

Executive Summary

Previous Solution:

- QuickBooks

Results with Sage Intacct:

- Powerful multi-entity, multi-dimensional general ledger improves project and financial visibility
- New reports empower producers to make better informed, more timely decisions
- Streamlined inter-company financial processes shorten monthly close by 3-4 days, and save more than 125 person-hours each month
- Cloud-powered efficiencies help eliminate \$100,000/year in headcount and IT costs

“Sage Intacct has freed my team up to focus less on tedious transactions, and much more on analysis and reporting that adds value to the business. At the same time, it’s saving us \$100,000 every year from reduced headcount and IT support, and has put us in a great position to handle whatever volume comes our way as the company scales.”

—Mark Bellich, CFO, RIVR Media

Making Sense of a Complicated Entertainment Business

RIVR Media is a leading independent television producer with more than 100 hit shows such as Escaping Polygamy on LMN and Renovation Realities on DIY Network. Every show takes approximately six to nine months to complete, and includes up to thirteen episodes—each with its own projected budget and costs. Previously, the company’s finance team attempted to track all this project data in QuickBooks, which was nearly impossible even after adding hundreds of different account numbers in order to overcome the system’s shortcomings.

“Even though we produce reality shows day-in and day-out, behind the scenes we struggled to extract reality out of the complex financial transactions that were required to manage five separate companies and dozens of ongoing projects,” said Mark Bellich, CFO at RIVR. “We knew we needed to get our accounting data out of QuickBooks and Excel, and Sage Intacct was the perfect fit for us. It supports our multi-entity environment, gives us a single chart of accounts, makes consolidations and monthly reporting simple, and gives us full visibility into all our shows across various cable networks.”

The company worked with LBMC Technology Solutions to migrate from QuickBooks to Sage Intacct’s cloud ERP software, and integrated the system with Nexonia for more efficient time and expense management. Thanks to this best-in-class approach, RIVR’s finance team was able to get a solid grasp on its increasingly complex business environment.

Managing the Full Project Lifecycle from Pilot to Finale

With Sage Intacct’s flexible general ledger approach and project accounting capabilities, RIVR can now tag each financial transaction with key dimensions that immediately attribute it to a customer, a series, and even an individual episode—creating much better transparency at the project level. Prior to Sage Intacct, the finance team often spent up to six hours trying to extract the right project detail when it needed a high-level summary of individual project financials. Even then, they were unable to track specific cost element details.

“With Sage Intacct, we can run a consolidated project detail report that spans all of our entities in less than a minute,” noted Bellich. “With this insight, we closely monitor our actuals-to-budget and can see where we might be overspending. The sooner we provide that real-time information to our producers, the more quickly they can react.”

This is especially valuable when RIVR is in mid-project, because they can compare their cost per episode to what was originally budgeted for the series, and flag ways the production team can reduce costs on future episodes before it's too late.

RIVR's finance team also benefits from anytime, anywhere visibility into its total revenues, costs, gross profits, and gross profit margins by project—either for the current month, or the full year-to-date. This dimensional transparency also means they can easily produce detailed client invoices directly out of Sage Intacct rather than struggle to create monthly invoices across multiple companies via Excel. As a result, the team is getting invoices out to the networks faster, and payments in sooner.

Aiming a Spotlight on RIVR's Financial Reality

In addition to gaining project visibility, RIVR's inter-company billings no longer require eight days of manual effort to generate. Multi-entity consolidations and financial reports used to require three full days of the CFO's time every month. Now, he can get reliable monthly financials from Sage Intacct in half a day, and close out the books three to four days faster. And he can easily produce a reliable report package for monthly financial reviews with the principals of the company.

“Sage Intacct's dashboards show me the big picture of our current financial standing every day when I log in,” commented Bellich. “I can see it all.”

About RIVR Media Enterprises

Since 1985, RIVR has produced a wide range of reality television programming for 21 different cable networks, including A&E, Animal Planet, the Discovery Channel, DIY Network, ESPN, the Food Network, HGTV, MTV, Nickelodeon, TLC and the Travel Channel. The company's shows include hits such as Whale Wars, Renovation Realities, Trading Spaces, and the World Series of Poker.



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