

Guardian SealTech

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COMPANY

- Location: Headquartered in Houston, TX, with locations in U.S. and Canada
- Industry: Industrial Services

OVERVIEW

Guardian SealTech provides preventative and corrective services to oil and gas companies in the United States and Canada. As the company grew through acquisitions, disparate systems became difficult to manage, making it increasingly difficult to meet business goals.

KEY RESULTS

- Increased visibility into financial performance across business units
- Empowered area managers, giving them better insight and control over business unit financial performance
- Recouped lost revenues and improved profitability
- Streamlined and improved company processes such as invoicing and time card entry and approval
- Process automation and data consolidation reduced data duplication and time-consuming data entry
- Boosted mobile workforce productivity

Guardian SealTech streamlines operations, boosts productivity with Acumatica

“Acumatica was by far the most robust Cloud ERP offering. It offers more functionality, better prices and more value to users.”

- Francisco Callegari, CIO, Guardian SealTech

SITUATION

Formed in 2011 through the merger of two environmental compliance leaders, Guardian Compliance is the largest, independently-owned Leak Detection and Repair (LDAR) company in North America, operating in over 100 client facilities and expanding internationally. Founded in 1983, SealTech provides services to a national petroleum refining and petrochemical customers, delivering high-quality maintenance and repair services for complex industrial processes and infrastructure. Both business units come together as divisions of Guardian SealTech, with a combined service team of 560 employees working in the U.S. and Canada.

Because Guardian SealTech grew its business through acquisitions, the firm ended up with disparate financial and operational systems that were difficult to manage and consolidate. IT supported nine different systems covering some 20 different regions, and managers grew frustrated because they didn't have insight into financial operations, says Francisco Callegari, hired in January 2015 as CIO. “The cost and efforts of managing these systems were unsustainable,” he adds.

“With the state of existing processes and data, we knew we couldn't afford to continue with the financial and operational systems in place, but we didn't know if the cost of upgrading was better or if we could afford to start over,” Callegari says. “On the other hand, we also needed to know what it would take to bring the whole business to the Cloud, the cost and benefits of doing so, and how well it would align with the growth strategies of the business.”

To determine how to proceed, a cross-functional team representing all departments assessed business requirements, evaluated alternatives and provided recommendations. The team identified 106 critical requirements and created a goal to “implement a cost-effective, end-to-end integrated and scalable business system to simplify and automate data entry, work processes, and reporting.”



They identified five key priorities for the project:

1. Automate processes through use of single points of data entry
2. Capture all related costs to jobs in an automated way
3. Enable increased business focus to drive revenue and profitability
4. Extend communications to all employees (mobility, email, intranet)
5. Include managed service solutions to gain efficiencies and drive adoption

SOLUTION

The team identified three vendors and worked with each to map Guardian SealTech's requirements into their solutions. Each solution was rated on predefined criteria, and total costs and implementation timelines were analyzed.

SealTech wasn't happy using Microsoft Dynamics Great Plains because functionality and integration were lacking. It took too many manual processes to support the business, training was poor, and support was slow to respond.

"While Microsoft says it has CRM integrated into Great Plains, it isn't fully integrated and wasn't a responsive ERP with a single database," Callegari says. "The product is not easy to maintain or use."

"Dynamics SL has great functionality, but it was too expensive," he added. "We were also looking for a cloud solution, and their offering isn't really end-to-end cloud—it's more bits and pieces."

Several other products were expensive because they charged per user. "Purchasing licenses for 560 users would be cost-prohibitive, especially if you want a scalable solution to support business growth," Callegari says.

Moving the business to the cloud requires a sophisticated ERP system that provides functionality, ease of use, performance, security, scalability, and lower total cost of ownership to handle a business effectively

for the short and long term, Callegari says. "In all these categories, Acumatica won hands down. Acumatica was by far the most robust Cloud ERP offering. It offers more functionality, better prices and more value to users."

Guardian SealTech chose to implement Acumatica in May 2015, and with the help of ROC Solutions, an Acumatica partner based in the Dallas / Ft. Worth area, went live in October 2015.

"As we worked on this project," Callegari says, "I knew I had to deliver compelling value to the business from day one. We had to finesse the implementation in such a way that users would eagerly adopt the new processes from the very beginning."

BENEFITS

SealTech technicians and managers practiced entering and approving timecards, entering and approving expense reports, and job costing and invoicing in a number of dry runs in September.

Acumatica immediately provided huge benefits, Callegari says. Most importantly, it gave managers and field supervisors a fully integrated system to run their operations and manage resources on their own.

Finally, the company had "a single source of truth" where data entry and online approvals of timecards, purchasing, expenses, and invoicing allowed managers to run their operations. They tracked key performance indicators, such as employee utilization, revenue, and job profitability, while gaining visibility into issues and opportunities throughout the organization.

"From Day One we saw how valuable Acumatica was—from tracking expenses to getting invoices approved to running reports that showed where people were working, who was being underutilized, and how we could reallocate people to where they were needed," he says.

For the first time, managers validated billing rates of projects as part of the invoice approval process. They saw where expenses

were being misallocated and where technicians might not be billing the right materials or time, allowing them to correct the mistakes and recover lost revenue, time and materials. The automated workflows and made tracking productivity and profitability simple and easy.

Previously, time, expense and material approvals were done on paper and often distributed for approvals via email and Excel spreadsheets—a manual, time-consuming process that was difficult to track accurately. Because many of the business units had different processes for the same tasks, it was difficult to consolidate.

With Acumatica, appropriate managers receive the right information so they don't have to chase it down. With one set of chart of accounts, standardized company and data structures, they've eliminated rework, redundant tasks, and accelerated speed of accurate information" Callegari says.

Thanks to support from ROC Solutions, the IT team walked technicians through the process of using the mobile application, showing them how easy it was to enter time, expenses and materials. "The simplicity brought to end users by a fully integrated and mobile friendly system made adoption successful very quickly," he says.

Callegari was impressed with ROC Solutions. "ROC has a tremendous amount of acumen and knowledge about Acumatica, project accounting, and our line of business. These factors, coupled with their commitment to our project deliverables and willingness to share their knowledge were key to a successful implementation," he says.

Acumatica is not only quick, simple-to-use and cost-effective, he adds, but a game changer that has transformed the culture of the business. "Everybody now has a responsibility for how we generate revenue, how we cost, how we purchase and how everything flows together," Callegari says. "We've changed our mindset to a "can-do" attitude to drive constant improvements and set the stage for growth."