



SERENIC SOFTWARE CASE STUDY

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) TRIBAL NATION OF INDIANS USES SERENIC NAVIGATOR TO SERVE ITS MEMBERS

Customer Profile

Today the Muscogee (Creek) Nation operates a more than \$106 million budget and has more than 2,400 employees. It has tribal facilities and programs across eight districts of the Muscogee Nation and serves more than 60,000 enrolled tribal members.

Business Situation

The Muscogee Nation needed to replace its soon-to-be obsolete financial management system with software that could help manage its large-scale funding and program spending for more than 300 separate budgets, along with incorporating human resources and payroll software.

Solution

The Muscogee Nation implemented Serenic Navigator Advanced Management Edition – certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV – as well as Serenic Human Resources and Payroll.

Benefits

- Manage complex budgets
- Speed reporting and processing
- Install checks and balances to improve overall financial management

“The greatest benefit is the time Navigator has saved us in issuing checks, which means clients get funds faster and vendors get payments in a timely manner. This is critical to our organization, since we are federally funded and can’t pay late fees. For us, no payment means no services for clients” – KATHY GUTHRIE – MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION DEPUTY CONTROLLER

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is a tribal government located in east central Oklahoma. Its people are descendents of a remarkable culture that spanned the region known today as the Southeastern United States before 1500 AD. The historic Muscogee built expansive towns in the present states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina.

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Federal funding from national departments and tribal funds from gaming, taxes and licenses provide income that the Muscogee Nation’s financial department must track. It produces quarterly reports on how federal funds are spent. On a daily basis, the Muscogee Nation issues more than 300 checks to vendors and clients – ranging from higher education scholarships and back-to-work financial assistance to disaster program aid.



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DEPUTY CONTROLLER

SCENARIO

In 2006, the Muscogee Nation learned that its enterprise financial system – FundWare – would no longer be supported. Its accounting firm, Finley & Cook, recommended Serenic Navigator, which the Muscogee Nation chose to implement. Immediately, the financial department recognized advantages over its previous system and appreciated Navigator’s Window’s-based platform for the ease-of-use and quick learning curve it provided.

Today, the Muscogee Nation’s 30 users in its central finance department utilize Serenic Navigator Advanced Management Edition – certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV – along with Serenic Human Resources and Payroll. It soon will add about 30 more users when its central financial office incorporates its Health System department, which includes clinics and hospitals for members, and takes over HR, payroll and payments.

“Our principal chief made this decision, so the tribe will be able to better serve our citizens with financial information readily at hand from Health Systems,” said Joyce Vaughn, Muscogee Nation’s Accounting Supervisor. “This will give us centralized access to Health Systems’ information and will speed up our payments to contract health providers, to whom members are referred.”

BENEFITS

Serenic Navigator has helped the Muscogee Nation manage complex budgets, speed reporting and processing and install checks and balances to improve its overall financial management.

“Serenic has definitely been worth the investment we made in the software,” said Kathy Guthrie, Muscogee Nation’s Deputy Controller. “We have 300 separate budgets to manage for our different programs. We’ve used Navigator to really streamline and eliminate a lot of the required information we used to have to key in. Now our budget tracking is much more simplified.”

- Serenic Navigator’s features – such as general journal entries allowing the user to post to two different fiscal years on the same journal entry and



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recurring journal entries – are tremendous time savers. “The greatest benefit is the time Navigator has saved us in issuing checks, which means clients get funds faster and vendors get payments in a timely manner,” said Guthrie. “This is critical to our organization, since we are federally funded and can’t pay late fees. For us, no payment means no services for clients.”

“We used to do check runs twice a week, and now we can do daily because it’s so much faster to enter data and transactions are posted automatically,” said Vaughn. “Sericnic has sped up our payments and errors are easier to catch because the system flags when an account number is invalid or a budget doesn’t match up. It also helps ensure items are charged to the right account number.” The Muscogee Nation is planning to use Serenic’s Remote Deposit feature to record deposits.

- **Procurement and purchase orders also are much faster** with Navigator, which enables documents to be reviewed and approved online, then printed out with the authorizers’ signatures. And bank reconciliation that used to take three to four days now takes less than a day with Serenic’s Positive Pay. “By the time we get our bank statements, we’ve already reconciled accounts,” said Vaughn. “With the high volume of payments we have, this is a huge benefit.”
- **Year-end audits are more efficient** because the team can pull reports from Navigator to get to the auditor in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet – saving time compared to creating reports by hand with their previous financial management solution.
- Serenic’s Positive Pay has helped the Muscogee Nation to **avoid check fraud**. Its team can run check numbers through the financial system when it completes check runs, to ensure all are valid check numbers before cashing the checks. Vaughn estimates the Muscogee Nation has saved more than \$5,000 in about four months by being able to do this. Previously, it wouldn’t know about a bad check until the team got its monthly bank statement.

“If someone asked us today to change systems, I would not want to,” said Guthrie. “With nearly 65 years of accounting experience between two of us, we’ve worked with many other systems and we both appreciate the positive difference Serenic’s features make.”

For more information

For more information about Serenic Software products and services, call 877-737-3642, or visit the Web site at: www.serenic.com.



ABOUT OUR PARTNER

Finley & Cook, founded in 1947, is an Oklahoma-based Certified Public Accounting firm with offices in Alaska and Hawaii. The firm serves nonprofit organizations, Native American governments and casinos, municipal utilities, foundations, city and state agencies and many more. The firm's approach combines Finley & Cook's experience, unique implementation and training methodology, and state-of-the-art financial software, including Serenic Navigator for Microsoft Dynamics NAV, to provide clients with a strong fund accounting solution to help meet their missions. For more information, visit www.finley-cook.com.



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