Case Study

Client: Canadian Highway Contractor and Aggregate Producer

Client Size
(Annual Revenue)

- ◉ $10M to $50M
- ◦ $50M to $200M
- ◦ $200M to $500M
- ◦ $500M to $1B
- ◦ Over $1B

Problem

The company was using an older integrated accounting system that was no longer supported by the vendor. They also lacked a number of the applications that have recently been developed specially for highway contractors like Equipment Maintenance, Trucker Payables, a Scale Ticket Interface, and an Inventory application.

Unique Challenges

While there are several software products available in the United States specially designed for highway contractors and aggregate producers, they do not handle Canadian payroll or GST and PST particularly well. The products available to the Canadian market that include Canadian Payroll, GST and PST are not as mature or lack some of the sophisticated features high contractors need. The other challenge for this company was their lack of a network. Everyone operated on stand-alone PCs while the accounting department worked from a System 36 and dumb thumbnail.

Approach
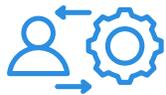
Through a standard selection process, Burger Consulting Group issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to several vendors that specialized in highway contractors and material producers, including one that did not have a Canadian Payroll package. This company ended up meeting all the other business requirements quite well and agreed to develop the Canadian payroll application, GST and PST processing for them. The cost of this custom development was split between the contractor and the developer, as the developer wanted to move into the Canadian market and clearly needed these functions. While this was being performed, Burger Consulting Group also helped the company evaluate local network service providers. Locating the network provider was a relatively easy matter; and after several design revisions, a comprehensive network, workstation, training, and support contract was signed.

Resolution

The company now has an office-wide LAN with Pentium workstations, which also have access to the integrated accounting system. The accounting system they selected handles their Canadian payroll, GST and PST, and integrates with their scale ticketing software. The office is far more efficient in its operations, and information is far more accessible.
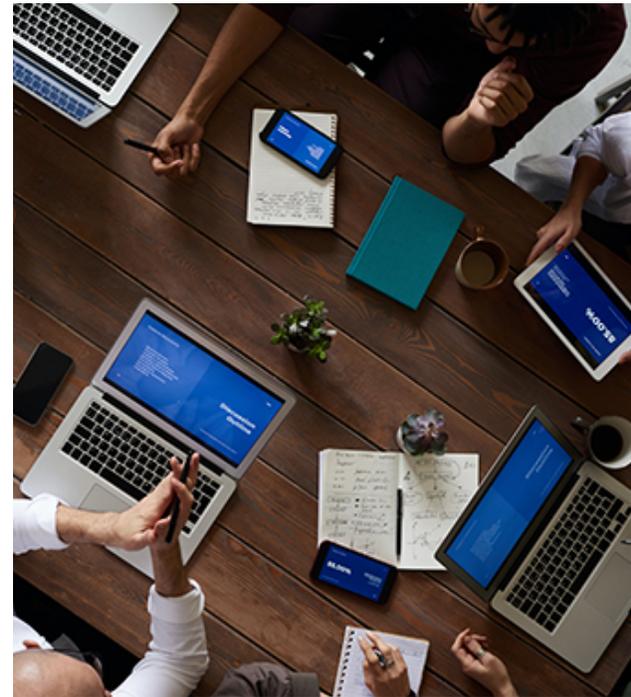
Lessons Learned:

- Software vendors are sometimes willing to share development costs with a contractor
- Sometimes you have to look for unconventional solutions and mitigate the risks associated with them
- Make sure to include an escape clause in the contract should the custom programming not meet expectations
- Finding local network service providers is not difficult and is preferable to a national company