



Microsoft Customer Solution

Case study

Microsoft Business Solutions—Great Plains

“I love [the Microsoft Great Plains solution]. It’s probably one of the best choices I’ve made since joining this company—selecting this product. It has made our life a lot easier from the get-go. It keeps supporting us in everything that we’re trying to do.”

Steve Pelletier
Controller
EXSIF Worldwide, Inc.



Innovative Solution for Global Tank Lessor EXSIF Worldwide

When EXSIF Worldwide was sold by their former owner, they were required to set up their own, in-house independent financial and accounting function. The PeopleSoft solution used by their former owner was simply too costly.

Their search for a solution resulted in Microsoft® Business Solutions—Great Plains® rising to the top. EXSIF likes the low cost of ownership compared with PeopleSoft, the drill-down capabilities, and the results they get from the Collections Management functionality. Microsoft Great Plains has sustained them through significant growth over the past two years, without the need to add staff.

Controller Steve Pelletier speaks highly of the support they have received from Microsoft reselling partner, Altara who has assisted them with not only the installation, but numerous other projects.

CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
<p>EXSIF Worldwide, Inc. is the world’s leading lessor of tank containers utilized for the transport and storage of bulk liquid chemicals and food products. The company is based in Purchase, New York, USA, with offices in Houston, Versailles, Dartford, Hamburg Singapore, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Rotterdam.</p>	<p>When EXSIF was sold by their previous owner, they needed to set up their own financial and accounting function. It was essential that the solution be affordable for their business size.</p>	<p>Microsoft® Business Solutions—Great Plains® was selected for its ease of use, low cost of ownership, and breadth of functionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ease of use ▪ Low cost of ownership compared with PeopleSoft ▪ Fast month-end close ▪ User satisfaction ▪ Ability to support growth without increased staffing



EXSIF Worldwide is the world's leading lessor of tank containers for bulk liquid and food products.

Situation

Traveling the highways today, it is common to see trucks transporting materials in tank containers. Most of those tank containers transport chemicals and liquid food products. Many are leased from EXSIF Worldwide, Inc., the world's leading tank container lessor.

EXSIF has a fleet of more than 28,000 tank containers that are leased to customers who need to transport chemicals and food grade products on ships, trains, and trucks. The tanks range from 2,000 to 9,250 gallons. EXSIF also has one of the largest fleets of drop-frame chassis that are leased to U.S. customers.

Using PeopleSoft for Financial Management

Until September 2000, EXSIF was a division of a large leasing company. That company used PeopleSoft for financial management. When EXSIF was sold in 2000, they needed their own independent financial management solution.

The Need for a New Solution

They considered PeopleSoft, but the cost of acquisition and ownership was considered prohibitive for an organization of their size. They had not been able to

integrate their invoicing into the PeopleSoft system, something that they definitely wanted to do with their new solution.

Solution

EXSIF considered several products. Even though EXSIF was a small company in terms of employees and revenue, they required some of the functionality of a large company. Because of their international presence, multicurrency functionality was a prerequisite. They needed a solution that would allow them to integrate all their financial functions, including invoicing. EXSIF needed to exit their previous owner's PeopleSoft system in a short timeframe, so the new solution had to be easy to learn and use.

The software that passed all their tests and rose to the top was Microsoft® Business Solutions–Great Plains®. It had more scalability than other packages which was important to EXSIF. They implemented the Financial Management module, including Multicurrency Management and use Microsoft Business Solutions for Analytics–FRx® Professional for financial reporting and Crystal Reports Professional.

Microsoft®

A Valued Partner Relationship

EXSIF's Microsoft Great Plains implementation took about three months, with the assistance of reselling partner, Altara in Cedar Knolls, New Jersey. Altara has also helped EXSIF not only with the installation, but with training, upgrades, integration of a new tracking system, and design of their new customer invoices.

Steve Pelletier, EXSIF's Controller, comments on EXSIF's relationship with Altara, "Without Altara, we wouldn't be where we are now—they've been great with us. If they treat all their customers like they treat us, I'm sure they have a lot of happy customers. Their response time is just unbelievable!"

A Valued Software Solution

Pelletier speaks about his over-all feeling about working with Microsoft Business Solutions: "I love [the Microsoft Great Plains solution]. It's probably one of the best choices I've made since joining this company—selecting this product. It has made our life a lot easier from the get-go. It keeps supporting us in everything that we're trying to do. We've had lots of changes this year, and Microsoft Great Plains has supported us well through all of them."

When asked about the specific features and modules that are important to EXSIF, Pelletier pointed to Collections Management, which represents the most used functionality, especially in the field offices. Users like the notes feature that allows them to communicate, for example, when a collector wants a payment applied to a particular invoice. "Our business has grown significantly since the 2001 implementation, but we're now doing a better job of collecting cash. That is one of the great benefits we've had. It's working very well," Pelletier says.

The users like the functionality of the software. They particularly like the drill-down capabilities and the ease of

downloading data to Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

Benefits

Lower Total Cost of Ownership than PeopleSoft

Pelletier says that the cost of purchase and implementation of PeopleSoft would have been two to three times higher than the Microsoft Great Plains solution.

Support of Company Growth

When EXSIF separated from their previous owner, they were required to set up their own, expanded accounting and financial department. As a result, they hired five additional accounting staff. However, they have had to add no more employees to support the substantial growth they have experienced in the last two years since they have been using Microsoft Great Plains.

Fast Month-End Close

EXSIF has a requirement to complete month-end close by the third business day following the end of the month; Microsoft Great Plains helps them do so. They use FRx to generate a trial balance, profit and loss, and balance sheet. Pelletier reports it is working very well.

Ease of Use

EXSIF employees reportedly like the ease of use of the software. They have experienced a short learning curve, compared with the PeopleSoft solution they previously used.

Microsoft Business Solutions offers a wide range of integrated, end-to-end business applications and services designed to help small, mid-market and corporate businesses become more connected with customers, employees, partners and suppliers.

For more information about Microsoft Business Solutions, go to: <http://www.microsoft.com/BusinessSolutions>

Software and Services

Microsoft® Business Solutions—Great Plains®

- Financial Management
- Analytics—FRx® Professional

Microsoft Windows®

Microsoft Office System

Microsoft Windows Server

System™

- SQL Server™

Employees: 85

Sites: 6

Users: 15

Transaction Volume:

Receivables per month: 2,900

Payables per month: 1,650

Partner

Altara

Knollwood, New Jersey, USA



For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:
<http://www.microsoft.com/>

For more information about EXSIF Worldwide products and services, visit the Web site at:
<http://www.exsif.com/>

For more information about Altara products and services, call (973) 326-9090 or visit the Web site at:
<http://www.altara.com/>

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