings of $860, with and additional $45,000+ in rebates
- Eliminated paper-based and manual processes
- Financial rebates (higher amounts and greater frequency)
- Vendor satisfaction and employee satisfaction are both improved
- More effective and efficient auditing process
- Improved data accuracy for greater financial controls
- Reduction of substantial manual data entry and processing
- Greater utilization of highly paid professionals

Challenge: With 40 projects annually, Weis Builders works with various vendors and subcontractors, and processes as many as 2,000-2,200 invoices a month. The large volume of invoices has never posed a challenge for Weis Builders because they leverage reliable and scalable eCMS accounting applications from Computer Guidance. Data entry, invoice approvals and payment processing have all been automated and standardized with Weis' eCMS solution.

However, certain invoices not related to specific jobs or to specific vendors / subcontractors are often paid by credit cards and are processed as a one-off. The administrative burden involved paying these one-off, miscellaneous invoices with credit cards was cumbersome, lengthy and manually intensive.

Weis Builders would get an invoice, enter it into Accounts Payable, track down the vendor via email or phone (in many cases this would mean multiple attempts and be based on the wrong contact info), and then pay the vendor with a credit card. At that point, they would enter this transaction into their eCMS ERP and would pay the credit card bill at the end of the month. Then, these transactions would be manually reconciled.

Weis Builders wanted to implement a simpler credit card payment processing solution that would be integrated with their core eCMS applications. They also wanted a payment solution that would provide some financial benefits in form of credits or rebates.

There are a lot of credit card payment processing solutions in the market offered by banks and financial institutions. Nonetheless, they are often not integrated with accounting or ERP systems, and they do not provide the desired rebates in the frequency or volume that Weis Builders would have hoped.

Although the volume of these miscellaneous invoices totals only $4.5 million annually for Weis Builders, the contractor wanted to streamline this credit card payment process and earn rebates.

Solution: Weis Builders implemented an integrated credit card payment processing application from Comdata and CGC that earns rebates for each transaction.

The eCMS ERP system was customized to process these types of transactions using credit cards – from payment selection through reconciliation—automatically. All transactions can be tracked and various reports can be created for auditing, analysis and documentation.

Weis Builders started using credit card payments for all their utilities, deliveries and miscellaneous purchases. They receive a 1% return on their transactions. While 1% may seem small, it quickly becomes notable when these transactions total $4.5 million annually, and will grow over time as the business' automated processes expand across the enterprise.

In addition, no checks are cut and mailed for these transactions, saving time and unnecessary expenses. And, there is no more manual reconciliation required, as the system provides reports and final cash reimbursement. Weis Builders knows exactly who was paid and when, as well as which card was used and when. The credit card payment process is seamless and automated, and all information can be viewed and reported on through their eCMS applications.

Lessons Learned: Although the invoices paid with credit cards account for significantly less than from other methods, Weis Builders found ways to turn their payables into a revenue generator while gaining monthly rebates on spending. The key was to customize the eCMS ERP system so it not only captured all transactions but it also incorporated these activities into standardized daily workflows.