

Success Story

Phase 3 moves to next level financial management with Sage Intacct

Technology services provider gains oversight of project resource planning and improves credit control with Sage Intacct

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James Proctor

Director of Professional & Managed Services, Phase 3



The Challenge

Rapid growth with more expansion planned, meant Phase 3 had outgrown its existing finance software. It needed a cloud-based financial management system that could scale with it and streamline processes.



The Solution

Sage Intacct had the flexibility Phase 3 needed to tailor the system to its exact requirements, plus the resource planning, time sheets, dashboards, and bank integration it was looking for.



The Result

Improved confidence in the company's invoicing and accounts, plus enabling Phase 3 to continue to grow in a “sound and safe way” means Sage Intacct was the right choice all round.

Key outcomes:

- Faster invoicing with automation saves three days a month.
- Improved accuracy of customer billing.
- Full oversight of project resource reduces missed revenue opportunities.
- Seamless integration with CRM system speeds up credit control.

Sage

Company
Phase 3

Location
United Kingdom

Industry
Professional Services

Sage Products
Sage Intacct



About Phase 3

Founded in 2004, Phase 3 are independent providers of professional and managed services for HR, payroll, and finance technologies, delivering implementation, system support and system selection services.



Rapid and continued growth meant time for a new scalable solution

After five years of using Sage 50 for its financial management, Phase 3 realised it had outgrown the software. Growing from five to 70 employees in the last seven years, and with turnover that achieved 50% growth in 2022 - the technology services provider needed a solution that could scale with it.

“Sage 50 is predominantly for smaller businesses, and we were no longer a micro business. We needed a system that could support our continued growth and integrate easily with other systems,” explains James Proctor, Director of Professional & Managed Services at Phase 3.

A key requirement was for better and more instant visibility of data as James says it was “difficult to have our finger on the pulse as it took ages to run reports”. At the same time, it had to be cloud-based as around 70% of Phase 3’s staff work remotely, so being able to log in from anywhere and see the same information as everyone else was essential.

“With Sage 50 we’d have multiple people logging in from different locations and because it’s predominantly a desk-top solution it caused frustrations and would often kick us out of the system if working from home,” says James.

Sage Intacct wins with full package of requirements and

strong resource planning

As a Sage Intacct implementation partner, Phase 3 was well aware of the scale and scope of Intacct’s capabilities having seen first-hand the difference the software could make to its own customers. Even so, being in the world of providing technology solutions Phase 3 did its own due diligence before making a decision.

“We did a full system selection project internally, and Sage Intacct was the only one that offered everything we needed, including resource planning, time sheets, dashboards and bank integration,” says James.

He adds that it was a “no-brainer” to upgrade to Sage Intacct, with the built-in resource planning features being a main driver for choosing Sage. “We had five different methods of recording time before we moved to Sage Intacct, so that has not only streamlined our hours logging, but also saved us around £5,000 a year having just one system as opposed to paying for all those other systems,” mentioned James.



Phase 3 has made a huge time saving with Sage Intacct's automatic invoicing.

Phase 3 puts its own implementation team to the test

Conveniently Phase 3 was able to use its own consultants to handle the migration from Sage 50 to Sage Intacct. In fact, it became a new learning experience for the Phase 3 implementation team as James did not hold back with requests. "We did throw a few challenges in for Hamza and the team; things they hadn't yet faced with existing implementation customers," admits James.

Hamza Naeem, Lead Finance Consultant at Phase 3, who oversaw the implementation agrees "it was a great learning curve" and laughs that he can probably implement Sage Intacct projects "with my eyes closed now."

One such challenge was around Phase 3's complex billing structure; some of it is time-based, some is materials-based, some is pre-paid, and some is direct debits. "We needed to be able to bill customers in all the different ways we are used to. Luckily there is plenty of flexibility within Sage Intacct so our implementation team could overcome this challenge and set it up how we needed it to work," explains James.

Hamza says the other test of their skills was the fact that despite Phase 3 being a relatively small company, "it operates like a large business". "Phase 3's requirements were so comprehensive, there was a lot of things we needed to configure and customise, but Sage Intacct is a full-scale ERP solution with a lot of flexibility, so we've been able to work through each of the requirements," says Hamza.

Improved financial and project management

Since going live, Phase 3 has made a huge time saving with Sage Intacct's automatic invoicing. Previously it was a very manual process with finance waiting for the delivery leads to pull data from the five different time monitoring systems, collate it into spreadsheets and then manually input invoices one by one. "Sage Intacct just sends out invoices automatically at the end of the month. This saves us three days a month of effort as it can now be done at the touch of a button," says James happily.

Billing has also become a lot more accurate as Sage Intacct is integrated with Phase 3's CRM system, and credit control has also been streamlined. "We used to spend two days a week manually generating statements and attaching to individual emails; now it's less than an hour thanks to Sage Intacct's automation," expressed James.

Another benefit has been gaining full oversight of all current projects and where resource is being allocated. "For the first time we can see which customers have been over serviced versus what they actually pay for," explains James, "which for a professional services business is critical for us to know."

This has enabled Phase 3 to spot trends before it's too late and put actions in place.



“Ultimately, Sage Intacct enables us to continue to grow in a sound and safe way, making sure that we are always analysing risk effectively before we make decisions - which is how we like to operate.”

James Proctor

Director of Professional & Managed Services, Phase 3

Increased confidence in data and ability to support growth

The biggest win for James since implementing Sage Intacct has been the access and visibility of key data. This has helped reveal missed revenue opportunities where Phase 3 was doing work for customers that wasn't being logged or billed. “The level of data we now have has helped us understand where our nonprofitable customers are and where we need to improve margins,” says James.

In fact, he admits he now has much more confidence in the company's invoicing and accounts than he has ever had. “You need your finance system to give you confidence in the data that you've got and that you're invoicing correctly – that's exactly what Sage Intacct gives us,” stated James.

James adds that there is nothing Sage Intacct doesn't deliver on, it “does everything that a finance system should do” and says Phase 3 hasn't had to compromise on anything. He concludes: “Ultimately, Sage Intacct enables us to continue to grow in a sound and safe way, making sure that we are always analysing risk effectively before we make decisions - which is how we like to operate.”

