

## eCMS v.4.1 Cloud ERP Software



*“With eCMS v.4.1, we got rid of some very significant time-wasting activities and reduced our administrative expenses by 20-30%. We are confident that this is just the beginning. Today, we are all working within the same data set at the same time and have visibility into our overall and individual performance. We are no longer driven by reports that would lag behind actuals by days or even weeks. These dashboards capabilities that refresh in seconds give us greater control over our finances and operations, but they also afford us the opportunity to adjust our business model and strategies as necessary to be competitive and grow.”*—John Clancy, Director of Information Systems, Cold Spring Construction Company

**Company:** Cold Spring Construction Co.

**Industry:** Heavy Highway/Civil

**Construction Services:** Full service heavy highway contractor specializing in excavation and paving

**Corporate Headquarters:** Akron, NY

**Territory/Locations:** Pennsylvania and New York

**Client Information:** Cold Spring is a family-owned civil/heavy highway contractor based in Akron, New York. Cold Spring self-performs most of its federal and state work with 150-200 employees. The heavy highway/civil contractor engages in site preparation and construction of roads, bridges, airports and landfills.

- Founded in 1911
- Annual Revenue \$75M+
- 150 - 200 Employees
- # of Owned Equipment: 640
- # of Rented Equipment: 20-30

### **Software Applications:**

eCMS, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Equipment Accounting, Equipment Maintenance, General Ledger, Human Resources, Self Service, Job Cost, Order Processing, Payroll, Purchasing, Project Collaborator, Business Intelligence & Analytics, eCMS Connect for VisionLink, and Cat Product Link and VisionLink powered by Trimble

### **Technology Environment:**

Hosted, Cloud eCMS

**Challenge:** The economic ups and downs of the last decade have brought about changes to the scope of Cold Spring Construction’s core business. Recently, the organization has been contracted to perform more maintenance and rehabilitation work than net-new construction projects. These changes in assignments have had a negative impact on project margins and revenues, applying tremendous pressure on the company in order to maintain any competitive advantages.

Cold Spring Construction was already well aware of the significant number of firms in the rehabilitation and maintenance market for government jobs, so they were determined to take all of the necessary steps to become more efficient, effective and productive as they transitioned from the net-new space.

The company’s financial executives needed to know the details of how each job’s performance, overall cash flow status and the AR and AP balances. This type of information is critical to on-demand and real-time decision-making, allowing proactive planning and on-the-fly responsiveness.

While the office executives wanted this information, field-based project managers also needed visibility into job performance, including associated expenses and overall productivity. The information that the PMs and superintendents managing multiple projects at the same time were looking at, had to be the same that the financial and accounting teams, so the data had to come from a single, integrated source.

Paperwork and manual processes—and the duplication of efforts, errors and safety gaps they can cause—needed to be identified and replaced with automated processes and cutting-edge technology. In addition, because Cold Spring Construction performs projects only for the government, additional reporting, auditing, compliance and payroll requirements must be accounted for and accommodated.

No segment of commercial construction can benefit more from technology than contractors performing heavy highway work. This field is labor and equipment intensive, and heavily dependent on the environment, which can be environmentally dependent and bring with it heightened safety concerns.

One of the largest expenses of any construction project is labor, and Cold Spring Construction needed to evaluate this area for the firm. As it was, timesheets were filled out manually at the jobsite field office and manually entered into digital system that then produced printouts that were faxed to Human Resources and Payroll, where the information was re-entered into the accounting software for processing. Any changes had to be made with back-and-forth phone calls, faxes and emails. Automation of this process was critical so the information could be captured more efficiently, accurately and effectively, as well as to make data immediately accessible to management for productivity measurements and proactive adjustments.

Cold Spring Construction also knew that minimizing equipment breakdowns and reworking projects that did not meet DOT standards would be vital to their success moving forward. They needed to capture equipment performance data accurately and automatically, and make it available for decision makers in real time. Foremen needed to know component and equipment maintenance history, usage, life and location in order to select the most appropriate equipment for each job. And, as it stood, the capture of equipment information was completed through the same manual processes used for the labor.

When Cold Spring Construction began evaluating the automation of capturing job costs, specifically labor and equipment performance, they uncovered many other administrative tasks that could be eliminated or improved with the application of technology. One such process was the automation of paycheck distribution, which were printed and mailed each week. Another was the overall management and maintenance of IT infrastructure and ERP software, which included computer systems that had to be backed up daily, updates that had to be applied during non-business hours, and admin/IT staff that wore too many hats, all of which took a toll on payroll.

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*"Our CFO loves having all financial information on hand in the same place and foremost on demand. He studies this information, he dissects it and makes strategic decisions proactively anytime and anywhere."*

—John Clancy, Director of Information Systems, Cold Spring Construction Company

**Solution:** Cold Spring Construction decided to implement Hosted eCMS v.4.1 to solve the aforementioned challenges and establish a pattern of ongoing business improvements as well as smarter processes and practices. The contractor chose a cloud-based ERP deployment to eliminate the expenses associated with hardware purchase, maintenance and management, and they were able to offset the risks of system management through hosting services.

The heavy highway contractor also implemented Interactive Data Inquiry and Cognos Business Intelligence applications to serve up integrated data from eCMS for management and project stakeholders on demand. These modules deliver real-time and accurate information to those who need it in a reliable and secure manner. Reports and dashboards present cash account balances, revenues per location, crew and job, outstanding AP balances, current and historic AR and inventory balances, payables due, GL inquiries, equipment usage, and maintenance schedules and history.

iPads were provided to the field for labor time entry and processing as well as equipment usage. The captured information was automatically delivered to Payroll, HR and Equipment Maintenance applications simultaneously for further processing and analysis. In addition, HR Self Service automated paycheck distribution and the upkeep of employee data. Printing, mailing, endless phone calls and manual updates of employee information by employees, human resources and payroll staff were all eliminated.

Bringing new applications and tools to Cold Spring Construction has resolved business challenges, strengthened productivity, enhanced profit margins and provided the opportunity for strategic business planning.

**Lessons Learned:** After careful evaluation of their current state, Cold Spring Construction implemented innovative and advanced technology applications to automate and streamline their business processes. In doing so, the firm quickly realized additional areas of improvements and new ways of doing certain tasks. Cold Spring Construction is also committed to ongoing process reviews to ensure the ERP continues to bring value to their bottom line.

### Results:

- Significant reduction of administrative expenses
- Elimination of several manually intensive processes
- Improved visibility into financial and operational performance
- Greater efficiencies with automation, standardization and fact-based decision-making
- Improved project margins
- Extended life of equipment
- Greater customer and employee satisfaction
- Elimination of thousands of dollars on hardware, OS software, and maintenance on both one-time ERP server expense by moving to hosted system
- Elimination of 10-15 hours per month in IT maintenance and updates (estimated at \$5,000 annually)
- Reduced one full-time headcount by automating field labor and equipment time entry and processing (estimated at \$50,000 annually)
- Extended life of equipment by approximately 20%
- Reduced manual paycheck processing, printing and mailing to 0% (estimated at almost \$10,000 annually)



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