



EdComs replaces a labour-intensive time recording and job costing process with a web-based application from Tempora that delivers scalable cost reporting capabilities without placing a drain on in-house IT resources.

Overview

Pressure on consultancies is intensifying all the time. Amidst fierce competition, clients want greater transparency and a better understanding of the value for money they get from firms. But with shrinking margins, consultancies need to be wary of over-servicing and keep a sharp eye on their time and costs.

The challenge

EdComs is an educational consultancy, providing creative and innovative research, strategies and solutions in a range of media for organisations who want to communicate with and through education.

As a consultancy, EdComs' primary asset is its employees and their time, and monitoring that time is critical to the success of the company.

According to Richard Cowen, Finance Director at EdComs, one of the hardest things is ensuring the company is charging the correct amounts and not over-servicing, especially where a client prefers to be charged a fixed fee.

Traditionally, EdComs had been using a manual and labour-intensive system of monitoring time, which Cowen describes as a "world of Excel spreadsheets and hard work".

The company needed a means of recording and analysing data at a much more detailed level.



Solution

EdComs looked at several job costing, time and accounts solutions on the market before adopting Tempora.

“A key concern for us was being sure we could integrate a new system quickly and with as little disruption as possible”, says Cowen.

“Because it’s web-based, Tempora has no in-house IT needs, and that meant we could get it up and running almost instantly.”

Furthermore, because Tempora doesn’t require EdComs to run its own server, there’s no need for EdComs to manually upgrade software every time there’s a new release.

“We can introduce new services or system upgrades to Tempora immediately, says Chris Smith, Tempora’s Director. “And this is a real benefit for those businesses keen on minimising their own technical support resources.”

EdComs was also keen that staff would be able to get up to speed with the product quickly once it was in operation. Tempora’s clear layout and simple functionality appealed in this respect.

Cowen says, “Nobody likes filling out timesheets. But they’re an inevitable bug-bear of any time-based organisation. The easier they are to use, the more useful they are when it comes to reporting costs.”

EdComs uses Tempora’s snap-shot reporting functionality to identify potential areas of over-servicing and monitor client profitability. Compared with EdComs’ existing system of spreadsheets, Tempora allows users to configure reports according to the level of detail they need for each client, whether by project, product or region, or another set of criteria.

Tempora also allows EdComs to import data from other existing systems – notably Sage, which means that elements such as job revenue can be factored into profit and loss reports.

Finding a solution that would sit alongside Sage was an important consideration for EdComs.



“Installing a fully-integrated system would have meant having to replace Sage and this was something we did not want to do,” says Cowen.

“Tempora gives us the reporting capability we need without disrupting our other systems.”

Results

According to Cowen, staff at EdComs find Tempora simple and straightforward to use, and the system has been “adopted well”. Those filling in timesheets are able to do so with ease, while the finance team have no difficulty linking it to Sage.

Cowen is drawn in particular to Tempora’s job costing and client profitability features.

“The ability to get a snapshot overview of whether certain clients are being over-serviced is particularly useful. We are able to monitor client profitability with greater accuracy, and bill accordingly – something we were never properly able to do before.”