sage

Sage 100 ERP
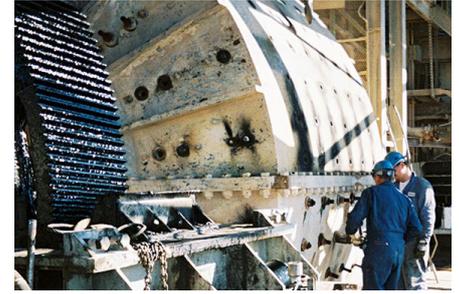## Reports produced in one-third of the time, eliminating bottlenecks

Customer
RAM Enterprise, Inc.

Industry
Mining, manufacturing and industrial maintenance/construction

Location
Elko, NV USA

Number of locations
4

System
Sage 100 ERP

* Sage 100 ERP was named Sage ERP MAS 90 when RAM Enterprise initially implemented this solution. The product names have been updated in this case study to reflect current naming. MAS 90 when RAM Enterprise initially implemented this solution. The product names have been updated in this case study to reflect current naming.

RAM Enterprise, Inc. provides industrial maintenance and construction services to the mining, aggregate, chemical processing, and power generation industries. The company also has a manufacturing arm, IMTECH Rubber Products, which manufactures and markets a line of rubber products aimed at wear, abrasion, dust containment, and noise reduction solutions in conveyor belt applications.

With 200 employees and service centers located throughout the Western United States, RAM Enterprise's financial reporting needs are substantial

The company used Sage 100 ERP* for more than half the company's 20+ year existence, a system it found efficient at processing financial information. However, its financial statements were generated using Microsoft FRx. Ian C. Weight, chief financial officer, acknowledges that FRx was accurate at generating the numbers and fairly quick at exporting the financials to Excel, but the templates were cumbersome and a great deal of manual work was

necessary to format and provide the detailed information required.

To provide managers of individual business units with just the basic information they needed, Ian and his team produced a monthly financial report pack that included four separate sheets for each reporting facility, including several profit and loss sheets showing actual figures vs. budget, previous 12-month trends, current year side-by-side monthly comparisons, and monthly budgeted figures.

With each of these reports, a corporate allocation needed to be generated based on each facility's share of the total overhead costs for each month. This calculation had to be performed manually, after the FRx reports were generated, then copied into each resulting report. That's five facilities with four reports each, so 20 different reports that required manual calculation. In a modern world, this made no sense, especially when individual sheets needed to combined and distributed to different people at the end of the process.

> "We have been extremely happy."

Ian C. Weight
RAM Enterprise, Inc.
Chief Financial Officer

Challenge
With bottlenecks created by a high level of manual calculation and allocation to serve all business units in its company, it was taking RAM Enterprise three weeks to produce its monthly financial reports. The team had neither the time nor the flexibility to produce the specific reports management needed to make more intelligent business decisions. Frustration levels in the accounting department were high.

Solution
Intelligence Reporting allows for the quick production of highly customized financial reports.

Results
Reports are produced in one-third of the time they were taking before. Every report is now fully customized. The accounting department has been hugely impacted in a most positive way.

"Processing four financial reports in eight hours vs. doing the job in one hour, with two extra reports and additional analysis thrown in for good measure. . . does RAM Enterprise, Inc. like Sage Intelligence? No. They love it!"

Ian C. Weight
RAM Enterprise, Inc.
Chief Financial Officer

Bottleneck nightmare

Not surprisingly, turnaround time for month-end financial reporting was about 15 business days, the majority of the working month, with processing time taking a full eight-hour day. In general, the process was time-consuming and not responsive to management's need to produce timely, effective reports.

"The process created time-consuming bottlenecks. We were so occupied delivering the usual reports each month that if any of our business unit managers quickly needed something a little out of the ordinary, there was simply no time or flexibility to give it to them. You can imagine how frustrated we were. We needed a solution that would allow us to prepare the financial statements in a timely manner, properly formatted to provide managers with the information they needed to make decisions, and distribute reports to the managers of individual business units.

If ever there was a company that needed a quicker, more flexible and less cumbersome solution, RAM Enterprise was it.

BizNet vs. Sage Intelligence

Ian knew he wanted a fully automated business intelligence solution. His goal was to reduce the time needed to produce and distribute the reports, and allow for flexibility in the formatting of the reports to suit management's needs.

Two options were evaluated: BizNet and Sage Intelligence. In the end the team chose Sage Intelligence because of the benefit of being able to report from multiple modules in Sage as well as non-ERP data sources.

Says Ian, "Sage Intelligence allowed us to take our existing financial statements and apply the necessary formulas directly in Excel and to then save these to Sage Intelligence. Any further modifications can be done directly in Excel, which we know and understand much better than FRx. Also, the fact that Sage Intelligence is able to report from multiple modules in Sage as well as non-ERP data sources is a huge advantage in the long term."

RAM Enterprise worked with Sage partner Eric Anderson of Eide Bailly (formerly SGS Technology)

Once the decision was made, the company moved to implementation very quickly towards the end of 2012. For the first four months it ran Sage Intelligence alongside FRx to fully convert financial statements and in order to compare the reports for accuracy. Its Sage partner was invaluable in this process, particularly because he had specific knowledge of Sage Intelligence, and he understood their unique needs.

No pain, no gain

Inevitably, some trial and error was necessary, and the initial financial reporting templates were extremely slow. Ian and his team also found the Report Designer somewhat cumbersome to work with, but Sage Intelligence has since released the Report Designer Add-In, which dramatically increases speed.

The learning curve RAM Enterprise faced was how to use the Report Manager to organize and create new reports, particularly for nonfinancial information.

"Creating containers and joining them in reports takes some practice and understanding of the Sage 100 ERP table structures," says Ian. "However, once you've established those, almost all the work is done in Excel, and that makes the process exponentially easier than before."

And what a gain!

Ian is unequivocal in his praise of Sage Intelligence. "We have been extremely happy. We have actually increased the number of financial reports that are provided to each facility from four to six, with additional analysis provided in the reports, and still reduced the time to process them from eight hours to one hour. Previously our turnaround for month-end financial reporting was about 15 business days. Now it's six days. While other efforts have contributed to that improvement, Sage Intelligence has alleviated, if not eliminated, some of the bottlenecks that previously hampered our efforts and frustrated us so much."

An added bonus is that Sage Intelligence has allowed RAM Enterprise to create nonfinancial reports (inventory, job cost, and so on) that previously didn't exist or were done manually, and the team has created them in a fraction of the time it would have previously taken.

Above all, every report they produce is customized in the sense that reports are now designed specifically to meet their management team's needs. Yes, they still create a standardized report for a third party just with a few key strokes in formatting, but Ian says there is nothing better than being able to give the management team what they want, when they want it.

When asked what he would have done differently he says, "Nothing."

About The Sage Group plc

Sage Group plc is a leading global provider of business management software to small and medium sized companies, creating greater freedom for them to succeed. Sage understands how and why each business is unique. We provide products and services that suit varying needs, are a pleasure to use, and are secure and efficient. Formed in 1981, Sage was floated on the London Stock Exchange in 1989 and entered the FTSE 100 in 1999. Sage has over 6 million customers and more than 13,380 employees in 24 countries covering the UK & Ireland, mainland Europe, North America, South Africa, Australia, Asia, and Brazil. For further information please visit: www.sage.com

For more information about Sage in North America, please visit the company website at NA.Sage.com. Follow Sage North America on Facebook, Facebook.com/Sage, and Twitter, Twitter.com/SageNAmerica