

WHAT WE GOT WAS ACCOUNTABILITY

“This system paid for itself before it was even implemented”, says Pete Cikesh, President of Interior Systems, Inc., a Chicago area construction firm specializing in interior design and installation of general office and data centers.

How is That Possible?

“I had a problem with accountability in the field”, says Pete. “We were running over on jobs and didn’t know why. I’d ask the question of my guys and the answer I got was always the same — I don’t know. Enough was enough and I finally made up my mind that I was going to find a way to hold people accountable. I told my project managers that I was buying a new system that would tell me why the jobs were over. And amazingly, even before I installed new software, just the threat got everybody in gear.”

But Seriously, Folks...

Interior Systems was using QuickBooks, which is fine if all you need is a simple accounting system. But as Pete already told us, his problem was in job costing, and QuickBooks just isn’t detailed enough in that area. It doesn’t take into consideration things like overhead or sales tax. All you get is material and labor. So what Pete would do is dump his QuickBooks data into an Excel spreadsheet to see where their jobs really stood.

But by then, it’s too late. And all you end up knowing is that you’re running over and catching up way too late. You still don’t know why.

Before implementing ComputerEase, Pete thinks Interior Systems was losing somewhere between 50 to

100 man-days per year. Since installing ComputerEase a little over a year ago, **man-days lost is down to three days.**

According to Pete, here’s why. “I can literally go to a manager now and say, you budgeted 8 hours for layout and it took you 12 hours for layout. Here’s the two guys that worked on that phase on these days, what happened?”

“I can tell you if the job was under budgeted in the first place. I’ll find out if the guys were inefficient. Or maybe it was some unforeseen conditions on the job site. Now they know I can pin it down and they can’t tell me “I don’t know” anymore. It makes everyone more accountable!”

“With ComputerEase, we went from three programs to one.

We were using a database program to keep job details for our sales staff, QuickBooks for accounting and Excel spreadsheets for everything else.

No more jumping from program to program”



Pete Cikesh, Interior Systems, Inc.

“I can pinpoint down to phase, day and man why a job is running over”

ACCOUNTABILITY IS NOT PAINLESS

Interior Systems had to rethink some of their processes. They ended up creating new timesheets, and had to train people to track and enter their time differently. The payback is that time entered now goes straight to payroll and into jobs.

Pete also acknowledged that QuickBooks is a simpler accounting program and takes less time overall.

“But I wasn’t looking to do accounting better and didn’t need a new accounting program — I needed to quickly know how

my jobs were doing. Here’s the justification I used for purchasing a new program:”

“Take the cost of the software and divide it by the cost of a man-day for your payback. I knew when I saved 30 man days, the software would pay for itself.”

As you’ve read above, Interior Systems may have doubled those man-days saved since implementing ComputerEase a little over a year ago.

The switchover has impacted Pete person-

ally as he now has more work to do. But the way he’s working now is *different*.

He’s running and evaluating reports that help him manage the business. He’s paying more attention to where jobs are over and under and implementing process improvements based upon that data. He’s using historical information gained from one job to estimate similar jobs with similar conditions. In the long run, saving man-hours and improving the business is worth the work for him.