

MAS 90

CUSTOMER

Auto Media, Inc.

CORPORATE PROFILE

Headquarters

Phoenix, Arizona

Type of Business

Advertising for automotive dealerships

Number of Locations

One

Number of Employees

10

Annual Revenue

\$20 million

SYSTEM PROFILE

Computer System

Windows NT

Users on System: 8

MAS 90 Modules in Operation

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- General Ledger
- Job Cost
- Purchase Order
- Visual Integrator

BSAN Premier Advisor Reveals Better Job Cost Tracking Accounting Practices

Auto Media is an internal advertising group supporting more than 20 automotive dealerships throughout Arizona, Texas, Georgia and California. Its project load is enormous — at least 1,000 different jobs every month, from mammoth tent sales for multiple dealerships to single-spot newspaper placements.

To obtain pricing discounts, Auto Media purchases newspaper, television, radio and special promotional ads in volume, allocating costs to individual dealerships. Sales managers submit monthly advertising requests to Auto Media on Excel spreadsheets. Internal graphic artists also use Excel to track accrued expenses. Each ad is treated as a separate project and identified by a unique job number, against which costs are accumulated and billed back to the correct dealership.

The company's parent uses MAS 90 as its accounting system for more than 50 accounting entities. Auto Media converted to MAS 90 in early 2002 for consistency, and implemented the Job Cost module for better cost tracking, billing and project management.



When Cindy Sneden, Auto Media's controller, tried to accrue costs for a job that had been estimated but not yet incurred, the numbers kept coming out wrong. She discovered that a former employee had not configured Job Cost correctly. Fortunately, training needs led her to an accounting firm affiliated with the Best Software Accountants Network (BSAN) Premier Advisor Program.

The BSAN Premier Advisor program provides accounting and business management software and support to public accounting professionals. Advisors receive practice development resources,

CHALLENGE

Automate data entry and job cost processing for 1,000+ advertising promotions every month and enhance overall project management capabilities.

SOLUTION

MAS 90 Accounts Receivable, Job Cost and Visual Integrator modules with consultant expertise from a BSAN Premier Advisor and their Authorized Business Partner.

RESULTS

Saving 40 hours per month with automated advertising data transfer to Job Cost application, and another 40 hours from seamless job invoice imports into Accounts Receivable.

“We used to spend 40 hours a month on data entry for Job Cost. Those tasks have been eliminated by the new accounting and system changes. I estimate we’re saving another 40 hours a month not having to manually input invoices into the AR module.”

*Cindy Sneden
Controller
Auto Media, Inc.*

access to training, and reference materials to better manage their practice and serve their clients. The program helps practitioners build alliances as “recommenders” with local Best Software technology partners, who in turn provide superior services and assist with Best Software solutions for advisors’ clients.

BSAN Consultant Sees a Solution

The years of accounting and MAS 90 expertise that Auto Media’s BSAN Advisor brought to the table resulted in speedy insights. “Our Advisor saw right away that reimplementing Job Cost would be better than tweaking what we had,” Sneden explains. “As a result of her recommendations, we developed a system that would bring us into alignment with standard accepted accounting practices, and at the same time improve revenue recognition and cost tracking.”

The new system includes additional fields for accounting, plus spreadsheets that pull data directly from the designers’ budgets. The Visual Integrator module was deployed to automate information transfer from the spreadsheets to both the AR and Job Cost modules. Multiple layers were necessary to accommodate Auto Media’s complicated data import requirements. The savings have been dramatic.

“We used to spend 40 hours a month on data entry for Job Cost,” says Sneden.

“Those tasks have been eliminated by the new accounting and system changes. Now we just spend one day a month doing manual verification of balances. This has freed up staff time for other important tasks.”

Auto Media had never used an AR module for billing. Now, however, the business process system changes makes it possible to pull every job into the AR system, resulting in more accurate billing statements and greater accountability overall. Splits for multiple dealerships are handled with ease, and costs for production, photos, editing, typing and processing can be broken out for special reports. “I estimate we’re saving another 40 hours a month not having to manually input invoices into the AR module,” Sneden says.

“The beauty of our new system is that we don’t have to change anything, whether it’s requests from our dealers or budgets from our design team,” Sneden notes. “Everything is imported and calculated automatically. We just check final figures at the end of the month.”

Sneden praises her BSAN Advisor for creativity as well as product expertise, using ingenuity to adapt existing software features to meet an unusual accounting challenge. “Our BSAN Advisor has been a godsend for us,” she says. “Her accounting abilities and product knowledge really saved us time and money. We could never have done all this without her.”



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