



In late summer, 2001, the North Carolina League of Municipalities and their managed funds, decided to replace their financial systems with software that would be the standard for all of their funds. They were using two software systems to manage various departments. Neither of these systems were integrated or interfaced with their membership or risk management system. This resulted in a considerable amount of additional work to generate their monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports. Thus a key requirement of the new financial software was the ability to easily interface the new software to the risk management system and to the membership systems. Most transactions originate within one of these systems.

NCLM is a non-partisan network of 519 North Carolina cities, towns, and villages who work together to provide the best municipal government possible to the citizens of North Carolina. Over the years, the League has augmented its staff and services to fulfill members' needs. Some of the League services include:

- A strong policy-development process for determining municipal goals and policies
- Strong lobbying programs at state and federal levels
- The ability to shape policy affecting municipal legislation and regulations
- Assistance with day-to-day management and personnel questions
- Valuable research and statistical reports
- Conventions and training workshops
- Special contract management.

Financial and Information Systems personnel had developed a long list of requirements that the new system had to be able to meet. In addition to meeting these requirements they wanted a system that could be tailored to fit NCLM's methods of operations and process flows. Another big issue was forms management. Since NCLM manages a number of different funds, they wanted a system that minimized the need for company specific forms. NCLM and its related funds manage to a budget. A key requirement was the ability to import a budget into Dynamics NAV from Excel.

NCLM developed a long list of candidates to be evaluated as part of their selection process. This included upgrading their older versions of software to current versions of the same products. After careful consideration they chose Microsoft Dynamics NAV (formerly Navision). NCLM was particularly impressed with the ease with which modifications could be made to the software to accommodate their individual requirements. Dynamics NAV also provided an easy to use functionally rich product that met the majority of NCLM's requirements. Minor modifications were made to accommodate user requests.

Work simplification was a key issue and wherever possible the system was tailored to minimize the manual effort to process information. NCLM was particularly impressed with the ease with which modifications could be made to the software to accommodate their individual requirements.

All Dynamics NAV reports are standardized to 8.5 X 11" and print on any laser printer. Invoices, Orders, and checks were customized

to print the funds logo, name and address on the form. Multiple copies are printed as needed and copy use is printed on each copy to indicate what it is for. Using Deep River's AP check with MICR encoding add on, checks can be printed on stock blank check paper on a laser printer with a special MICR Toner cartridge. This greatly improved NCLM's processes eliminating the need for fund specific forms and eliminating the need to constantly change paper on the printer.

The implementation began in November, 2001 and the company went live on March 1, 2002. During this time all of the various transaction processing systems were interfaced with Dynamics NAV. Dataports were developed by Deep River to extract the data from the external systems through Dynamics NAV transaction journals and forms into the Dynamics NAV General Ledger System.

Manual journaling of transactions from the membership system and the risk management systems has been eliminated. Since detail transactions are processed through Dynamics NAV the users can now drill down to the sales invoice from the accounting system and send a copy of the invoice to members through email if necessary. By having transaction detail in their accounting system, it makes analysis and forecasting much easier.

As users identified modification requests, they were reviewed with the team along with estimates of programming, testing and consulting time. Decisions were made on which requests should be approved and a budget was established for the development of these requests. Although modification requests were greater than initially anticipated, this proactive approach kept management informed of

the expected cost of the project and the cost of requested modifications.

Monthly reporting from Deep River provided a clear picture of the status of the project compared to its projected costs. The implementation was well planned, and executed by both the NCLM and Deep River teams.

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