

Sage HRMS | Customer Success

Sage Abra Suite—A Walk in the Park for New Lenox Community Park District

The New Lenox Community Park District (NLCPD) serves the 58,000 residents in the New Lenox, Illinois area. With more than 30 parks and a golf course under its jurisdiction, NLCPD's core staff of 24 swells to more than 200 during the peak seasons. With a diverse, distributed workforce, the organization requires a versatile, powerful human resource management system (HRMS) to manage its payroll and HR functions. For NLCPD, that solution is Sage Abra Suite.

Spreadsheets to Track Spreadsheets

When Stephanie Humbert, the human resources coordinator for NLCPD, joined the organization, human resource functions were handled manually. "It was a terribly burdensome system," she recalls. "We had spreadsheets for everything, and anytime something changed, we had to update all of them. We even had a spreadsheet to help us track our spreadsheets!"

Meanwhile, payroll was outsourced to a third-party payroll service provider. "It was time-consuming to get many of the reports we needed," Kathy Lynch, the finance and human resources superintendent for NLCPD, explains. "Sometimes we would wait days to get even simple payroll reports."

Sage Abra Suite Pays for Itself

With budget cuts imminent, NLCPD began looking for ways to cut expenses and zeroed in on a plan to bring payroll in house to save the costly outsourcing fees and to gain more control over the payroll and reporting functions. As the organization researched

payroll and HR software, one name quickly rose to the top. "I had used Sage products in a previous position," says Lynch. "NLCPD was already running Sage Fund Accounting, so when I heard about Sage Abra Suite software, I felt an instant level of confidence."

NLCPD performed a complete evaluation of several systems and in the end selected Sage Abra Suite. The evaluation process helped demonstrate that the functionality of the software would meet the organization's needs and that it would indeed help reduce expenses. "Our cost/benefit analysis determined that Sage Abra Suite would pay for itself in less than three years," says Lynch.

Sage ESS Eliminates Paper and Drives Efficiency

"Sage ESS has proven to be the biggest surprise to folks here. Some doubted that the staff would use it or that it would actually offer any tangible benefits. In actuality, it has become a favorite of both management and staff," says Karen Acklin, the accounting supervisor for NLCPD.

Employees enter requests for time off through the ESS portal, and the requests are automatically routed to their supervisor for approval. "This automation alone saves everyone so much time," Lynch reports. "Previously, employees would fill out a paper form that their supervisor approved, HR entered the data into a spreadsheet, and then the form was filed. When an employee needed to make a change to the request, it involved another round of paperwork. Now, it is a completely paperless, highly efficient process."



CUSTOMER

New Lenox Community Park District

INDUSTRY

Government Municipality

LOCATION

New Lenox, Illinois

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

5

SYSTEM

Sage Abra Suite

- Sage Abra Suite HRMS
- Sage Abra Suite Payroll
- Sage Employee Self Service (Sage ESS)

Sage Fund Accounting

CHALLENGE

New Lenox Community Park District sought to cut expenses and increase efficiency by bringing payroll processing in house and by automating its HR functions.

SOLUTION

Sage Abra Suite delivers full HR, Payroll, and Sage Employee Self Service (ESS) functionality to the park district and its 200+ employees.

RESULTS

Automating HR functions saves the labor of one half-time employee. Sage ESS drives efficiency by eliminating paper and empowering employees with access to their own data. The savings from bringing payroll in house will provide a full ROI in three years.

Employees have their choice of receiving their pay through direct deposit or by Sage Payroll PayCard. Payroll vouchers are available for viewing from the ESS portal. “For us, the Sage Payroll PayCards are as easy to use as direct deposit, and the fees are lower than our outsourced provider used to charge,” notes Humbert.

Flexible Reporting Tools Meet Specific Needs

NLCPD’s employees are members of the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). The IMRF requires employers to submit a monthly pension plan report. Previously the organization had to track the required information in a spreadsheet and spend several hours each month preparing the report in the proper format. Using the powerful report writer available with Sage Abra Suite, Crystal Reports®, the organization’s business partner designed a custom report that precisely meets the IMRF requirements. “Now we simply select a menu option, and a few seconds later have the report we need to submit to the IMRF,” explains Lynch.

“From the accounting perspective, the Crystal Reports have been a very useful tool,” says Acklin. “We were able to create a simple report that reduces our processing time by allowing us to view our employees in alphabetical order instead of employee number order. We also added our general ledger account numbers associated with each job code to verify where they will appear in our financial statements prior to posting the payroll. This is easy to do and has a huge impact in reducing coding errors.”

From Full-Time to Part-Time

Before implementing Sage Abra Suite, it was the work of one full-time human resources employee, plus help from others, to keep up with the busy HR department’s demands. “It’s now a part-time position,” says Lynch. “By automating our HR functions with Sage Abra Suite, we literally cut the time required to process payroll in half.”

Additional labor savings have come from the reduction of clerical expenses at the organization’s satellite offices. “Previously, each location maintained their own spreadsheets of data specific to

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Finance & HR Superintendent
New Lenox Community Park District

their office,” says Lynch. “Now the information each manager needs is available to them through either the ESS portal or Crystal Reports.”

Integration With Accounting

NLCPD has long relied on Sage Fund Accounting to support its financial operations. Its business partner, who supports both Sage Abra Suite and Sage Fund Accounting, implemented a third-party product that provides seamless integration between the two programs.

“I had a monthly three-page report consisting of journal entries that I had to key into Sage Fund Accounting,” explains Lynch. “Now I run the import utility, and the process is completed within 30 seconds. We have eliminated data entry and the associated errors.”

NLCPD has every confidence that the products it has chosen are the right solution. In addition to saving time and money, the increased efficiency of the Sage products has led the Government Finance Officers Association to bestow a *Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting* to NLCPD for each of the past two years.

About Sage

Sage is a leading global supplier of business management software and services for small and mid-sized businesses. The Sage Group plc, formed in 1981, was floated on the London Stock Exchange in 1989 and now employs more than 12,300 people and supports more than 6 million customers worldwide. For more information about Sage in North America, please visit the company website at www.SageNorthAmerica.com. Follow Sage North America on Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/SageNorthAmerica>, and Twitter, <http://twitter.com/#!/sagenamerica>.