Sage Intacct 'book of truth' for ACT Construction

A long-established construction firm is consolidating and extending growth with Sage Intacct

"With Sage Intacct we can drill down into each project and allocate resources really effectively."

Christopher Murray
Chief Financial Officer, ACT Construction

The Challenge
Since founding ACT Construction in 1987, CEO Joe Murray tried various manual and software solutions but none suited his growing business. Joe wanted cloud based software that would provide detailed visibility of, and reporting on, diverse projects, and integrate seamlessly with accounting and project management processes.

The Solution
Joe saw a demo of Sage Intacct and was so impressed he bought the software straight away. Sage Intacct is now ACT Construction's "book of truth" and, having integrated solutions including Sage Construction Management, the firm has detailed, real-time data and reporting for every project.

The Result
Sage Intacct is supporting ACT Construction's ambition to consolidate and sustain year on year growth while providing superb service and value. For example:

- Customized dashboards make important data instantly accessible.
- Highly granular data drives better resource allocation, cost control.
- Integrations make Sage Intacct a whole-business management solution.

Company
ACT Construction

Location
Texas, US

Industry
Construction

Sage Products
Sage Intacct

About ACT Construction
ACT Construction, a Texas-based general contracting company, has completed thousands of retail and commercial construction projects throughout the United States.

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A thriving family business

Although ACT Construction was founded in 1987, before the smartphone era and a time when very few people had internet access, it has evolved to become a near $100 million dollar company and is still growing. That is partly due to founder Joe Murray's willingness to put technology to work on behalf of his family business. As Joe puts it: "I called this business ACT because those are the initials of my children, but someone told me that it was a good idea to have a name beginning with A because you were always at the front of the phone book and trade show directories. That turned out to be a good strategy, it still works for us. But over the years other things have changed, because a business has to adapt and use new tools as they become available."

Over decades, Joe used everything from spreadsheets to software to coordinate ACT Construction's operations and maximize efficiency, but nothing worked perfectly. Meanwhile, the business became increasingly complex. In the late 1990s, ACT Construction built multiple stores in the Dallas area for a national pizza chain: this led to work elsewhere and soon the company was designing and building retail and commercial premises in 40 states.

Seeking a solution

This growth—while obviously welcome—was continuous and brought complexity to the business. Growth meant more transactions and activities to track across multiple locations, more efficiencies to monitor and state regulations to comply with. Joe's son Chris Murray, Chief Financial Officer at ACT Construction (and the C in ACT) describes the firm's approach: "We deliver concepts using local trades and subcontractors. We have our onsite superintendents that schedule and coordinate all facets of the job and they work with our project managers, who oversee five to eight projects at a time. We deliver projects on time and on budget and these two keys have helped us maintain great relationships over thirty plus years," he explains.

Clearly, ACT Construction needed software to track, quantify and report on its work at all levels, and provide the business insights required to maximize efficiency and productivity. Fortunately, Joe had been using Sage 100 and decided to call the Sage sales department to see if they had a cloud based solution: "I took a demo of Sage Intacct and I literally think the day I took the demo, I called sales and said 'Tell me what this is going to cost.' And then we implemented Sage Intacct," he says.

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Knowing the benefits of end-to-end solutions, ACT Construction has integrated other software systems with Sage Intacct.

Better data = better business

The improved data access that Sage Intacct provides—data that is better in terms of granularity, timeliness and analysis—was among the first things Joe and Chris noticed. "Before Sage Intacct we had limited visibility of project finances because we had a local system. Distributing reporting functions and access rights was difficult, very cumbersome. But with Sage Intacct, I now have the ability to let people in. I do not want people coming in and putting their fingers in the pie or anything, but Sage Intacct has security built in so I can let my team members see the data. And having that visibility is huge," says Joe. "We call Sage Intacct our 'book of truth'."

Chris adds: "Sage Intacct has so many helpful tools. We are able to create our own dashboards, so we can drill down from a financial perspective to see where we are as a business. We can ask: is this job on path to make money for our company? We can really get into the nitty gritty and see where things went well and, sometimes, where they went south. At our completion meetings we review every aspect of how the project went and the first place we look is the Sage Intacct dashboard. It really helps us to figure out where to allocate our resources."

Chris also highlights the value of real-time awareness of every project at the granular level provided by Sage Intacct, since the construction business is fast paced and swift responses are vital. "If you find out three weeks into a 10-week job that you're a week behind, that's too late," he says.

Sage Intacct with integrations: better together

Knowing the benefits of end-to-end solutions, ACT Construction has integrated other software systems with Sage Intacct. These include a well-known and construction-specific project management software and, within the last few months, Sage Construction Management.

Joe feels the latter integration has come close to realizing his 20-year dream of an end-to-end system that unites data from first lead to project completion and beyond. "With Sage Construction Management I can put everything in starting with my leads, somebody that I think I want to do business with, and I could pull that into an estimate, a proposal, sign the deal, move it into a project. And then the beauty of the whole thing is that it works now with all my accounts payable and accounts receivable in Sage Intacct and the data then comes back into Sage SCM. Awesome. I've been looking for this for 20 years!" he explains.

"We're always looking to grow our company, and Sage Intacct has capacity to meet that demand."

Joe Murray
Chief Executive Officer, ACT Construction

Growing with Sage

Now that Sage Intacct is embedded in the business, ACT Construction is in for the long haul. "I don't want to move to another software. This is adaptable and it works," explains Joe. Having enjoyed consistent growth over the past 25 years, avoiding economic downturns along the way, the company remains committed to continuing its slow but steady expansion. And as Joe and Chris agree, Sage Intacct will remain a fundamental part of that success for many years to come.

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