

Success Story

Local industrial authority improves efficiency by 85% through cloud-based financials

Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority

“It was a hard sell to my director and our board to implement new financial software, but we are absolutely getting the value for what we are paying. The time savings with Sage Intacct and the feeling of knowing my director, my board, our community, and our public can have confidence in the information they’re getting makes it so worth it.”

Amy Tarpley

Director of Finance, Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority



Company overview

The Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority is the lead agency for attracting new business investment, encouraging the expansion of existing industries, and improving the quality of life in the Macon-Bibb County area. With the aid of partners at regional, state, and local levels, the authority creates a competitive business environment that facilitates an industry’s ability to generate success.

Results with Sage Intacct

- Increased overall finance efficiency by 85%.
- Sped audit cycle by 92%.
- Shifted finance department to 100% electronic processes.
- Gained data security and transparency into financial processes, building trust and confidence.

Sage

Company

Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority

Location

Georgia, US

Industry

Nonprofit

Sage Products

Sage Intacct





Streamlining multi-entity financials

The Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority is the lead government agency tasked with attracting new business investment, encouraging the expansion of existing industries, and improving the quality of life in Georgia's Macon-Bibb County area. Working with partners at the regional, state, and local levels to create a competitive business environment, the organization facilitates success through infrastructure assistance, local vendor programs, and more.

The authority manages revenue streams from land sales, tenant rent, administrative fees, and partnerships with other local agencies, while complying with special tax incentives. Recently, the organization hired a new finance director, Amy Tarpley, who inherited accounting software that had not been updated since 2001 and paper-based reporting processes that made the timely and accurate tracking of funds and projects impossible.

Amy quickly moved the financials over to Intuit QuickBooks but struggled to manage the authority's annual operating budget of \$12 million across 11 distinct funds using its rigid, time-consuming chart of accounts. "When the audit came, none of our balances matched," remembered Amy. "I worked side-by-side with our auditor nearly every day for six months, and by the end, we were both acutely aware of the need for a more robust solution," said Amy.

She sought a mature, cloud-based system with multi-entity capabilities that would offer visibility to stakeholders beyond the finance team. The authority chose Sage Intacct for its robust functionality, customizable features, and audit-ready financial controls. After implementing the modern financial management solution, Amy improved overall efficiency by 85%, sped up the audit cycle by 92%, and gained priceless transparency across the organization's financial operations.



Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority's audit cycle is now 92% faster with the help of Sage Intacct.

Cloud-based automation saves weeks of manual work

With help from Sage Intacct implementation partner Armanino, the authority was able to quickly and smoothly deploy its new system — eliminating paper and making all workflows 100% electronic. A key advantage for the organization is Sage Intacct's ability to seamlessly and accurately track several funds and projects, including whether projects are completed, in-progress, ongoing, or prospects. As a one-person finance team, Amy improved her own productivity by eliminating manual, duplicative entries across payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable.

She also established a consistent monthly close process, something that previously was too difficult due to QuickBooks' inability to support the authority's complex financials. Amy estimates that the system's automation has cut at least a day's worth of work each week that she can instead funnel towards more impactful and strategic initiatives, including tasks she would not have even attempted to do previously because they were too arduous.

The audit cycle, which used to take over six months, is now 92% faster. "Before Sage Intacct, I felt like I was treading water through our audits," explained Amy. "Now, it takes me two weeks to pull the information together on top of doing my regular job. We have our auditors set up with read-only access so they can see all the transactions in our system, and if an auditor has a question, I'm able to answer in minutes," said Amy.

Sage Intacct's robust internal controls also secure external access for a local accounting firm that handles the authority's payroll and bank reconciliations. "With Sage Intacct in place, we can grant and manage access so that our partners can get in and find the information they need every month. It really provides a level of comfort for my director and the board, and keeps everything running smoothly," said Amy.



Increased visibility cultivates trust and transparency

Through easy access to custom Sage Intacct dashboards from anywhere, key stakeholders across the organization can now access any financial information they need at the moment they need it. This was particularly helpful when COVID-19 hit mere months after implementing Sage Intacct, since it allowed the organization to maintain continuity even during uncertain times.

Previously, Amy had limited bandwidth to generate regular financial reports at most once a quarter. “Reporting would have taken me three or four days of manually combining information from our old system. Now, I can give my executive director a weekly report in a matter of minutes and send monthly reports to the board,” she commented. This real-time visibility expedites critical business decisions. For example, when an opportunity recently arose to invest in a new piece of property, Amy was able to evaluate the status of the budget and reply to the executive director within minutes rather than the week it would’ve taken her previously.

Perhaps most impactfully, having clear audit trails in place with Sage Intacct has changed the Authority’s culture to one that fosters trust and confidence inside and outside the organization. “Getting a reputable system like Sage Intacct in place has been a big win for us,” said Amy. “We now have the ability to be transparent and show our mayor, our commission, and even our partners what we are doing with our funds. This has greatly increased our community’s trust,” concluded Amy.

