



Microsoft Customer Solution

Case study

Microsoft Business Solutions–Axapta

“With Microsoft Axapta, we can ship an order and immediately access the revenue, costs, and gross margin on the transaction.”

Ed Simnick
 Tech Support Manager
 Allison Payment Systems



Allison Payment Systems Increases Productivity and Speeds Processing Time

Allison Payment Systems, LLC is a privately held specialty commercial printer that provides customers with payment solutions including coupon payment books, check printing systems, monthly billing statements, mailing services, and more. The company has been located in Indianapolis, Indiana, since 1888. They produce 200 million financial and healthcare related pieces of mail per year.

Allison Payment was using a MAS90 DOS-based solution. They wanted a customizable solution, added functionality, and a solution that would speed up processing time.

Allison Payment Systems implemented Microsoft® Business Solutions–Axapta® with assistance and customizations by Microsoft reselling partner, BKD Technologies. Implementation has resulted in improved job tracking and productivity. Shop floor productivity has increased by 15 to 20 percent according to Bob Boles, CFO. Processing time for coupon book billings is now over ten times faster than previously. Allison Payment appreciates the availability of real-time information; this has improved decision making for the company.

CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
Located in Indianapolis, Indiana, Allison Payment Systems provides companies with payment solutions including coupon payment books, check printing systems, monthly billing statements, mailing services and more. They have been in business since 1888 and they produce 200 million financial and healthcare related pieces of mail per year.	Allison Payment was using a MAS90 DOS-based solution. They wanted a solution that was customizable and compatible with Microsoft products available today. They needed additional functionality and a solution that would speed up processing time.	Allison Payment Systems implemented Microsoft® Business Solutions–Axapta® with help from Microsoft reselling partner, BKD Technologies. Customizations were added to import cost and data information and to allow integration with AccuTrac, a postal solution used to track shipping and mailing costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved data access ▪ Customizable ▪ Improved job tracking and productivity ▪ Faster processing



“We appreciate the ability of Microsoft Axapta to customize to our unique needs. You can’t just go out and buy a software solution that works for our environment.”

Ed Simnick

Tech Support Manager
Allison Payment Systems

Situation

Located in Indianapolis, Indiana, Allison Payment Systems, LLC is a privately-held specialty commercial printer that provides a broad range of computer-printed products and services to financial institutions and other financial businesses such as mortgage services, business-to-business billers, healthcare, and so on. They provide services to “whoever needs a way to have clients make payments.”

Founded in 1888 by Noah Allison, the original coupon book business enabled local merchants to help ease the credit problems many of their customers were experiencing. In 1962, the Allison Coupon Company was sold to Cummins Chicago, a manufacturer of document perforators that could personalize the payment books. It became the Cummins-Allison Corporation until 1995 when it was acquired by the current management team and became Allison Payment Systems, LLC.

Prior to 1995, coupon book products composed 85 percent of the \$14.2 million revenue for Allison Payments. However, by 1998, the company realized over 56 percent of its revenue from periodic billing statement products. Allison Payments is currently one of the top players in payment systems in the United States producing more than 200 million first class mail pieces annually. The company has grown 450 percent in the past seven years.

Allison Payment Systems had been using the MAS90 “blue screen” DOS-based program that was not compatible with any of the Microsoft products on the market today. They couldn’t export information to create reports.

“Our MAS90 solution had been customized heavily,” says Ed Simnick, Tech Support Manager. “This locked us out of going to a Microsoft® Windows®-based version of that product.”

Allison wanted to be able to customize their solution without being locked into a certain release of the product. They needed a solution with additional functionality and one that could re-index files quickly.

“When we ran our coupon book billing, we had to start it on Saturday so that it could re-index the files and be ready by Monday,” says Becky Hatfield, Project Manager.

Once the decision was made to find a new solution, the company looked at several possibilities and narrowed the selection to three, one of which was Microsoft® Business Solutions–Axapta®.

Solution

When the scorecards and sheets were tallied, Allison Payments chose Microsoft Axapta. “We appreciate the ability of Microsoft Axapta to customize to our unique needs,” says Simnick. “You can’t just go out and buy a software solution that works for our environment.”

“We also appreciate the user-friendliness of Microsoft Axapta,” says Chris Eland, Inventory Specialist Manager. “Our employees are familiar with Microsoft products; they can easily move around within the software.” Customer service staff find the solution easy to use and can quickly respond to requests with real-time information.

Allison Payment Systems also likes the drill-down features of the solution. After reviewing data, they are now able to go back to the origin of that data to see how and where it originated.

Microsoft reselling partner, BKD Technologies assisted Allison Payment with implementation. “They did a good job of finding out what we wanted, what we had, and how they could incorporate those items into our solution,” says Hatfield. BKD and Simnick added customizations to

Microsoft®



Allison Payment Systems produces 200 million financial and healthcare related pieces of mail per year.

incorporate costs and data information. This allows Allison Payments to import sales information to generate work orders.

Since Allison Payment Systems is the largest mailer of first class mail in the Indianapolis area, Simnick added integrations with AccuTrac, a postal solution which tracks mailing and shipping costs accurately back to each client.

The software enables Allison Payment to run over 4,000 production orders per day. Microsoft Axapta tracks order production and eliminates the need for employees to clock in and out on different jobs. "Our factory productivity has increased by 15 to 20 percent since implementation," says Bob Boles, CFO.

Previously, job tracking was often inaccurate since it sometimes took employees longer to clock in and out of a job than it actually took to run the job. Job tracking was only as accurate as the employee using the clock. Microsoft Axapta now provides integration enabling jobs to be automatically tracked for each project.

In the future, Allison Payment Systems plans to implement the electronic billing and other additional features available through Microsoft Axapta.

Benefits

Improved Data Access

"There is much more data that I can access; and I can access it in a more timely manner," says Simnick. "If I want to see why expenses seem out of line, I can drill-down at a seconds notice and pinpoint the information I need." This helps Simnick to correct erroneous information or explain why the numbers may seem out of line.

Information can be accessed on a daily basis, rather than having to wait for the end of the month, as was previously the case. "With Microsoft Axapta, we can ship an order and immediately access the revenue, costs, and gross margin on the transaction," says Simnick. Being able to provide real-time financial information to managers has improved their decision-making abilities. Real-time information has also improved customer service capabilities.

Customizable

As a specialty print shop, Allison Payment Systems has a unique set of needs for a software solution. The customizability of Microsoft Axapta allows them to input cost and data information up front and then sort

Software and Services

Microsoft® Business Solutions– Axapta®

- Financial Management
- Supply Chain Management
- Analytics and Reporting
- Customizations Tools

Microsoft Windows®

Microsoft Windows Server System™

- SQL Server™

Partners

BKD Technologies
Indianapolis, Indiana, USA



Headquarters:

Hammons Tower
901 E. St. Louis Street, Suite 1000
P.O. Box 1190
Springfield, MO 65801-1190
Mike Burlew, partner in charge
417-865-8701, ext. 707
mburlew@bkd.com

Jeff Balyeat, principal and
Axapta® consultant
317-383-4202
jbalyeat@bkd.com

the resulting information to the client on the back end.

Using Master Orders enables them to combine work orders and then split out the labor and materials costs to a specific client on the back end.

Improved Job Tracking and Productivity

Shop floor productivity has increased by 15 to 20 percent with the automatic job tracking available through Microsoft Axapta. Employees are no longer required to log in and out on each job with the new solution. "It was not cost efficient before," says Hatfield. "On small jobs, employees

would spend more time clocking in and out than the actual job would take." Now, a camera reads data imbedded into each job and integrates with Microsoft Axapta to track projects automatically.

Faster Processing

The time required for processing coupon book billings is now more than ten times faster. While it used to take more than 24 hours to re-index and process these statements, this process now takes about two hours.

Software for the Agile Business

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:
<http://www.microsoft.com/>

For more information about Allison Payment Systems products and services, call 317-808-2400 or visit the Web site at:
<http://www.apslc.com/>

For more information about BKD Technologies products and services, call 800-749-2531 or visit the Web site at:
<http://www.bkd.com/service/technologies.htm>

© 2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

This case study is for informational purposes only. MICROSOFT MAKES NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, IN THIS SUMMARY.

Microsoft and Axapta are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation or Microsoft Business Solutions ApS or their subsidiaries in the United States and/or other countries. Microsoft Business Solutions ApS is a subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be the trademarks of their respective owners.