

Geller & Company Streamlines Finance Operations for the Jewish Association for Services for the Aged

The Jewish Association for Services for the Aged (JASA), founded 35 years ago, provides social, recreational, health, cultural and educational programs for older persons, regardless of their race, religion or ethnicity, to help sustain them in their homes and communities, and to offer opportunities for a better quality of life. When JASA realized it needed to address the shortcomings in its accounting systems, it turned to Geller & Company, a New York-based outsourcing firm, for software implementation, accounting and finance outsourcing, and business process review services.

At the time of the implementation, JASA's accounting function was split into two different entities, one for its eight residual housing companies and the other for services for the aged. All are separate legal entities running multiple accounting systems. While JASA's housing side was using a combination of Great Plains, QuickBooks and Excel, the services side ran entirely on American Fundware. Since all the accounting was done centrally and JASA was maintaining many different platforms and applications, which were not all relational databases, the use of disparate systems did not result in the most efficient system. The accounting department found it was spending a lot of time producing reports in the different formats required by the city, state and federal government agencies, which JASA depends on for funding. The inability to slice and dice the financial information within the current accounting systems created inefficiencies. Also, too much time was being spent outside of the accounting system massaging the numbers in Excel. In addition, from a people standpoint, maintaining different systems fragmented the expertise within JASA's accounting department. Clearly, there had to be a better approach.

Within 60 days, the Geller & Company team had all of JASA's housing companies up and running on Solomon, now a Microsoft Business Solutions product. "We chose Solomon because JASA's business is project-driven by way of government contracts, and there is a comprehensive project manager module within Solomon that allowed us to capture and track all of the contract specifics and remove the project data from the chart of accounts," said Thomas Rotolo, Senior Account Executive at Geller & Company who oversaw the JASA implementation.

While Geller & Company implements and supports a variety of business software products from different vendors, including SAP, Antonette Favuzza, Senior Account Executive at Geller & Company adds that longevity was also a primary reason for choosing Solomon. "Microsoft is putting a lot behind its midsized company business products, so obviously Solomon is going to be around. Also, it has the advantage of integrating well with other products that JASA could conceivably need in the future." In addition to the implementation, Geller & Company helped JASA revamp its processes in conjunction with the new software. "We reconfigured their chart of accounts and performed a business process review to identify procedural enhancement opportunities," said Rotolo. "We even assisted them in formally defining the terms and nomenclature used in process descriptions, since the old system had not kept up with changes in the organization. The same service could be referred to by four different names."

JASA emerged with a more complete picture of the organization and way it does business – better reporting, better analysis and with one uniform, central software system instead of two fragmented systems. Geller & Company worked with JASA to standardize budgeting and operations, including how invoices and expenses were processed. Geller & Company also improved JASA's government funding source compliance by producing multiple reports tailored to the specific requirements of different government funding sources — a major plus, since reimbursement from government agencies is vital to JASA's cash flow.

According to David J. Stern, Executive Vice President at JASA, "Our organization is a social service agency dedicated to helping elderly persons and their families. Outsourcing the accounting and finance functions allows us to concentrate on our core mission. Geller & Company specializes in efficient, highquality finance and accounting outsourcing, and they bring to our collaboration a great deal of experience working seamlessly with many different organizations including not-for-profit agencies."

Geller & Company provides finance, accounting, tax outsourcing services to emerging growth, middle-market and global organizations in varied industries.