

Success Story

Buro Four cuts month end from three weeks to five days

Buro Four replaced manual, spreadsheet-heavy reporting with Sage Intacct, giving directors current financial information and freeing finance to support faster decisions.

BURO FOUR



The challenge

A 17-year-old finance system left Buro Four dependent on manual processes and spreadsheets. Month end took two to three weeks, leaving Group Finance Controller Danielle Sedef and the board working with information that was already out of date.



The solution

Buro Four introduced Sage Intacct, including AI-powered accounts payable automation, to reduce manual finance processes, create reports directly in the system and give its finance team more time for strategic analysis and business decision support.



Results

- Reduced month end from two to three weeks to five days
- Gave directors access to financial information much sooner
- Removed manual spreadsheet manipulation from board reporting
- Freed finance staff to focus on strategic work that helps drive the business forward
- Gave Danielle more time to answer questions and support business decisions

Sage

Company
Buro Four

Location
United Kingdom

Industry
Construction project management

Sage Products
Sage Intacct

BURO FOUR

About Buro Four

Buro Four, founded in 1985, specialises in expert-driven project management across a range of industries, from construction to science. The business spans the UK, Europe, Asia, and MENA, employing more than 100 people.



When the numbers arrived too late

Danielle Sedef could spend most of the month producing the numbers, only to find they were already too old to guide the next decision.

As Group Financial Controller at Buro Four, Danielle is responsible for giving project managers and directors the financial clarity they need to focus on projects, profitability, and growth. The construction project management company works across EMEA and Asia, managing projects in sectors ranging from education and museums to corporate offices and data centres.

But the finance system Buro Four had used for around 17 years had not kept pace with the business. Reporting involved downloading information into Excel, configuring it, checking it and repeating the process whenever an error was found.

“The biggest pinch point for us was month end,” Danielle says.

“It would take us weeks, two to three weeks, to do month end, because everything was so labour intensive.” The delay affected more than the finance team’s workload.

It also affected the confidence directors could have in the decisions they were making. By the time Danielle could report on performance, the information was already losing its value.

“That meant that I couldn’t be involved in anything strategic,” she says. “Everything was looking at historical, and the same for the board. It was very difficult for them to make any decisions, because all the data they were looking at was so out of date.”

“I couldn’t be involved in anything strategic.”

Danielle Sedef

Group Financial Controller, Buro Four



Growth exposed the limits of the old system

The pressure became harder to ignore as Buro Four changed around it.

The company was establishing operations in the Netherlands and Germany, acquiring another business and moving into new areas. Each of those moves created new decisions for Danielle's team to inform: where the business could grow, where it could control costs, whether a proposed direction was financially sound.

Finance needed to be part of those conversations in real time, not weeks after the fact.

"We wanted to grow and develop into new areas," Danielle says. "There was a lot happening, a lot of change, and my role was changing."

The old system made that impossible. Finance was still reconstructing the past while the rest of the business was making decisions about the future.

"In order for us to be able to support the decisions and the business growing and moving forward, we couldn't continue just looking at the past and sitting with a very manual system," Danielle says.

Buro Four chose Sage Intacct because its investment in AI technology matched the company's vision for the future, while helping remove manual work and giving finance a platform that could grow with the business.

The objective was not simply to produce the same reports faster. It was to give finance the time and information to contribute while decisions could still be influenced.

Taking the manual work out of finance

One of the clearest examples of what changed can be seen in accounts payable.

Previously, invoices had to be sent to budget holders by email or on paper, tracked through the approval process and manually entered into the system. Managing that process could absorb hours from the finance team's day.

Sage Intacct now handles much of the routing and coding, leaving the team to review information rather than move it manually between people and systems. Reports are built inside the platform rather than exported, rebuilt and cross-checked in spreadsheets—which means Danielle can trust what she's looking at without having to verify it step by step.

"It's there. I just have to click a button, and it's there," she says. "That's just phenomenal, to be able to trust the system and to trust the data. It's just a breath of fresh air."



The most important result of that change is not the automation itself. It is what Michael, Buro Four's finance assistant, can do instead.

"So now that AP automation has saved us considerable hours of the day, my finance assistant is now able to grow and develop in his role," Danielle says. "He's now assistant management accountant."

Instead of spending much of his time coding and processing costs, Michael can analyse where the business is spending money, identify potential savings and support budget holders with more current information.

"He's actually analysing what are we spending our money on, where can we make savings, really help the business become more profitable," Danielle says.

That progression shows what changed inside the finance team. Routine work did not disappear simply to make the department more efficient. Removing it allowed the team to contribute in a different way.

"My team are able to provide the business with support in their decisions on wanting to grow, making savings, being profitable, and doing more of the fun strategic side of things, rather than just always looking in the past," Danielle says.



Five days changes the conversation

The most visible difference comes at month end.

What previously took two to three weeks now takes five days. Danielle can complete the board pack, send it to the directors and return to supporting the business rather than spending most of the month preparing historical information.

“The most significant impact of Sage Intacct has been not having to spend three weeks of a month just doing month end and getting it to a board pack. It’s now five days,” she says. Faster reporting also gives directors greater confidence that the information they are using reflects what’s happening in the business today. Finance can respond differently when directors ask questions.

“The most significant impact for our directors has been having access to information so quickly and not having to wait long periods of time to get it, or being able to feel that they can ask us questions and ask us to do analysis,” Danielle says. “Whereas in the past we would have had to say, ‘I just don’t have the time.’”

The reporting process itself is more dependable. When directors recently changed how they wanted profit-and-loss information presented, Danielle could reconfigure the reports inside Sage Intacct before the first month end of the new financial year. Under the previous process, she says, that change could have taken weeks or months.

“With a click of a button it was done,” she says. “The directors have that information in the first month of the financial year. That is unheard of in the history of here with our old systems.”

BURO FOUR

A finance team that can look forward

For Danielle, the change has also removed some of the personal pressure attached to reporting.

“I have a huge weight lifted off my shoulders,” she says. Reports no longer have to be repeatedly downloaded, rebuilt and cross-checked in spreadsheets. The information is produced within the system, giving Danielle confidence in the reports and the underlying data—and giving directors confidence to make decisions sooner.

That trust has changed the relationship between finance and the board. Directors now receive information while it is still useful. Danielle and Michael have more capacity to investigate what has happened, answer questions and help the business decide what to do next.

The clearest sign of that change appears every month when the reports arrive.

“It’s so nice that every month I see a smile on their face when they get the report, and they get it on time,” Danielle says.

After more than a decade of watching finance reconstruct the past, Danielle can now see the board using the numbers to move the business forward.

“It’s just phenomenal, to be able to trust the system and to trust the data. It’s just a breath of fresh air.”

Danielle Sedef

Group Financial Controller, Buro Four



Sage

©2026 The Sage Group plc or its licensors. All rights reserved. Sage, Sage logos, and Sage product and service names mentioned herein are the trademarks of Sage Global Services Limited or its licensors. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.