Sage Intacct helps cultivate business-minded accountability at 100-year-old nonprofit, ACUI

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David Teske
Director of Finance & Administration, ACUI

The Association of College Unions International (ACUI) is a nonprofit educational organization that supports thousands of campus community builders at over 500 schools around the world. The association enriches student unions through education, advocacy, and services. In recent years, many nonprofits like ACUI have been increasing the business rigor across their operations by more proactively addressing programs that fail to hit sales goals or other KPIs. To promote this mindset, the organization's finance team wanted better visibility into costs, profitability, and budget variance than it could get with its existing on-premises accounting system.

ACUI went in search of a cloud-based solution with a modern interface and the right consulting partner for ongoing support.

Key Outcomes
- Software payback in less than 6 months based on business value alone
- Automated several manual workflows to increase efficiency by 35%
- Shortened bank reconciliations from 5 hours to 5 minutes
- Cut audit preparation time in half

Organization
ACUI

Location
Indiana, US

Industry
Nonprofit

Sage Products
Sage Intacct

ACUI
Advancing Campus Community

About ACUI
The Association of College Unions International brings together college union and student activities professionals from hundreds of schools in seven countries. ACUI enriches them through education, advocacy, and the delivery of services that enhance campus communities.

Cultivating business-minded accountability

Dave Teske, director of finance and administration at ACUI, shared, "Sage Intacct's reputation of success with other associations, its flexible chart of accounts, and its seamless integration capabilities set it apart from the other vendors we looked at. We also chose Maner Costerisan as our implementation partner, and have been extremely satisfied with their understanding of our industry, and their valuable insights that help us adapt our thinking."

Productivity gains ensure rapid software payback

A full-service public accounting and business advisory firm, Sage Intacct partner Maner Costerisan helped ACUI import its financial data, get up and running on Sage Intacct, and integrate the system with Nexonia's expense management add-on in under ten weeks. As a result, the association greatly improved its accounts receivables process, and is now able to accept ACH payments for dues and other revenue sources—a convenience they weren't able to offer to members before moving to Sage Intacct. This saves the finance team a lot of time they previously spent manually processing payments and check reconciliations.

In addition, by eliminating old paper-based workflows for accounts payable approvals and bank reconciliations, they save several more hours each month that they can shift to other important projects. Sage Intacct's automated A/P workflows provide more transparency into where each expense is in the procure-to-pay cycle, and ensure that transactions are applied to the correct vendors, employees, projects, and departments.

ACUI's payables, reimbursements, and credit card reconciliations are always synced between Nexonia and Sage Intacct, which further relieves finance's bookkeeping burden, because the rest of the organization can enter their own expenses directly into Nexonia. Next, the finance team plans to integrate Sage Intacct with ACUI's association management system (AMS) for additional reporting efficiencies and a streamlined quote-to-cash process.

Financial visibility drives profitability improvements

Sage Intacct's general ledger uses dimensions that capture the business context of each transaction, so ACUI can analyze performance by various organizational drivers without having to manage a complex chart of accounts. Users can now simply "tag" entries with the relevant member, vendor, employee, department, region, or project, which makes it easy for anyone to get useful information directly from Sage Intacct without having to manipulate data in Excel or ask the finance team for help. This flexible structure gives various stakeholders self-service access to current financial data, like the association's cash positions, department budgets to actuals, or expenses for a certain region or vendor.

"Our CEO and board of directors have recognized how valuable Sage Intacct's real-time dashboards are to the business, because they increase our credibility and help executives better manage day-to-day operations," noted Teske. "Rather than creating dozens of different reports for various departments, we can get the right information to the right the groups by putting top-level reports on a dashboard, and letting the appropriate staff or volunteers adjust filters to see whatever region, department, or sub-cost centers they care about."

Thanks to Sage Intacct, ACUI's executives are now able to do more proactive financial planning, and regional staff and volunteers can always see where their P&Ls stand at any moment so they know where to focus in order to improve profitability. In the future, the organization plans to bring statistical data—such as conference attendance numbers and cost of goods sold for retail promotional products—into Sage Intacct. This will help the team monitor cost ratios across programs so they can prioritize accordingly, adjust pricing models as needed, and carry over best practices from one program to another.

> "Since modernizing and streamlining all of our financial processes with Sage Intacct, our overall efficiency has improved by ~35% and we've increased accountability across the organization. Given our productivity gains, $25,000 in annual headcount savings, and the significant improvements to business visibility, Sage Intacct easily pays for itself in less than 6 months and saves us thousands of dollars beyond that every year."

Dave Teske
Director of Finance and Administration, ACUI