

EBS gives Entity Solutions room to grow with NAV

When Entity Solutions recognised that it had outgrown its accounting software, the multi-award-winning professional engagement (contractor management) services company turned to Evolution Business Systems (EBS) and the Microsoft Dynamics NAV enterprise management software to meet its needs.

With turnover growth of nearly 50 per cent in 2010-11, Entity Solutions chose Microsoft Dynamics NAV because it offered the ability to immediately meet its current needs and the flexibility to meet all requirements for the foreseeable future. For Entity Solutions CEO Matthew Franceschini, the Microsoft Dynamics NAV project was “the single most successful technology implementation I have ever seen” – on time, within budget and delivering more than EBS initially promised.

Business problem

Founded in 1999 and servicing Australia nationally with offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, Entity Solutions is Australia’s leading professional engagement (contractor management) services company. Entity Solutions provide holistic engagement, management and value add services for white collar contractors (referred to as Independent Professionals or IPros by Entity Solutions) – and the organisations engaging them. Entity Solutions also offers migration, backoffice, business establishment and management services.

Entity Solutions is an award-winning company. Recent achievements include:

- winning the Service Excellence category in the Australian Business Awards for 2009, 2010 and 2011; winning the Australian Service Excellence Award (VIC) from Customer Service Institute of Australia (CSIA) for 2008, 2009 and 2010;
- appearing in the BRW Top 500 private companies list since 2007; and
- reaching the finals of Excellence in Customer Service Award as well as the Fastest Growing Private Business (>\$100 million) Award in 2011

Distinct from recruitment services, Entity Solutions does not search, select or place IPros into contract work, but rather manages the commercial relationship when an IPro secures an assignment or is already under contract to another business.

In the last 12 months, Entity Solutions supported more than 4,300 IPros throughout the country, invoiced more than 620 contracting organisations for their services and provided them with payment as well as a range of accounting and taxation compliance services.

Entity Solutions Finance Manager Wayne Willey said the company is focussed on providing superior service to its customers. “Our role is to relieve the burden of administration for our IPro customers” he said.

“We’re dealing with time-poor people, so we have to provide a solution for that problem. We aim to differentiate ourselves by our customer service. The awards we’ve received speak for themselves.”

“This makes it a special challenge in terms of accounting as we are dealing with people’s livelihoods, their money, their disposable incomes, so it’s not just running a standard Accounts Payable system.”

In 2010, Entity Solutions identified that it needed to replace its five-year-old accounting software, which was limited in its reporting and analytical capabilities by being a period-driven system that required third-party software to generate reports. The software sometimes crashed, which could cause a half-day of disruption to staff every month.

Technology solution

After examining the market and multiple suppliers, Entity Solutions selected Melbourne-based EBS to provide the Microsoft Dynamics NAV enterprise resource planning system.

Mr. Willey said Entity Solutions chose EBS and Microsoft Dynamics NAV because they offered a straightforward evolution path for the business.

“We chose EBS because they had superior knowledge of our business.”

“EBS spent the time to understand what we needed. EBS became our partner rather than a supplier: If we wanted, I could take one of their people and put them in our business and they would fit in straight away.”



“The single most successful technology implementation I have ever seen” – on time, within budget and delivering more than EBS initially promised.

Entity Solutions CEO Matthew Franceschini

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"While other products we reviewed were limited, NAV is more comparable to a full enterprise resource planning system without all the features that we don't require. NAV was able to handle our high volume of transactions, it provided us with date-driven reporting and it offered us a great deal of flexibility and expandability of its capacity. We can modify it to suit what we need as we grow."

"NAV provides the accounting and reporting part of our business system. NAV also gives us the ability to integrate with our internal CRM system. With support from our IT department, we can develop reports that extract data from these two different applications."

"EBS has the ability to modify the database behind NAV to suit our needs. We have plans to do more with it for the foreseeable future. Normally, an accounting system will last for about five years, but I'd expect NAV to be able to continually evolve and adapt to our requirements as we grow because of its flexibility and its ability to integrate with other software such as our internal CRM."

Mr. Willey also said the migration to Microsoft Dynamics NAV went "almost flawlessly". "EBS managed the project and did the bulk of the work," he said.

"We worked together. We remained within budget. EBS was responsive and worked with our internal developers and our internal systems and acquired an understanding of our internal CRM."

"We went live at the specified date and our business process didn't change that much. We got reports out on day one. We were aware of our financial position on day one."

Business benefits

Mr. Willey said improved reporting was an immediate benefit of Microsoft Dynamics NAV. "With our former system, we couldn't get real-time reporting," he said.

"In order to pay our IPros, we invoice the organisations they provide services to and then we pay our IPros once those funds are received, so we need to have an up-to-date accounts receivable system. When you're dealing with people's livelihoods, you need provide them with prompt responses, which requires immediate access to information in real-time, not some historical report."

"As NAV is date-driven, not period driven, we can get a snapshot at any time, which allows us to convert our Accounts Receivable to Payroll. This enables us to be much more responsive to the business. We have a live General Ledger and our Balance Sheet and Income Statement are live."

In total, the Finance Department at Entity Solutions has saved at least 58 hours per month by eliminating disruption and manual processes with Microsoft Dynamics NAV.

Mr. Willey said the new system was extremely stable. "We've had no glitches and no downtime," he said. "Previously, we used to have something like four hours a month with people out of the system due to unplanned downtime. As our financial team provides a service to internal customers, reporting to executive levels, a system that doesn't require a lot of attention gives us more time to provide that service to our customers in other departments. Now I spend less time creating

reports and modifying spreadsheets and more time improving business processes and working with staff in other departments."

Entity Solutions CEO Matthew Franceschini said the Microsoft Dynamics NAV project was the single most successful technology implementation he had been aware of. "I've seen hundreds of technology implementations in my career and I'm not aware of too many that have come in on time, within budget and even delivered improved enhancements on what was promised at the outset," he said.

"From an executive's perspective, NAV has provided Entity Solutions with improved assurance of decision-making. It gives us the ability to make decisions with greater certainty based on access to information that is more real-time, more accurate and quicker to access."

"As a company, EBS is agile and responsive: They are transparent and they deliver. Our approach with any supplier is to have a win-win partnership. If you can come from that perspective, if you find a supplier that can trust you on that assumption, you can be more transparent and open to discussion on inputs and outputs, so you will get a better result. With EBS that's the approach they take."



More about Evolution Business Systems...

Evolution Business Systems (EBS) specialises in business management solutions that give you the freedom to focus on your business. EBS does this by automating your core business processes and integrating your specialist business applications to deliver the right financial management solution. With deep expertise in leading financial applications including Arrow Financials and Microsoft Dynamics™ NAV, EBS works beside clients to ensure their software solves problems rather than creating more.

EBS has a detailed implementation strategy that is tailored to customers in terms of timelines, requirements, risks and responsibilities as well as project variations and external requirements. While it does not sell or support hardware or site network environments, EBS informally partners with selected specialists in these areas to provide clients with a "total solution".

'making it happen'

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