

## **MESA Case study**

### **PROFILE**

Located in Madison AL, Mesa Associates Inc., has multiple operations in locations across the United States and over 450 employees which contribute to their full-service engineering, procurement and construction management firm. Led by CEO and President Ranjana Savant, with daily operations and strategy managed by Executive Vice President Tim Cutshaw, Mesa Associates has just celebrated its 25th year in business.

### **GOALS**

Implementation of Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 R3 to manage Mesa's finances, projects, clients, and resources all in a single integrated system

Implementation of CEM add-ons for HR and Payroll to manage Mesa's Payroll, projects, and employees all in a single integrated system.

Creation of a 9/80 payroll system to accommodate Mesa's payroll schedule.

### **PREVIOUS CHALLENGES**

Over the years as Mesa grew they had pieced together a ERP system from numerous custom made system from their IT department. As they became a large organization this system no longer fit their needs and Mesa knew they needed to shift to a third party software.

Executive Vice President Tim Cutshaw, Greg Solomon and Mesa's IT department evaluated their options carefully, knowing the solution they chose would have to be a good fit for Mesa's very specific business and customer needs. Their main objective was to replace their homegrown intranet portal with a single software for all their business needs. Partnering with CEM Business Solutions was an important step in the process. "Every business is very different, but CEM Business Solutions knew what Mesa needed and gave us the HR and Payroll solution we were looking for. CEM Business Solutions put a value-based solution in our hands that addressed our most important requirements", Greg Solomon commented. Now they have all their HR and Payroll data integrated into their AX 2012 software.

Mesa's organizational tools and software systems were largely homegrown. In particular, a time-keeping system they called "the intranet" had been built out, piece by piece, to ultimately resemble a pseudo ERP system. However, across the company there were multiple systems, databases and silos of information - incongruent systems that limited visibility into ongoing projects. This situation resulted in several inefficient business processes and Mesa's project managers lacked a single comprehensive view into how their projects were performing.

Moreover, it was difficult to provide key stakeholders with real-time information on the performance of their projects, resources and employees.

As the company grew, it became necessary to change to maintain its characteristically high degree of service excellence and integrity.

## **ISSUES FACED DURING IMPLEMENTATION**

Mesa's HR department found it difficult to move to AX as their homegrown intranet system had been built exactly to their specifications. CEM and the Mesa management team worked to create a new HR system in AX 2012 that met their needs just as well as the previous system while being part of AX. There were a number of trainings done internally and workflows configured in AX to facilitate the transfer between the two systems. CEM consultants were onsite multiple times with the Mesa IT team to help make the HR transition as smooth as possible.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Finding an ERP solution that was flexible enough to meet Mesa's unique client driven requirements was a key in their software evaluation. "We wanted a customizable system, and needed to ensure that we weren't forced to completely adapt to how the new software worked", explained Greg. Therefore, extending the native Microsoft Dynamics AX capabilities to meet Mesa's unique client-driven requirements was a key element of Mesa's Microsoft Dynamics AX implementation. Since "out of the box" AX did not have all they needed, this was where CEM came in with its add-ons for HR and Payroll.

Mesa follows a 9/80 work schedule for all its workers. CEM worked with Mesa to customize the AX 2012 payroll to run a 9/80 payroll. Microsoft initially said that AX 2012 could not do 9/80 Payroll but CEM took the challenge and successfully customized AX to run Mesa's 9/80 payroll. CEM Business Solutions had the flexibility to customize the solution Mesa needed for the HR and Payroll module. Mesa's talented internal IT department and other staff members have become a valuable resource in facilitating this development. "Our team is used to customizing software to meet our unique needs" commented Greg, "When you look at other ERP systems on the market, they're not nearly as flexible as Microsoft Dynamics AX. Dynamics AX was in a league of its own in this regard."

## **PROCESS ENHANCEMENT**

Having all the modules in one software enhanced the business process of timesheet entry and data flow to payroll. Timesheet and leave were all connected to payroll and the project costs posted were actual labor costs from payroll.

This process has saved over 40% of time consumed by the Finance and HR department. Initially they used to verify data from two different systems which resulted in more time and less accuracy. With Dynamics AX and CEM's customization Mesa has not only saved its employees' time but reduced the company's cost.

## **EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH CEM**

"If I can describe CEM in three words I would say they are committed, innovative, and executers" stated Greg, "CEM Business Solutions is fully committed to what they do, with consultants readily available to troubleshoot any issues that we have, at any time. CEM ensured that the processes were executed and delivered according to plan. After Mesa went live, CEM's technical resources resolved our problems quickly and efficiently." Mesa is now live with the Human Resources and Payroll add-ons, and their payroll is running accurately with very minimal support needed from CEM.