Synopsis

Client: Professional firm offering telecommunications, engineering and information technology services.

Key Pains: Current system was incapable of handling multiple ongoing projects, effectively capturing time and expenses, and forecasting and budgeting for projects.

Solution: Microsoft Dynamics SL

Key Benefits: Improved bidding and project profitability, increased recourse and capacity planning and better time and expense capture.

The Client

ESEI is a licensed professional Telecommunications, Engineering, and Information Technology Services company that offers 4 distinct types of services:

- Transmission Engineering for high capacity networks
- Network Engineering support
- Data Integration Solutions
- Technology Consulting

In business since 1994, this El Paso-based business serves private and commercial clients (with a particular concentration on the energy sector), the Defense Department, US Federal agencies, and several school districts.

The Challenge

Continuous strong growth was starting to render ESEI's existing accounting and financial management systems inadequate. Properly recording and tracking the time spent on individual projects was increasingly becoming a time-consuming and error-prone task. Excel spreadsheets just weren't cutting it anymore. Project management was becoming a small nightmare. Resource planning and forecasting capabilities were also severely limited, which meant that adequately managing project capacity was extremely difficult.

The final impetus for change came with the landing of several government contracts, each of which had stringent auditing requirements. The system ESEI was running had served them well in the early days, but simply lacked the horsepower to deliver the reporting that clients now demanded in order to award further contracts.

ESEI had also expanded its employee roster over the years and now sourced expertise on individual projects from across the globe, as required to deliver the results their clients expect. Managing the project efforts of these remote employees required a solution that could be accessed anytime, anywhere.

The lack of management reporting and analysis capabilities was also becoming a significant impediment to growing the business further. It was difficult to ensure that bids for new contracts were profitable and based on real historical data, as well as to ensure that forecasts were accurate.

The Solution

ESEI carefully considered several alternatives before selecting the Microsoft Dynamics SL solution. They found it to contain an ideal combination of capabilities. Firstly, it integrated seamlessly with the Microsoft technical platform and office productivity products that ESEI was already using. Secondly, it had all the time tracking and project management functionality that ESEI needed to coordinate multiple projects and complete them, on time and on budget.

An extranet component also allowed for all remote employees, regardless of their location, to be connected to the system in real time.

ESEI chose Clients First because of their strong technical expertise in the Microsoft Dynamics software they chose, their proven track record as technology implementers, and their ability to offer local support.

The Benefits

Having installed their new Microsoft Dynamics SL solution in 2005, ESEI has found that they have realized several business benefits:

- Dramatically reduced errors in time and expense capture. The Microsoft Dynamics SL solution is a major improvement over the linked Excel spreadsheets they were using to capture time and expenses related to ongoing projects.
- Significantly increased project profitability. Because projects can be more efficiently tracked, both in terms of the time expended and other expenses incurred, they can be more rigorously managed and brought in on time and on budget to the client, and with a profit to ESEI.
- Superior bidding capabilities. Because past projects can be analyzed in terms of their total costs, based on real historical data, ESEI has a far greater ability to bid future projects in a manner that is profitable to them, while still being competitive enough to win.
- Greatly improved resource and capacity management and planning. Because forecasts are more accurate, projects can be resourced far more efficiently and appropriately.
- Streamlined operations. The Microsoft Dynamics SL solution enables an electronic approval process and automated workflows that greatly increase operational efficiency.

In Summary

Antonio Rico, President at ESEI, sums it up this way:

     "Clients First are the right people with the right attitude when it comes to management solutions. They work with you to first understand your business needs, and then to come up with a solution. Their knowledge of technology, and their support, is first rate. Very highly recommended."