



At a Glance

Central Park Conservancy

Industry

Non-profit Organization

Employees

200 Full-time, 80 seasonal

Logistics

Maintains 843 acres

Solution

Epicor Enterprise

Business Challenge

Lack of integration across organization created inefficiencies

Solution

Integrated back office solution to enable more efficient reporting, budgeting and purchasing

Business Benefits

- Real-time reporting for managers and directors
- Increased accuracy in PO creation and streamlined approvals
- Cost-savings from greater efficiency in accounting procedures including improved budgeting capabilities

Return on Investment

- Month-end closing time reduced to five business days from multi-week process
- Automated P.O. routing and approvals takes multi-day process to real-time

Integrated Back Office Delivers Increased Flexibility and Widespread Efficiencies at Central Park Conservancy

The Central Park Conservancy is a private, not-for-profit organization founded in 1980 that manages Central Park under a contract with the City of New York Department of Parks and Recreation. The Conservancy has raised more than \$300 million to date, providing more than 85 percent of Central Park's annual \$20 million operating budget.

In addition to serving as a fundraiser for the Park, the Conservancy functions as a facility management company, funding and managing significant construction and maintenance work for the Park's 843 acres.

With an ever-expanding project agenda, the Conservancy recognized that its current back office solution wasn't providing the functionality it required. The older solution provided basic accounting capabilities to the finance team, but the reporting capabilities were severely lacking.

"We wanted a solution that would provide better, real-time reporting for our line managers and directors," said Steve Spinelli, CFO for Central Park Conservancy.

"We also wanted to get a handle on purchasing, to automate the workflow and approval process. Lastly, we wanted a package that would help us make budgeting an active, real-time process."

The Conservancy looked at a wide range of solutions from the high-end to the most basic, and ultimately chose Epicor Enterprise. "The Epicor solution seemed to be the most flexible and scalable solution for our needs," said Spinelli..

Greater Precision in Reporting and Budgeting

Immediate improvements were seen in the Conservancy's reporting capabilities following the implementation of the Epicor solution, and Spinelli credits Epicor with making the accounting process much more efficient.

"Closing the month went from a multi-week process to five business days," said Spinelli. "Additionally, we can now provide monthly project efficiency reports online — a process that used to involve a lot of photocopying and physical inter-office distribution. Now, we simply run the reports and they are automatically distributed electronically into the managers' online directories."

Previously, budgeting was a very manual process for the Conservancy - spreadsheets with hundreds of links that were difficult to maintain accurately.

The Conservancy's employee base includes a variety of regular and seasonal laborers who move from project to project frequently. Employees are budgeted accordingly and their salaries distributed across different projects.

The Epicor Business Intelligence Active Planner module in Epicor Enterprise enabled the Conservancy to create a position control table listing all laborers with salaries that automatically links and distributes resources across the different budget lines.

"Active Planner is a powerful tool that allows us to build a data table that can be easily absorbed back into the budget and allocated accordingly," said Spinelli. "Like most companies, salaries are the most dynamic expense throughout the year so this is something we use constantly. It's made everything much cleaner."

Providing a Comprehensive Purchasing Trail

The Procurement module in Epicor Enterprise has greatly improved the Conservancy's purchasing activities, including the approval process. With three principal locations that are 50-60 blocks apart, the previous purchasing approval process involved people driving around to obtain signatures. Epicor Procurement provided the flexibility and integration to the back office the Conservancy needed to smooth the process.

Increased accuracy in PO creation and approvals has also been achieved, enabling the finance team to be much more effective. "One of the great things Epicor Procurement has done is give us a lot of controls over purchasing in general, even from a coding perspective. The solution keeps requisitioners from inputting a project code on a PO that's been deactivated, or wasn't valid to begin with," said Spinelli. "We did not previously have this control, which meant a great deal of time was spent researching mystery PO's."

"Epicor Enterprise has made us much more thoughtful about purchases. We have procedures and controls in place; it's imparted a real discipline to everyone, making them much more thoughtful about the whole purchase process across the organization," said Spinelli.

"Our quarterly board meetings no longer mean crisis for my team. With Epicor, our accounting got a lot better—our reporting, our auditing, our purchasing. We are definitely saving money."

Steve Spinelli, CFO

Central Park Conservancy

About Epicor

Epicor is a leading provider of enterprise business software solutions to the midmarket and divisions of Global 1000 companies. Founded in 1984, Epicor serves over 20,000 customers in more than 140 countries, providing solutions in over 30 languages.



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