

The Oregon Zoo Foundation is wild about Sage MIP Fund Accounting

The Oregon Zoo Foundation raises funds to help support the Oregon Zoo's conservation, education, and cultural programs. The \$5 million it generates each year goes toward conservation activities, new exhibits, and directly into the zoo's operating funds. A few years ago, the foundation adopted Sage MIP Fund Accounting as its financial solution, and according to its financial manager, Ric Barton, this has proven to be an excellent decision.

"We were using another software package, but it lacked the flexibility we needed to structure our financial statements the way we needed, and didn't provide us with a reliable way to analyze where our funds were coming from and where they were being spent," recalls Barton. "Sage MIP Fund Accounting is adaptable to our needs. We were able to customize the chart of accounts to match the way we operate, and as a result we can get the information we need quickly and easily."

The Expense Trail

Now The Oregon Zoo Foundation is able to track expenses down to a granular level using Activity Codes within Sage MIP Fund Accounting. As an example, Barton points to using Activity Codes to track staff development expenses. When staff members attend various seminars or workshops throughout the year, they incur airfare expenses, registration fees, and lodging costs. While these expenses span general ledger account codes and cost centers, Barton is

able to easily identify all of the foundation's staff development expenses by assigning each expense a common Activity Code.

Activity Codes also help The Oregon Zoo Foundation monitor and track expenses related to prospecting activities such as printing, mailing, and graphic design fees. By assigning these expenses a common Activity Code, The Oregon Zoo Foundation is able to easily determine how much it has spent in this area across all general ledger account codes and cost centers.

Pigeonholing Funds

With Sage MIP Fund Accounting, the foundation is able to track restricted and unrestricted funds, endowments, and gifts, as well as readily report on this data. This is invaluable for the foundation, as many donations are given with the mandate that they be applied to a particular program.



CUSTOMER

The Oregon Zoo Foundation

INDUSTRY

Animal Welfare Organization,
Charitable Foundation

LOCATION

Portland, Oregon

Number of Locations: One

Number of Employees: 13

SYSTEM

Sage MIP Fund Accounting

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable Reporting
- Bank Reconciliation
- Data Import/Export
- General Ledger

Challenge

The Oregon Zoo Foundation's previous software lacked flexibility in structuring accounts, and did not provide adequate tools for isolating where donations came from and where they were being used.

Solution

Sage MIP Fund Accounting is flexible enough to adapt to the way the foundation operates, and offers advanced reporting capabilities previously unavailable.

Results

The foundation can track precisely where its donations come from and where they are being spent. Government and board reporting is simplified, and expenses are categorized, helping the foundation to better analyze its operating costs.

For example, the organization recently launched a new initiative to bring lions, absent since the late 1990's, back to the park. Many donors earmark their donations for this particular cause. As donations flow in, the foundation is able to associate the funds with this particular campaign and further identify them as coming from an individual donor, a corporate donor, or a government agency.

Reporting Menagerie

The foundation has a large reporting audience. Its own board of directors, the zoo's board, its accounting firm, various funders, and the federal government all demand accounts of where The Oregon Zoo Foundation's funds come from and where they are being spent. "The power to generate these reports is where Sage MIP Fund Accounting truly excels," says Barton. "I love the reporting capabilities of the software. We're able to format custom reports to our exact requirements and even combine multiple fiscal years on a single report."

Using the single-click export to Excel feature, Barton can perform further data analysis and report formatting in a familiar spreadsheet style.

Barton is able to generate reports that show the foundation's revenue and its sources, and the foundation's expenses in every conceivable category. "When I go before the board of directors, I need answers—and I get those from Sage MIP Fund Accounting." Barton appreciates the ability to produce a detailed 990 worksheet that assists the foundation in compiling its annual federal 990 form.

The Oregon Zoo Foundation's ongoing activities span fiscal years. With traditional accounting software, it might be impossible to accurately extract revenue and expense statistics across different reporting periods, but Sage MIP Fund Accounting handles this task with ease.

"I think of the data in Sage MIP Fund Accounting as a cube," explains Barton. "I can slice the data and analyze it one way, or turn the cube and slice it another way to analyze a different aspect."

Streamlining Operations

Barton says Sage MIP Fund Accounting makes his job easier. For example, at the end of this past fiscal year, the board asked Barton to find out which funds were unallocated and available for use. They wanted to donate a percentage of those funds to the Zoo for the lion exhibit, and the balance to the Zoo for maintenance. "I was able to easily generate a report within Sage MIP Fund Accounting to give the board members the information they asked for," says Barton. "Without the program, that information would have been very difficult to uncover."

"Without the flexibility and power of Sage MIP Fund Accounting, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to operate the way we do."

– Ric Barton
Financial Manager
The Oregon Zoo Foundation

The Bank Reconciliation module performs complete reconciliation in record time. It used to take many hours every month. "Now, I can't imagine going back," says Barton.

Through streamlined procedures, flexible reporting tools, and detailed fund tracking, Sage MIP Fund Accounting gives The Oregon Zoo Foundation more time to spend on its mission. "Without the flexibility and power of Sage MIP Fund Accounting, it would be difficult if not impossible for us to operate the way we do," concludes Barton.