

Time to Analyse

How the ORYX Finance Automation solution helped Design International to process and report their timesheet data

Not too long ago, the processing of hundreds of weekly timesheets was a frustrating and time consuming exercise at Design International.

How did Accountagility help overcome this challenge, and what advantages were experienced as a result of using ORYX?

Client Fact File

- Award winning International Architects firm
- Founded in 1965 in Toronto, Canada
- Present in 45 countries
- Pioneers of design features that have become industry benchmarks
- Over 10 million sqm of built architecture around the globe

Key Project Metrics

- Duration: 2 ½ Months
- Key Business Benefits Achieved:
 - Reduction in time to process timesheet data
 - Integration into the GL to support project costing
 - More time for greater analysis of the numbers

Background

When Paul Mackrow, Director of Finance and Administration joined Design International, he quickly saw that efficiencies could be gained if the capturing and processing of timesheets could be improved. He explains in his own words: "Design International have a number of studios geographically dispersed in London, Milan, Shanghai and Dubai. Each office has a varying number of architects associated to it, and each architect is required to submit a timesheet for every week. At the time I came on board, finance was spending vast amounts of time reviewing and manually compiling timesheet information, using Excel spreadsheets. It was clear there was a better way to process this data, and save our finance staff valuable time". He continues, "I also wanted to be able to extract meaningful data, but at that time, it was such a long manual process, gaining informative reports was not an easy task".



The agile difference

The Project

Paul engaged with Accountagility to review their requirements, and three main areas were raised:

- The need to automate the capture of timesheets and be able to analyse the data
- To capture project revenue and costs and provide profitability analysis
- Enable import and export integration into the incumbent general ledger HansaWorld

Using the ORYX Platform, a custom process automation solution was designed. Working closely with the Design International team, Accountagility undertook great care to ensure the solution limited instances of user error, this was achieved by creating pre-populated timesheet templates to include the Architect's name, the studio they work at, and the project codes and project names they were working on.

Building on that first step, it was important to improve the way data was submitted and validated. Today, the finance office load timesheet files using the automated data import facility, using robust validation techniques. Any exceptions are flagged for a finance team member to resolve, giving the option to review data before it's committed into the system.

Paul Mackrow comments "It was imperative that the submitted timesheet information would enable us to compute project costs. This required details such as the architect grade and the associated rate card". Once the data was loaded into ORYX, the rules based computation engine produced two outputs; one was a journal detailing the project cost information, exported into HansaWorld, this is useful for the company's general management accounting information. The second was to provide Cube Views providing onscreen analysis to show profitability by project, or by studio.

The ORYX Solution

A business process automation solution, designed to meet the exacting needs for the finance office at Design International

Stacey Munday, Operations Director at Accountagility who worked closely with Design International confirms: "ORYX offers a number of analysis and reporting techniques, we wanted to make as many of these available to Design International. This included cube view analysis that allows users to manipulate the views output using various dimensional filters. Our cube view analysis contains drilldown and excel export capabilities. Also our specialist reporting module enabled journal exports to be designed to Design International's exacting needs".

Key Outcomes

Design International has streamlined the way important information is processed and presented back to the company, saving valuable man hours of finance staff time.

Covid-19 impacted most businesses in many ways, and Design International was not an exception. Like countless firms, staff numbers fluctuated and many employees were required to work from home. Despite this, the Timesheet and Analysis system from Accountagility continued to work throughout, and continues to support Design International today.

At its peak, the Timesheet and Analysis system was processing timesheets for hundreds of staff members on a weekly basis. The solution is flexible and handles unexpected increases and decreases in volumes of timesheets.

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Paul Mackrow
Director of Finance and Administration

"Without implementing ORYX, the office of finance would have spent a lot of time number crunching, rather than performing analysis of the numbers".

"Throughout the implementation, Accountagility were attentive and provided attention to detail. On the whole we have experienced a close working relationship. Our engagement commenced with Accountagility because I saw there was an initial need for the business. What Accountagility have delivered has benefited our business over the last 5 years" concludes Paul.

About Design International

Design International was founded in 1965 in Toronto, Canada. With truly innovative design becoming the brand's identity, the practice quickly found its footing in the arena of architecture and has since spread its wings across the globe with headquarters in London, and offices in Milan, Shanghai, and Dubai.



About Accountagility

Accountagility provides a full suite of solutions to help companies accelerate business performance, reduce risk and deliver cost savings of up to 80% in the Finance function.

The solution deployed for Design International was a tailor made process automation solution using the ORYX platform.