

Case Study

**STEPHEN GEORGE
& PARTNERS LLP**



Background

Founded in 1970, Stephen George & Partners is a leading architectural practice with seven offices worldwide. The company's client base is diverse, with projects covering various sectors including residential, retail, master planning and industrial/distribution. The company was placed in the 'Top 100' practices by the Architects' Journal and has been rated one of the 'Top 100 Companies to work for' in the Sunday Times.

Problem

With a successful trading history, Stephen George & Partners was accustomed to being in control of project finances. The practice had used ProjectMinder to monitor the financial aspects of projects for the previous six years, but when the recession hit it was decided that commercial responsibility should be distributed more widely across the business, without losing visibility and control. There was also a desire to improve cash flow and increase efficiency.

A range of interconnected spreadsheets were required for fee forecasts to be completed and the rekeying of data into multiple systems was causing significant inefficiencies for the practice.

Solution

An extensive review of various systems led the practice to Union Square for Project Accounting, the industry-focused financial system for AEC professionals. The centralised system would eliminate the need for rekeying data and allow for invoices to be raised directly from the fee schedule, through integration with the practice's existing Sage accounting system. Functionality provided by Union Square includes timesheets, fee forecasting, invoicing and a Sage Line 50 ledger connector, all powered by live data.

A key part of the decision to implement Union Square was the ease of use and the extended range of functionality that could be bolted on as and when required.

Company

Stephen George & Partners LLP

Business

Architect

Number of staff

56

Solution

Union Square for Project Accounting

"With a successful trading history, Stephen George & Partners was accustomed to being in control of project finances."

UNION SQUARE
FOR PROJECT ACCOUNTING

Implementation

Union Square spent a lot of time with Stephen George & Partners to understand the requirements in detail. Over a six month period the implementation was gradual, which allowed the brief to evolve and expand the solution and ultimately the benefits that the practice received. Modules were implemented a few at a time so as not to bombard users all at once, which proved successful.

Benefits

Union Square for Project Accounting has provided Stephen George & Partners with multiple benefits, including:

- Tailored set of management reports – providing a live summary and drill down detail for any project at any given time. This has replaced the need for multiple spreadsheets and gives Project Architects visibility of progress, allowing corrective action to be taken if necessary.
- Clear view of financials – integrating the entire financial life-cycle to provide one version of the truth, ensuring everyone (with permission) has good visibility of the current financial situation, and improving cash flow.
- Fully adopted timesheets system – a universally liked, easy to use and fully adopted timesheet system combining time, expenses and leave, allowing for easy resource allocation and forward planning of workloads.
- Increased efficiency – allowing administration staff to be redeployed to other more 'value adding' areas of the practice as the need for paper filing and rekeying of data is removed.



A Q&A with Michael Barker, Managing Partner

How have things moved on since the initial implementation?

All modules are now fully implemented. We've also spent time redefining and simplifying the use of the system and our document storage; tweaking it to get the best possible outcome.

Has Union Square helped growth or added value?

Everything is in one central place. Feedback on financial information is the most significant benefit; forward planning, invoice projections, predicting future income and managing costs are generally a much more efficient process.

Are there any new ways of working?

Getting people to embrace new technology can be difficult. To combat this we chose the modular approach for implementation so people weren't rushed and had time to adjust; an approach that we feel worked well for us.

What are the next steps?

With the introduction of BIM we want to ensure we keep up with the new challenges this will present and look at integration with Revit.



"The centralised system would eliminate the need for rekeying data and allow for invoices to be raised directly from the fee schedule, through integration with the practice's existing Sage accounting system."

Contact us for more information on all our product offerings and how we can help transform your approach.

enquiries@unionsquaresoftware.com

unionsquaresoftware.com
unionsquaresoftware.com.au



Your knowledge. Together.

UNION SQUARE
FOR PROJECT ACCOUNTING