Client Success Story

County Government Gains Resource Efficiencies and SAP Upgrade Flexibility

County of Cuyahoga

Client Profile: The County of Cuyahoga is located on Lake Erie in northeast Ohio. It is Ohio's most populous county with 1.26 million residents and includes the city of Cleveland.

Industry: Public sector

Revenue: $1.3B

Employees: 8,000

Applications: SAP R/3 4.7 including Personnel Admininstration & Payroll, Development and RWD InfoPak

Database/Operating System: Oracle Database 9i / Solaris 10

"Quicker response time from Rimini Street means quicker uptime for my end users."

Jim Martin
SAP BASIS Administrator
County of Cuyahoga

The County of Cuyahoga uses a highly customized SAP Business Suite system for administration, payroll and managing resources.

The County of Cuyahoga Challenge

The County of Cuyahoga had been running SAP since 1999. Extended support with SAP was slated to end in March 2013, forcing the County to evaluate their options. Jim Martin, the County's SAP BASIS administrator, explained, "We were in a situation where our SAP system was going to go unsupported unless we upgraded. We'd already had Extended Maintenance, which was costing us a ton of money, and we were looking to reduce our overall total cost of ownership."

Going unsupported with its mission-critical SAP system was not really an option. "I've been working with SAP at the same location now for 16 years," says Martin. "I know it pretty well, but I don't know everything about it. There's always going to be a problem that's going to come up that you've never seen before. You need support from somebody that's very familiar with your system."

Instead of being forced to deal with the disruptive churn and expense of upgrading according to the vendor's agenda and timeline, the County wanted time to explore all its options—SAP as well as non-SAP—at its own chosen pace. "We're in the middle of evaluating and selecting a new enterprise system," says Martin. "In the meantime, we need support for our SAP ECC 4.7 system."

The Rimini Street Solution

Martin researched independent support providers. "SAP is a pretty complex system," Martin says. "We were concerned about whether a company that we picked was going to be able to actually handle it, meet our needs and solve issues. Our application here is not a straight out-of-the-box application:—we have three or four ABAP programmers who are constantly customizing the system, particularly HR and payroll."

Benefits

– **Gained Strategic Flexibility:** The County of Cuyahoga can continue running its SAP ECC 4.7 system while it considers its future strategic enterprise software roadmap

– **Saving 50% on Annual Support Fee:** Immediate 50% savings compared to vendor's support program.

– **Receiving Premium Service:** Quicker response times, Primary Support Engineer model, support for customizations and strategic advisory services—all provided at no extra cost.

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Jim Martin
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For More Information

To read more about County of Cuyahoga or to read other client success stories, visit www.riministreet.com/clients.

In his research, Martin learned that the Rimini Street support program covers customized code at no additional charge. Positive references from Rimini Street clients rounded out the picture, and the County of Cuyahoga switched to Rimini Street Support in November 2012.

The Rimini Street support model emphasizes full service over self-service. Each client is assigned a Primary Support Engineer (PSE) with an average of at least 15 years of experience, backed by a team of functional and technical experts. Over time clients develop a personal relationship with their PSE, who in turn develops a detailed understanding of their overall IT environment and operational needs.

Client Results

Martin explains the value the PSE model brings to the County: "I like the fact that when I do have a problem, 90 percent of the time, I talk to the same person at Rimini Street, who knows our situation. And if we don't fix it the first day, I know that I'm going to be talking to the same person the following day, that I won't have to repeat everything and we won't have to start from scratch."

Martin says, "I'm very happy with Rimini Street. Whenever I place a service call, I always get a call-back, or an email, quickly—usually less than an hour. Rimini Street is a great company to work with," he continues. "It feels more along the lines of a family-owned company. And the quicker response time means less downtime for our end users if there is a system problem. I used to spend hours researching case resolutions myself and was led around the world with vendor support depending on the time of day. I'm very pleased with the service, the response time and the comfort level our technical team at Rimini Street gives us. They really understand our issues."

Beyond break-fix support, strategic advisory services are also important. Martin says, "There have been times when there wasn't really a problem with the system, but we just needed a suggestion on the best way to go about something."

In one such instance, the County was in the process of moving its SAP systems to new hardware. The Rimini Street Technology Solutions Group thoroughly researched the issues and provided the County with all appropriate compatibility details, including guidance on interoperability issues between Oracle Database 9i and Solaris 11.

"In cases like this, Rimini Street has been extremely helpful," says Martin. "And even when I have a development issue, when it's not something that's critical, I still get a very quick response from our Rimini Street team." As noted above, Martin is currently evaluating future ERP options. Based on his experience with Rimini Street, would he consider Rimini Street to support the future system? "Yes," replies Martin. "The answer to that is a definite 'Yes.'"

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