

# Sage CRM Sage Accpac ERP



## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

### CLIENT

Winnipeg  
Chamber of Commerce

### SAGE BUSINESS PARTNER

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membershipmanagement

### INDUSTRY

Membership and Trade  
Associations

### LOCATION

Winnipeg, Manitoba

### SYSTEM

Sage CRM, Sage Accpac ERP

## Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce Automates for Growth with Sage Accpac Extended Enterprise Suite

The concept of businesses working together to foster growth in their community is nothing new. In fact, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce began doing that in 1868. In the past 140 years, change has been constant and the organization has had to shift its approach in order to stay competitive and meet the mission of the organization. The chamber has historically met these challenges head on and recently had reason to shift again.



When the economy took a downturn after the .COM bubble and the events of September 11, the management of the Winnipeg chamber began to look for ways to develop their operations in a way that would improve their communication with specific groups and also drive more income to the organization. What they found was a Sage Software solution that had a highly integrated customer relationship database and accounting system.

Using Sage CRM and Sage Accpac ERP the chamber was able to utilize a module developed specifically to help membership and trade organizations with most of their everyday challenges.

### Membership Management in "Internet" Time

So what has the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce been able to do with an end-to-end solution? Everything! Today the chamber is able to run the complete lifecycle of a member with very little intervention from employees and the system handles various tasks that used to be very difficult to manage and execute.

Using the mass email functions of the membership management solution it is very easy to communicate with committees, specific membership groups, and also to solicit new members. The database handles mass emails and has the ability to send and collect surveys of information.

### CHALLENGE

Replace multiple technologies used in individual departments and provide an integrated system to handle all aspects of building, running and managing the organization.

### SOLUTION

Implement Sage CRM, Sage Accpac, and a Membership Management solution to provide a centralized database with automated processes for memberships, events and fundraising, along with the integration of accounting and web portal capabilities.

### RESULTS

For the third year in a row the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce is in the top 10 of North American chambers in growth and has increased in membership over 25% during challenging economic times.



*"We have fully integrated the membership database with the accounting system. The system has impacted the organization across the board. Now we can take a person and put them in a position to provide greater impact and direct interaction with the membership as opposed to doing paper transactions."*

— Karen Weiss,  
Vice President of Operations for  
Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce

#### **ABOUT Net@Work**

Net@Work is a leading integrator of accounting, customer relationship management (CRM) and business management software. A Sage Select business partner Net@Work represents the full range of ACCPAC, MAS and CRM products, specializing in workflow analysis, application development, industry specific customizations and system upgrades. With a staff of 130 plus consultants, developers and hardware engineers, Net@Work supports over 1,800 clients and has received numerous awards for its high level of customer service.

#### **ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE**

Sage Software has been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and mid-sized businesses for over 25 years. With a complete range of business management solutions and services, Sage Software helps companies improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and automate and integrate a variety of operational activities. Its solutions support the specialty needs of a broad scope of industry segments, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, real estate, nonprofit, and professional services.



When you go to the WCC web site (<http://www.winnipeg-chamber.com>) you will often see vital information that represents the pulse of the community and this is extremely important in focusing initiatives on the membership they serve.

If a prospective member desires to get involved with the organization they will begin to receive information and learn more about the chamber through various communications. When they decide to become a member the dues are processed and then the information is directly passed over for accounting purposes. When renewals come due the next month or next year they are automatically processed and available for payment online.

When a member goes online they see various events and can register or pay for them there, as well as make contributions to capital campaigns or fundraising projects. They can even purchase sponsorships for various events without ever picking up the phone. If someone does want to transact through talking to chamber personnel then all of the automated functions can happen just as easily through the employee's view of the database.

There is also a "playground" of member directories online that are empowered by the Sage solution. Members can email each other and see various levels of information based on what each member wants to make public in the directories. By bringing together the membership they can interact with each other and become more of a community with the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce at the center.

So what does all of this mean? Karen Weiss, Vice President of Operations for Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce stated, "When salespeople are out selling memberships, at special events, or at sponsors they have the entire history of communication between the chamber and the client in front of them." More importantly, people are more empowered to have greater interaction with the people they serve and less time dealing with technological challenges or various databases.

#### **Surviving the Economic Roller Coaster**

Today many organizations have found survival a challenge in the current economic downturn and growth has been nonexistent. In fact, the Winnipeg Chamber made the changes following the last downturn in anticipation of times just like these. So how has the new system impacted the organization? Well, quite positively. The chamber was just recognized for the third year in a row by the American Chambers of Commerce Executives as being one of the top 10 chambers in growth over the past year. This is quite impressive considering the association is over 1,400 members strong.

"Despite the downturn in the economy, membership growth continues to be strong," said Dave Angus, President of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce. "Over the past five years we have seen our membership grow from 1,548 corporate members to 2,050 members today – the most in the 136 year history of our organization."

No one knows what the future will hold for any organization but the foundation that the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce has built with Sage Software building blocks will continue to provide stability with a well known and strong software publisher. It also provides the flexibility that enables the organization to use the help of its technology partners to modify and mold the system to the ever changing environment.