

TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #113

Solution Overview

Industry

Education

Microsoft Business Solutions Partner

LANAC Technology Corporation
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Scenario

With a focus to stay on the cutting edge of technology, Township High School migrated to Microsoft Business Solutions running on the highly stable Microsoft SQL Server.

Company Profile

Township High School District 113 operates two high schools in Highland Park, Illinois.

Benefits

Microsoft Business Solutions along with third-party solution, Interfund Management, provides Township High School with seamless system integration and flawless fund accounting.

Software Used

Microsoft Business Solutions—Great Plains
Financials
Inventory and Order Processing
Customization Tools
Encore Business Solutions Interfund Management
Microsoft SQL Server

Demographic Information

Number of Employees: 500-600
Number of Users: 10

Migrated from DOS-based accounting

By implementing Microsoft® Business Solutions—Great Plains® and Encore's Interfund Management, Township High School District 113 has gained a stable, intuitive and functional business management system capable of integrated control of all accounts with minimal effort and guaranteed accuracy.

With nearly 3,300 students in two high schools, Township High School District 113 (THS) takes pride in being on the cutting edge of technology, purposely giving students a look into the future. THS also stays on cutting edge of technology for district operations, upgrading to Microsoft Business Solutions—Great Plains and a powerful MS SQL Server™.

Growing Pains

On a home-grown MS-DOS®-based system, THS faced the coming of the 21st century on a 25-year-old system hardly fit for the times. Slow processing of data was an issue that was decreasing staff efficiency and morale. Also an issue was the system's limited versatility. Deciding a move to a Windows®-based system with a more stable platform would be beneficial to operations, the growing district began the search for a new solution.

As THS conducted the search, Microsoft Business Solutions quickly showed itself to be the business solution with both the needed capabilities and the flexibility for growth. THS also liked the fact that Microsoft Business Solutions would allow for online information storage and sharing. "We had a vision of what we wanted; we knew what the staff needed. Versatility was the deciding factor," says Mary Schmidt, accounting and purchasing manager.

Initially running on a FairCom platform, THS experienced system issues including database crashes, lost data and difficulty in recovering data after crashes. "We were down for long periods of time trying to recover data and get back to where we'd been prior to the crash," Schmidt says. At this point, THS was pleased with the accounting software but unhappy with the hardware. The decision to move to MS SQL Server provided needed system stability and eliminated problems.

A Solution to Fund Accounting

As a public school, THS must keep separate accounts for different budgetary expenditures. This practice is called fund accounting and is common in the public sector and not-for-profit organizations. Fund accounting is based on governmental regulations and involves the control of funds that must be treated as separate entities within one general ledger.

Satisfied with the financial capabilities of Microsoft Business Solutions but still needing a method to control fund accounting, THS also implemented third-party

“The fund accounting process is flawless; we’ve never had a problem with it. I can’t say enough good things about it.”

Mary Schmidt
Accounting and Purchasing Manager
Township High School District 113

solution Interfund Management by Encore, which integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Business Solutions.

Developed specifically for multi-divisional/multi-company businesses and not-for-profit organizations, Interfund Management enables THS to manage fund accounting without user intervention, seamlessly managing 10 different funds in one general ledger account. Interfund Management provides an automatic analysis of transactions to ensure that each fund remains balanced and eliminates the need to manually reconcile account information.

Schmidt was instantly impressed by the fund accounting capabilities and ease of use found with Interfund Management. “You don’t even have to have a full understanding of fund accounting, because it’s all done behind the scenes. It’s a very clean process; you don’t have to worry about being out of balance. The system takes care of itself,” Schmidt says.

Return on Investment

Microsoft Business Solutions has significantly benefited THS in many ways, including:

- **Improved Requisition Process:** The previous process required each requisition be manually entered into a purchase order. Now the eRequisition module allows THS employees to enter requisitions via the employee intranet, significantly reducing processing time.
- **Strong Operating Platform:** MS SQL Server is an operating platform that requires far less maintenance than the previous server while offering greater stability and fewer system crashes. When problems do occur, recovery is much less difficult than it had been in the past.
- **Ease of Information Retrieval:** Having all information online allows for staff to easily find needed information using drill-down capabilities. “We can do everything online and all in one place. I don’t have to manually search for information,” Schmidt says.
- **Improved Reporting:** Utilizing Crystal Reports and the FRx Financial Reporter module allows staff at THS to produce reports with exact level of needed detail. “Reporting is now so versatile and I feel very secure about my numbers. We can create reports that have exactly the information we need.” Schmidt says.
- **Keeping Pace with Technology:** A company committed to product research and development, Microsoft Business Solutions continues to add functionality based on customer needs. “I like the fact that every time we complete an upgrade, the system fulfills more and more of our needs,” Schmidt says. “It never gets stagnant.”
- **Speed:** The new solution has eliminated manual processes and significantly increased efficiency within the accounting department. Staff

has easily adapted to the user-friendly Windows environment of Microsoft Business Solutions even after a lengthy relationship with a MS-DOS-based system.

For more information about Microsoft Business Solutions, visit www.microsoft.com/BusinessSolutions

© 2002 Microsoft Corp. All rights reserved. Microsoft and Great Plains are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation or Great Plains Software, Inc., in the United States and/or other countries. Great Plains Software, Inc. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

This document is for informational purposes only