

BUILDING SLAM-DUNK FINANCE PRACTICES WITHIN NCAA-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS

HOW THE MOUNTAIN WEST CONFERENCE STREAMLINED
ITS BACK OFFICE WITH BRAINSELL & SAGE INTACCT



Images Courtesy of the Mountain West

THE COMPANY

[The Mountain West Conference](#) (MW) is a collegiate athletic conference affiliated with the NCAA. From its inception in 1999, the MW has been committed to excellence in intercollegiate athletics, while promoting the academic missions of its member institutions. Progressive in its approach, the MW continues to cultivate opportunities for student-athletes to compete at the highest level while fostering academic achievement and sportsmanship.

Now in its 22nd year, the MW has been assertive in its involvement with the NCAA governance structure and has taken a leadership role in the overall administration of intercollegiate athletics.

The MW has marked several achievements during its first 21 years, most notably becoming the first to establish a sports television network dedicated solely to an intercollegiate athletic conference (The Mtn.). The MW also was the first to experiment with the coaches' challenge in the college football instant replay system and was the first non-automatic-qualifying BCS conference to participate in four BCS bowl games, winning three.



COMPANY TYPE

Collegiate Athletic Conference

LOCATION

Colorado Springs, CO

SOLUTION(S) BEFORE BRAINSELL

Sage 300

Microsoft Excel

Expensify

A manual positive pay process

SOLUTION(S) AFTER BRAINSELL

Sage Intacct

Expensify

Bill.com

THE PROBLEM



Manual Processes Hamstring Finance Accountability

The MW utilized Sage 300 as its accounting software for many years, but it no longer suited the company's needs as its accounting tasks grew increasingly complicated. Disparate and manual workflows increased the time and employee bandwidth required to keep up with the company's needs.

MW had several disconnected systems from the Sage 300 core ERP package, including:

- Expensify for expense management, with no integration into Sage 300.
- Pay stubs had to be manually created and emailed to employees.
- ANB Bank: Wires and banking transactions were manually imported.
- 1099's were manually managed.
- Bills were paid with American Express — outside of Sage 300 — or sometimes via manual check printing within Sage300.
- The MW handled check fraud prevention manually, outside the Sage 300 system.

The hunt was on for Gary Walenga, CFO of the Mountain West Conference, to find a new accounting solution that was easy to use and provided great reporting.

FROM THE SOURCE:

"Sage 300 was a beneficial tool for a while. But I ultimately felt like I had eight different processes that didn't talk to each other. I had to manually figure out solutions, without having one solution that could bring everything together."

— Gary Walenga, CFO
Mountain West Conference

THE SOLUTION

Top-Division ERP All in the Cloud

The switch to the cloud was what Walenga and his company were looking for. It provided more opportunities to synchronize a variety of different solutions together into one seamless solution that worked.

This is where Sage Intacct comes into the picture. Sage Intacct can automate complex processes through personalized billing, tax compliance, and a variety of other features vital to back-office success. The platform also has intuitive dashboards that provide fast, yet rich, vision into MW's financial and operational performance.

Also, since Sage Intacct is cloud based, it is accessible from anywhere in the world if there is Internet connection. This allowed Walenga to work from anywhere, which was near impossible with his prior workflows and an absolute necessity due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

FROM THE SOURCE:

"Our check-cutting alone was probably a two hour process a week. It is now five minutes a day. We can now send out payments every day, instead of sending out checks once a week. We can pay everybody, every day, in just five minutes. It's incredible!"

– Gary Walenga, CFO
Mountain West Conference



With the help of BrainSell, MW's new ERP landscape transformed those disconnected systems into an integrated platform that handles multi-entity reporting, streamlined management, and is easy to use.

Regarding the additional technologies Walenga uses daily, BrainSell helped the company by:

- Using a pre-existing, free integration between Expensify and Sage Intacct.
- Incorporating Rippling, an integrated payroll partner, within Sage Intacct so paystubs are emailed automatically to employees. There also is an employee portal, which MW extended into PTO and benefits management.
- Integrating Intacct with hundreds of U.S. banks to push transaction data into the system via Intacct Bank Feeds.
- Helping the company track and manage 1099s within Sage Intacct.
- Implementing and integrating Bill.com with Intacct to completely automate the accounts payable process – eliminating the physical check cutting process. ACH can also be sent via Bill.com.
- Intacct can aggregate banks transactions and put them in a list view, then match them up with transactions. This automates the positive pay process.

THE RESULTS



All-in-One ERP Makes Mountain West Title Contenders

With a streamlined ERP system, Walenga and his team have completely streamlined the back office. Instead of manually managing a multi-million-dollar operations budget, MW now has an automated finance workflow that allows Walenga to focus on mission-critical tasks. The automation also positions MW to accurately track the business' finances, giving deeper insight into operational performance and providing a turnkey solution for a smooth, accurate and easy audit process.

The integration of Sage Intacct with the variety of additional finance solutions significantly increased MW's productivity. Cutting checks took roughly two hours a week out of Walenga's schedule. Now, it only takes five minutes a day. There are no longer stacks of paperwork that require to be manually printed and assessed. Instead, it now takes Walenga two minutes to consolidate information into an email and share with the team.

Also, better vision into the health of the business positions Walenga to make it easier for his team to gain the information they need to do their jobs. Reporting capabilities now allow team members to login and access information whenever they need it, versus waiting for a manually sent report that takes hours to digest and utilize.

FROM THE SOURCE:

"Even though we're going through challenging times [due to COVID-19] and being the only finance person in the office, I've still been able to take on additional responsibilities. It's been fueled by the fact we've got a great solution for our accounting [processes]."

— Gary Walenga, CFO
Mountain West Conference



About BrainSell

BrainSell helps companies thrive by solving business challenges with expert guidance and best-of-class technology. We have offered unbiased software selection, implementation, support, and consulting services to clients of all sizes across North America for over 25 years.

Our methodology involves helping clients identify the clearest areas for potential improvement in their processes. If technology can help you, then the BrainSell team can guide you on your path to business growth.

Want to learn more? Reach out today to talk with one of our growth enablement experts!

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