

General Contractor Built to Quickly Scale with Acumatica Construction Edition

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– Bruce Young, Curran Young President & Co-Founder

OVERVIEW

General Contractor, Curran Young Construction, makes running a highly efficient company a top priority. Rather than installing a traditional suite of siloed construction software packages, they implemented Acumatica Construction Edition, a modern construction solution with the mobility, scalability and flexibility they wanted for their innovative firm.

SITUATION

With 35 years of experience and \$2 billion in combined construction project experience, Chris Curran and Bruce Young began their General Contractor firm, Curran Young Construction, located in southwest Florida, offering services including general contracting, owner representation, predesign and design build.

The firm plans to capitalize on Florida’s construction boom where industrial vacancy rates hover at just 1 percent, and where healthcare firms of all types are building freestanding emergency rooms, urgent-care centers, and new hospitals to support growing and aging populations. Curran Young’s goal is to build a modern, innovative company, one that allows them to quickly scale and support operations without needing constant upgrades or huge investments in technology infrastructure, and to provide excellent customer service, says Chris Curran, Chief Executive Officer. As they began to look at the core business systems and software that construction firms typically use, Curran and Young recognized the industry was quick to invest in new technologies that aim to reduce the cost or time of their projects – like BIM, virtual reality, thermal imaging, 3D printing, engineered living materials, and remote surveillance. Often this technology becomes more of a marketing and sales strategy with limited return on investment for the client. They discovered that most of the industry was not making investments to drive efficiencies or modernize back office systems.

“For the most part, it’s still a bricks and sticks industry run on Excel,” says Young, President and Co-Founder. “Instead of examining fundamentals to create greater efficiencies, most firms still get through with grit. There hasn’t been a perceived need to make any advancement in back office technology.” With the advent of smart phones, the need to access information quickly, and a requirement to serve customers and support vendors at the project site, Curran and Young wanted modern and mobile tools that could give them a competitive edge.

They considered Sage and other construction financial software that they had used at other firms. They also considered a suite of software packages that traditional construction firms used, such as Textura Payment Management software for subcontractor payments. Whatever financial package they chose, it needed to integrate well with Procore Construction Management Software and other specialized applications, said Young. “It also needed to have customized reporting, to distribute information to different levels of the organization and it needed to be intuitive, because we’re not accountants.”

SOLUTION

Acumatica: Cloud-based, highly integrated functionality



COMPANY

- **Location:** Bonita Springs, FL
- **Industry:** General Contractor – Industrial, Healthcare and Mixed-Use Commercial Construction
- **Application Evaluated:** Sage & Industry Specific

SOLUTION

- Acumatica Construction Edition
- Acumatica Financial Management

KEY RESULTS

- Gained enterprise-scale financial functionality
- Avoided costly on-premises server technology investment
- Gained 30 percent more time working in one tool as opposed to three siloed applications
- Avoided future software costs associated with headcount growth because of unlimited user licensing
- Gained integration with modern construction applications such as Procore Management Software and other third-party applications

Acumatica's ease of use, affordability and cloud-based offering made it a no-brainer, Young says. "Once we made a decision to go cloud, other software couldn't compare to Acumatica's Construction Edition. Being cloud-based takes away the necessity of having servers and infrastructure and their associated operating costs. It was a logical choice." Acumatica's unlimited user pricing structure allows Curran Young to grow without worrying about additional costs per user, he adds. "Conservatively, we could grow to 60 people in five years. When we do that, it's great to know Acumatica is not pay-to-play software, but that it's scalable with unlimited users, which gives us one less thing to worry about when forecasting our future costs."

Curran Young implemented Acumatica's Construction Edition, which, in addition to Acumatica's financial module offers construction related functions including job costing, project management, contract and change order management, subcontractor bidding and payment, and integration with specialty applications such as Smartsheet, Procore and Office 365 for an end-to-end cloud construction ERP solution.

BENEFITS

Flexible System Customizable

"The Alliance implementation team allowed us to ramp up and get going in record time," Young says, adding that it only took five weeks from the initial decision to a go live date. Acumatica's flexibility allowed them to set up the software according to the way Curran Young plans to do business, rather than the rigid and inflexible ways dictated by other software packages.

Curran Young wanted to create a project numbering system that takes into account not only the type of project but provide historical context so they could quickly access past project data like costs by year to have a historical index. Acumatica's flexibility allows them that freedom.

Integration with Third Party Software

In addition, Curran Young has the ability to add the industryspecific applications it wants in the future without requiring a completely new foundation; Acumatica is an open system that easily integrates with third-party applications like Procore. Having data flow seamlessly between Procore and Acumatica Construction Edition helps field operations and the office stay in synch and deliver projects on schedule and budget.

"It was a logical choice - with Acumatica we can communicate and integrate with other tools easily which is a big plus as we use tools like Procore, Excel, ProEst and Building Connected."

– Bruce Young, Curran Young President & Co-Founder

"Having a solution that can communicate with other tools was a must," Young says. "In construction there are a lot of pieces and moving parts, multiple vendors and subcontractors, and different expenses and financial controls that need to be tracked and communicated in multiple places. Integration is essential."

Gained Time to Perform Higher Value Tasks

Acumatica's integrated functionality and ease of use allowed Young to recoup some of the time he spent signing in and out of the different construction software applications he used at previously. "The time saved is substantial, even without the large volumes I was doing before from a financial control standpoint. I'm saving 30 to 35 percent of my time, so I'm able to be much more efficient," he says. "In Acumatica, it's easy to find a project and much faster to switch tasks than any other software I've used," Young adds. "Navigation is just a click of a button and information is now all in one place. I don't need to change applications to approve different items; everything is under one roof. Because of that, I'm less likely to have something fall through the cracks or drop the ball on something."

Mobility: Serving Clients and Vendors on Site

Because Acumatica is cloud-based, Curran Young employees can access data from anywhere: on a job site, at a customer location, at the office or from home. Mobile access to corporate data allows them to instantly solve vendor payment questions, get project updates, execute change orders or check subcontractor rosters, for example.

"Acumatica gives us a lot more freedom to get necessary items accomplished on my schedule no matter where I am," says Young, adding that previously he had to go back to the office to execute paperwork and approvals. The ability to finish paperwork faster frees the team to spend more time with their families – time that is often hard to find when launching a startup.

Curran Young didn't have to invest in a separate software program like Abacus for expense report coding, he says, because he can capture, approve and cost identify expenses right in Acumatica, which built in those functions. In addition, Curran Young can offer fast customer service because Young and others operating on a job site - with appropriate security access to Acumatica - have instant insight into the system and thus don't have to refer questions to the accounting team.

One reason Curran Young enjoyed a fast launch was because Acumatica is so easy to use. "Learning Acumatica has been a fun process," says Cindie, Accounting Manager. "While the system offers sophisticated and complex accounting functions, I like how user-friendly it is." Comparing other financial software and legacy construction tools to Acumatica is like comparing black to white," Bruce Young says. "Learning Acumatica and being able to run with it in just a few weeks speaks volumes. As I mentioned, we're not accountants but the learning curve has been short because Acumatica is easy to access, and its intuitive nature is awesome."

Purpose Built for High Growth

With a solid financial foundation in Acumatica, Curran Young is poised for rapid growth. "We are all about efficiency which is why we compare ourselves to a Formula E car," says Curran. "We're on track to be that kind of contractor. While many in the construction industry may not have heard of Acumatica, everything in the product is efficient, available at your fingertips and the flow of information and accessibility is incredibly powerful."