

Success Story

KQED dials in savings with its switch to Sage Intacct

Public radio station gains efficiencies that allow it to save the impact of one FTE.

About KQED

KQED provides the people of Northern California with the news and information they need to stay informed, inspired, and involved. Its television, radio, digital media, and educational services comprise one of the largest public media organizations in the nation, with a weekly audience of more than 2.5 million, 500 employees, and \$90 million in annual revenues.

Executive summary

As the media industry changes, KQED is changing with it, investing in the technologies that allow it to continue to be a force for good in the community. When the limitations of its older accounting system began constricting its mission, KQED made the switch to Sage Intacct.

Results with Sage Intacct

- Saving 40 hours per week by automating manual tasks.
- Seamless integration with other best-in-class applications.
- Simplified financial reporting uncovers actionable data.
- Improved data access promotes collaboration.



Sage

Company
KQED

Location
California, US

Industry
Nonprofit

Sage Product
Sage Intacct

KQED

Choosing best-in-class

“We were using Microsoft Navision for core accounting, but it didn’t integrate with the other business applications we rely on,” recalls Sara Williams, Director of Financial Solutions for KQED. “With separate, siloed systems, we couldn’t draw out the reports we needed and everything took too much time and too many steps. We knew there was a better way forward.”

KQED engaged a professional consulting team to help them select their next-generation business management solution. Together they evaluated NetSuite, Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central, and Sage Intacct as contenders — ultimately selecting Sage Intacct.

“The best-of-breed approach is very appealing to us,” Sara says. “We have already invested in other best-in-class applications, such as HRMS, budgeting and planning, and grants management, so we wanted a financial management application that would integrate with those and serve as the central data hub. Through its import options and APIs, Sage Intacct is designed for this, so it was our top choice.”

Efficiencies save 40 hours each week

The transition to Sage Intacct means automated workflows and approvals have replaced manual processes, bringing improved accuracy and efficiency. For example, KQED now pays all its vendors through direct ACH payments, eliminating the time required to print and mail paper checks. Additionally, integration with the organization’s bank speeds and simplifies bank reconciliation tasks, further freeing staff time and delivering real-time information surrounding cash flow.

Overall, the efficiencies gained save the organization 40 hours a week. “We were actually able to eliminate one FTE thanks to the efficiencies we’ve realized using Sage Intacct,” Sara notes.

Turning the channel from spreadsheets to automation

KQED is also tapping Sage Intacct to help eliminate mountains of spreadsheets and hours of duplicate data entry.

For example, the organization used to calculate and store its asset amortization schedules in spreadsheets and then manually enter the results into its accounting application. Now, Sage Intacct calculates the schedules automatically during invoicing. And the software’s Dynamic Allocations feature makes short work of year-end allocations of KQED’s general and administrative expenses — which were also calculated offline and manually entered. “Eliminating these manual tasks not only gives us more time for critical thinking and planning, but it also shows respect for the skills and talents of our team,” Sara adds.

Dimensions simplify and elevate reporting

KQED leverages the dimensional capabilities of Sage Intacct to simplify its chart of accounts while elevating its reporting capabilities.

“We make extensive use of dimensions to allow us to gain visibility into our various business lines, like TV and radio, and by project and fund,” Sara explains. “In our old system, we had to maintain separate GL account numbers

for every combination — which led to a bloated, complex chart of accounts. Dimensions eliminate that complexity and allow us to filter, group, and sort our financial and operational data more easily and more flexibly.”

As KQED plans its future, data surrounding membership revenue and subscriber retention rates becomes invaluable. “This type of reporting and data analysis is crucial to us, and it used to be done entirely in spreadsheets,” says Sara. “We’ve built reports in Sage Intacct that combine operational and financial data to deliver real-time insights without all the manual effort.”

Capturing and sharing strategic insights

Through improved access to data, KQED can involve more stakeholders in its strategic planning efforts. Finance managers, for example, now have self-service access to the budgeting and actual data related to their area of influence.

“It’s empowering to our staff and beneficial for the organization to share data this easily,” Sara explains. “We’re continually launching new projects and initiatives, and Sage Intacct provides critical insight into the success of those projects. As a result, we have a deeper understanding of what is working and resonating with our audiences and can provide more of it.”

Another way Sage Intacct boosts communication at KQED is through the Sage Intacct Collaborate feature. “It’s a chat function within Sage Intacct,” explains Sara. “We can add notes of explanation or ask questions surrounding a transaction. Other users reply and all the messages are saved to provide complete context. We’re taking these kinds of conversations out of emails and putting them right where they’re needed.”

Sara feels that easy access to actionable data offers the most significant benefit to KQED. “We’re able to look across the organization and identify trends and opportunities over time,” she says. “We use that data during our strategic planning sessions — and are finding levers we can pull to affect positive changes.”

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