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Consultants communicate billable time and project status from client sites

Enterprise: Longview Solutions

Industry: Application software for financial management

Application: Changepoint-Billable time capture and project management

Profile: Longview's team of financial experts provides turnkey financial management solutions including Khalix software, complete implementation assistance, comprehensive education, and consulting services. The company's customers are cross-industry, including manufacturing, automotive, telecommunications, energy, oil and gas companies.

Longview was capturing new clients and enjoying real success for its integrated financial management and decision support solutions based on its Khalix software. Ironically, it was having less success capturing billable hours and project management data from its field consultants and getting that information back to company headquarters in a timely manner. This was costing the client administrator hours of time ensuring the records were up-to-date.

Given the complex nature of its software solutions, the company maintains on-site consultants to help its clients implement their solutions. The problem was keeping employees who seldom visited company offices in touch and keeping the company informed on project status. But, it was the slow-moving billable hours data that sparked Longview to action.

With limited access to corporate office systems, Longview consultants were using a myriad of methods to submit timesheets and expenses—including voicemail, faxes, and rushed visits to the office between flights to enter their time into the time keeping system. Periodically, an administrator had to gather all this information and enter it to produce invoices in a timely manner. The system was cumbersome and time-consuming. Clearly, the situation that had to be fixed.

The company decided that equipping consultants with laptops was too costly to justify since consultants spent most of their time on client systems. Then Longview discovered Changepoint software from Changepoint Corporation on the Palm Computing® platform. Changepoint, an ERP solution for IT consultants, was specifically designed to help mobile users status projects and enter time and expenses. The solution had immediate appeal to Longview consultants. The inexpensive handheld device allowed them to capture their time and expenses, and synchronize the information with the central system via laptop or modem when convenient.

Capturing consultants' billable hours now works like clockwork. Hours logged on the Palm Computing platform device are automatically directed to managers for approval, then to the corporate database where information is delivered to an invoicing module. The information is updated every time the consultants synchronize.

Beyond billing information, such mission-critical project data as hours spent, project status, and time and resources needed to complete the project is captured by the consultants and communicated back to company managers. With this information in hand, managers can be more in touch with status on the company's core business–client IT projects.

Since Longview implemented the new Palm Computing platform solution, they've cut administrative costs, saved time and increased communication. The time consultants spend on administrative tasks has been cut dramatically and they appreciate the convenience of the Palm Computing platform devices. The administrator no longer has to manually input time sheets—a job that took hours every week—so she can focus on other aspects of her job. Longview was able to outfit all the consultants with handhelds instead of laptops at a fraction of the cost, with similar results.

By taking a short look at the Palm Computing platform, Longview found a better way to do business.

Mobilize Your Enterprise

One of a series that profiles real-world handheld computing solutions on the Palm Computing® platform.

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