

Acumatica Transforms Publisher's Data Management, Saving Thousands of Dollars



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- Jerry Wallace, Director of Operations, Great Commission Publications

OVERVIEW

Great Commission Publications evaluated numerous ERP applications before selecting Acumatica to improve data management and enhance customer service.

SITUATION

Great Commission Publications (GCP) is a non-profit organization founded in 1975 by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in America. GCP produces Sunday school curriculum for the founding denomination, churches denominations, and individuals. GCP has approximately 15 employees and generates \$2.5 – \$3 million in annual revenue.

When Executive Director Marvin Padgett and Director of Operations Jerry Wallace arrived at GCP, they found that significant challenges had developed due to the inadequacies of their previous data management systems. "The existing system had been developed primarily for book publishers and GCP users had limited ability to retrieve financial and operational data. Downloading a month's worth of information might take 30 minutes to an hour and a year's worth of information was typically not achievable."

The existing database system was often unable to print order confirmations for the warehouse, which resulted in orders not being shipped. This created a snowball effect of further issues in customer service and shipping operations. Mr. Wallace shares his frustration with their previous system:

"That's one major issue I had with the old system — it just wasn't able to get things resolved quickly and wasn't reliable. Once you get behind in shipping, you have an avalanche of customers calling to check on the status of their orders." A further issue that Mr. Wallace encountered was that GCP couldn't easily update its freight database files, a problem which had cost the business many thousands of dollars in lost freight billings in previous years. He adds, "If you talked to the vendor, it was like pulling teeth to get answers and solutions offered were less than adequate."

SOLUTION

The management team at GCP knew they could identify a better ERP system, so they researched options. "We looked at many of the ERP providers including Netsuit, Intacct, Microsoft, and other providers."

Mr. Wallace says that when they discovered Acumatica, "It seemed like it fit everything we would need or might even imagine ourselves doing in the future. I called two or three Acumatica users; I asked if it was robust enough. They laughed and said they weren't using 10% of its capabilities."

COMPANY

- **Location:** Headquarters in Suwanee, Georgia (metro Atlanta area)
- **Industry:** Publication and nationwide distribution of church school materials

SOLUTION

Acumatica Suites and Modules

- Financial Management Suite
- Distribution Management Suite
- Customer Management Suite

KEY RESULTS

- Strengthened order-tracking and cut shipping turn-around time by at least half
- Enhanced employee productivity through remote access via the Cloud
- Improved financial management with reports on sales activity and shipments

A key feature that attracted the team to Acumatica was its ability to create reports. “When I came here, the sales people had no comprehensive reports on what customers were buying. We take about 15,000 orders a year over the web and on the phone,” Mr. Wallace says. “There were over 50,000- 60,000 line items on those invoices,” he adds. “We weren’t easily able to track customers’ orders on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis.”

Getting help with the old system required paying and waiting for tech support from out-of-state. As a result, GCP was glad to find an Acumatica partner — Joel Gress of Dynamic Tech Services — nearby: “Now if we need an on-site visit, we can get it. Sometimes you need that face-to-face discussion,” Mr. Wallace explained.

In October 2014, GCP began working with Acumatica on SaaS. They use the Financial Management, Distribution Management, and Customer Management (CRM) suites and are investigating integrating OzLINK for freight management purposes.

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BENEFITS

The management team at GCP appreciates many features of Acumatica. Unlike GCP’s old system, it is Cloud-based and offers easy remote access to all employees. “With Acumatica, GCP can have every person in the company as a user without it costing anything extra,” Mr. Wallace says, adding, “We love that. We can get data at any time — if we’re on the road on business, working at home, or a thousand miles away on vacation; we can log in, get needed information, and solve problems.”

GCP’s customer service representatives and curriculum specialists also enjoy managing their customer order flow and data more efficiently. Mr. Wallace points out, “It saves a lot of time and trouble when getting calls from the customers to be able to easily look up their customer ID and access in a few keystrokes what they’ve recently purchased as well as other critical information to filling an order accurately and efficiently — it’s all easily available. That increases our productivity and enables us to meet shipping requirements of same or next day shipping... I’m pretty thrilled about that!”

Mr. Wallace, is ecstatic that he can create reports by using Acumatica’s standard reporting systems, generic inquiries, or downloading data to Excel to create custom reports from a variety of sources. “We can easily run reports by product line, get to numbers two or three different ways, and pull them out pretty quickly,” he says. “We know the status of orders on backorder, on hold, and orders in process of shipping.”

Acumatica has also helped GCP turn orders around much faster. Mr. Wallace reports, “Now we’re shipping everything basically the same day the order comes in and we don’t lose track of orders. Before it was often two or three days, or sometimes weeks, just because of our inability to track what was going on with the order.”

Being able to validate shipping addresses through Avalara Avatax within Acumatica resolved another financial expense for Great Commission Publications. Mr. Wallace says, “It’s probably saved GCP a couple hundred dollars a month on bad addresses and incorrect shipments. A much bigger loss is the amount of time you lose in taking care of the issues a poorly executed order causes — that number would eclipse the reshipping cost by ten times.”

Mr. Wallace predicts Acumatica “will allow us to be a lot more focused on what’s going on with our product lines. As for the future, GCP can now do a much superior job of managing the information we have. Acumatica is definitely a financial and operations platform that is helping GCP get to the data it needs to make decisions and execute operations quickly and efficiently. I’m pretty excited about what it’s going to look like going forward!”