



V1 Project Accounting

INTEGRATING V1 PROJECT ACCOUNTING

Scott Brownrigg is an international architectural practice with a heritage spanning almost 100 years. In recent years, the practice has consistently been rated in the top 20 of the UK's top 100 practices and has worked on some of the UK's largest projects.

With four offices in the UK, an office in Cyprus and employing 250 staff, Scott Brownrigg is a design led practice with interests in public sector, business space, large mixed use, residential, education, transport, hospitality, retail and industrial developments.

Integration plays an important part in the overall running and administrative success of the practice. The forward thinking, dynamic team continually seek to invest in the latest 'best practice' technologies to ensure every component of its business meets the demands of an ever-changing market place.

Tackling an increasing and demanding UK and international workload with existing processes and systems for timesheets, expense forms, contacts and projects, became progressively fragile. The Board agreed early in 2007 that it needed a more integrated, automated and robust approach to time and project resource management.

A thorough evaluation of the principal project management systems best suited to use in architectural practices was undertaken, resulting in a shortlist of two suppliers.

David Hughes-Hallett, finance and strategic projects consultant with Scott Brownrigg described the decision process. "Both the systems we shortlisted scored well against our requirements."

A key factor in the final decision came down to chemistry and the rapport we established with the V1 Project Accounting (V1 PA) team.

"We were seeking an 'implementation partnership', rather than a client/supplier relationship. Their approach during the tender process encouraged us to believe that they would be responsive to encompassing our needs and that we would be able to have some input in determining future functionality as the system evolves."

V1 PA is a tailored project management solution designed specifically for use by architects of all sizes to help them manage practice profitability by managing costs, time, and resources on individual projects in line with the target.

Being able to monitor resource usage means that practices may identify 'scope shift' opportunities to go back to the client and to bill for additional work.

David continues: "The V1 PA system best answers the business benefits we are pursuing, whilst meeting our needs for future-proof technology, worthy client credentials, user friendliness and accessibility, implementation confidence and ongoing support."



If we can utilise the V1 PA system to see trouble coming at an earlier point in the cycle, we can avoid it. 

David Hughes-Hallett,
finance and strategic projects
consultant, Scott Brownrigg

At the time of the working group's recommendation of V1 PA as its system of choice, the anticipated benefits were:

- ▶ Robustness through the replacement of fragile Microsoft Excel spreadsheets
- ▶ Pace and completeness of time reporting due to the ease with which timesheets can be completed at any time and from remote locations
- ▶ Speed, accuracy, relevance and accessibility and performance transparency
- ▶ A shift of finance department work balance away from data processing toward intelligent analysis and interpretation
- ▶ Better resource planning and management on individual projects
- ▶ Overhead efficiency without further resource

Following the implementation David says that the practice is "pleased with the relationship" that has ensued. Further work has recently been completed by the V1 PA team on specific enhancements and the practice is now ready to focus on ensuring that all users gain competence and that there is overall adoption of the system. He makes the point: "Any system is only as good as the information put into it, plus the competence and willingness of users to deploy it."

Since Scott Brownrigg has been using the system, the practice has been able to significantly automate the production reporting process. What was a labour intensive process has been transformed through the use of V1 PA.

Additionally, it is benefiting from access to swift and thorough information on the effectiveness of staff utilisation.

Prior to its installation, finance staff had to manually process up to 800 timesheets every month.

David commented: "There is no doubt that V1 PA has improved the timesheet process enormously. With staff increases, the thought of processing 250 timesheets a week using the old method is just unimaginable now."

There are no obvious glitches and it is now extremely easy to track what is missing and, even better, there seems to be minimal 'mis-posts' as the system is very user-friendly in this respect."

In terms of ROI, time and expense processing is far more manageable, month-end production reporting is swifter, utilisation and productivity information is more accessible, European directive information is improved, and management information and analysis opportunities continue to emerge.

V1 PA has provided greater empowerment to the project runners to manage the resources and profitability of their own projects and it is anticipated, this will lead to an accelerated awareness of issues and enhanced profit management.

Although Scott Brownrigg has already come a long way in their use of the project management system, they believe they are nowhere near using the system to its full potential. There are now plans to deploy invoicing, holiday charts and resource planning and sector reporting along with a range of other management reports.

The team are confident that 'as we build our expertise in using the system, further benefits will accrue'.

David referred to the "robustness of the system's integrated, month-end profitability reports as one of the real process benefits." He added, "Production reports in themselves are a success and the running and processing time is much reduced."

"Added to which, I feel that the V1 PA team has always been very accommodating in this area and they do seem to recognise the importance of the reports."

David concluded by saying: "We are happy with the decision we made to implement V1 PA. It is a good system and we are definitely experiencing benefits and we know that there are more to come."

This case study has been re-issued to reflect new product branding. Note that the product name in the original case study was "Project Minder".



Get in touch about how V1 can benefit your business:

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