

CUSTOMER SOLUTION CASE STUDY

IPM innovation empowers civil construction firm with integrated project management, fleet maintenance and mobile data collection.



Sunstate Group Queensland (SGQ)

Industry: Civil Construction and Road Surfacing

Location: Australia

Employees: 240

Business Situation:

Years of growth and expansion caused major challenges for SGQ as they battled manual processes and disconnected data. They needed an integrated project and financial management solution to replace their antiquated small business accounting software.

IPM Solution:

- Microsoft Dynamics NAV
- IPM Project Management Software

Key Benefits:

- Integrated management of projects, accounting, maintenance, assets and HR
- Expanded analytics and reporting
- Mobile data collection
- Unified data with more accurate insight
- Improved document control
- Easy to customize and extend



Sunstate Group Queensland (SGQ) is an experienced civil construction and road surfacing firm serving government and public sector organizations in Australia. The company currently manages five locations, 240 employees and an expansive portfolio of state-of-the-art vehicle and equipment assets. The company prides itself on its knowledgeable people, efficient service and meticulous approach to every project.

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Russell Dodd
CIO, Sunstate Group Queensland

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BUSINESS SITUATION

SGQ enjoyed steady growth of several years and, like many growing businesses, came to realize their existing technology simply couldn't support the needs of their evolving business. The civil construction side required extensive project management capabilities for complex projects that spanned several months, while the road surfacing operations required efficiency with daily tracking of field workers and a large fleet of vehicles and equipment.



Using a bookkeeping software package designed for small businesses, staff had to spend hours working around the limitations of the software resulting in duplicate effort and risk of errors. Manual, paper-based processes were also a big concern as information was trapped in silos hindering management's ability to leverage accurate data to control costs and make timely decisions. With major challenges across the board, it was clearly time to find a more effective way to manage the company's operations.

SGQ leaders began evaluating several options hoping to find a system that could fulfill their core requirements while providing much-needed flexibility for customizations around their unique business model. "We found IPM to be the only solution suited to our vision. It was built on a modern and scalable Microsoft platform with most of the functionality we needed already built in. The biggest plus was that it could be easily customized and wouldn't require us to change our business practices to fit the software like the other systems out there," explains Russell Dodd, CIO for SGQ.

The IPM team performed a thorough assessment of SGQ's existing processes, challenges and infrastructure and knew the company would benefit from a single solution to manage all business areas, including accounting, project management, job costing, human resources and their fleet of equipment. To help the company achieve all of today's goals while positioning them for future growth, IPM recommended an integrated solution that combined the comprehensive business and financial management of Microsoft Dynamics NAV with the powerful and flexible project capabilities of the IPM Project Management suite.



IPM SOLUTION

Early in 2012, IPM began the implementation and integration of Microsoft Dynamics NAV and IPM Project Management. Within three months, SGQ was ready to go live with their new solution. All data was migrated into the new systems and several customizations were made onsite to ensure functionality and reporting was aligned to SGQ's needs. Users were trained on both NAV and IPM so everyone could comfortably and confidently utilize their new tools.

SGQ quickly leveraged the flexibility of IPM's Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform to develop extended modules and functionality around their specific needs. "With IPM, we had about 90% of what we needed already built into the framework, and we were able to customize each module very easily. To me, there is no other package this flexible. Once you learn to work with it, you can basically achieve anything you want to do," says Russell.

Some of the major enhancements made by SGQ included customizations around their fleet management and maintenance, as well as personalizing the employee record area to capture specific HR data pertinent to their business. One of the most exciting developments was an extended mobile data collection solution built on IPM's mobile application. Field personnel can now use their tablets and mobile devices to take photos of the jobsite and document daily service checks that are required to comply with government regulations. They can take care of business offline and simply push all information into the system when they have an internet connection. Russell says, "The potential of the mobile app is unlimited. You can convert anything in IPM into a mobile solution. This alone saved us from hiring a full-time person to handle manual paperwork."

SGQ leaders are extremely pleased with the measurable improvements and valuable benefits they have realized from their IPM Project Management solution. "One of the biggest advantages IPM offers is that it helps you mitigate risk. In the construction industry, there is the potential to lose millions of dollars if you don't have proper checks and measures in place. With IPM, everything is integrated, connected and managed from one place. When you have all this information at your fingertips, you gain full control of your business," says Russell.

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Simplified Project Management

IPM has given SGQ an end-to-end project management solution to effectively cost jobs, control expenditures and track all points of business from the proposal through completion.

Streamlined HR and Payroll Management

IPM enabled SGQ to tailor their HR functionality to their business. Now, they can easily track multiple employees' labour and expenses which has greatly improved accuracy in invoicing and payroll.

Electronic Document Control

Mounds of paper have been replaced with electronic document storage and organization. All project and fleet records, documents, invoices, receipts, registration, insurance and more is easy to find and conveniently accessible anytime, from anywhere.

Integrated Technology with Easy Customizations

One of the biggest benefits of IPM for SGQ was the ability to customize and extend it around their unique business processes and environment. Because IPM is powered by Microsoft Dynamics CRM, SGQ enjoyed seamless integration with Microsoft Office and Microsoft Dynamics NAV without juggling multiple systems. "We didn't have to buy a separate health and safety system, plant system, asset management system, HR system or any of that. We can use the framework of Microsoft Dynamics CRM and build it out any way we need to which saved us quite a bit of time and money," says Russell.

Accurate and Connected Data

The integration of Microsoft Dynamics NAV and IPM Project Management provides a centralized database so everyone can access and work from accurate information.

Drilled Down Analytics and Reporting

SGQ traded stacks of spreadsheets for custom dashboards and reports that provide a unified view of their business. They can now drill down to any level of detail and leverage the intelligence to make informed decisions.

Improved Productivity and Collaboration

From the office to the field, SGQ is saving hours per day by eliminating many of the manual tasks they endured before. Employees can easily share the workload with faster access to information and automated processes.

Expanded Mobile Capabilities

SGQ was able to extend IPM's mobile app to automate the documentation of required daily equipment inspections in the field saving the equivalent of a full-time worker. Workers can also take photos or document issues onsite to proactively mitigate issues.



Fleet Management & Maintenance

SGQ now has a holistic means of managing their fleet and equipment. They can align maintenance schedules to project demands, maintain proper inspection documents for audits and store all details in one place.

SGQ is now equipped to sustain growth and success with technology that is fully aligned to their business strategy. Russell adds, "I know IPM is a construction and project management solution, but I could honestly recommend it for any business in any industry because it has more scalability than anything in market today. It's a great package and they are a fantastic team to work with."

About IPM:

IPM Global specializes in developing purposefully designed software for project-related industries. The IPM Project Management software suite is built on the flexible Microsoft Dynamics XRM framework enabling easy customizations and seamless integration with Microsoft Office and a variety of back office ERP solutions such as Microsoft Dynamics, SAP and Sage. Core features include project management, contract control, document control, resource management, job costing, planning and forecasting and mobility. IPM is available as an on-premise or cloud solution with a variety of specialized add-on capabilities to choose from.

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