



People. Passion. Purpose.

Client
Pathways to
Independence

Industry
Nonprofit

Location
Belleville, Ontario

Budget
\$20 Million

System
Sage Accpac ERP
General Ledger
Accounts Payable
Accounts Receivable
Optional Fields
Orchid EFT Processing

Balgord Paves the Road to Success for Pathways to Independence

Pathways to Independence (Pathways) supports individuals with developmental challenges and acquired brain injuries through residential options, day programs, and vocational programs in communities throughout Southeastern Ontario. The organization's 320+ employees serve hundreds of clients, helping them to recognize their potential and live with dignity and self-empowerment. Pathways has relied on Sage Accpac ERP for more than a decade to meet its financial and accounting requirements. Recently, when faced with new reporting mandates from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), Pathways turned to its business partner Balgord Software Solutions for assistance in achieving compliance efficiently.

Face Complexities

As a nonprofit agency service serving those with disabilities, Pathways must comply with the recently adopted Ontario Mental Health Reporting System (OMHRS) and Ontario Healthcare Reporting System (OHRS), intended to allow MOHLTC to better monitor and account for the funding it allocates. "About ten percent of our operating budget comes from the Ministry of Health," explains Tom Burns, director of corporate services. "In return for that funding, they require a very detailed, specific accounting of how the funds are used."

For most organizations, meeting the new reporting requirements requires a fundamental change to their systems. "There is a standard chart of accounts all agencies must use; that requires change at the core level of each organization's accounting system," notes Burns.

To ease the compliance burden on affected organizations, the Ministry of Health offered a free general ledger program that mapped the program's accounts to the reporting standards. "The problem was, it wasn't really free," explains Burns. "We have a significant investment in our existing Sage Accpac solution that goes far beyond the purchase price of a general ledger module. We use several other modules, for example, that we would have had to purchase, plus there is the cost of staff retraining and data conversion to consider."



About Balgord Software Solutions

Balgord's award winning solutions and services have helped many satisfied clients meet today's business and technology challenges head-on.

We specialize in helping small to midsized companies and nonprofit organizations improve their businesses operations with accounting, customer relationship management, and fundraising software solutions.

We work to ensure that the solution we provide is the best fit for your organization, and is implemented and installed right, the first time. We also provide ongoing training and support to help you maintain your competitive advantage. We want you to think of us as part of your team.

Our expert consultants have considerable real-world experience utilizing software systems to improve productivity and employee morale by simplifying and automating tasks.

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Adapt To Change

Rather than switch from Sage Accpac, Pathways initially met its reporting requirements with a complex series of spreadsheets—which quickly became onerous. “It was tremendously time consuming, plus we were concerned about maintaining the spreadsheets’ accuracy, because each time a number was updated in our accounting software, we would need to update one or more spreadsheets,” says Burns. “It was an issue requiring a solution—and quickly.”

Pathways turned to Balgord Software Solutions for advice and received very good news. Using the inherent functionality in Sage Accpac, Pathways could meet its reporting requirements while still retaining its existing account structure. Using Optional Fields, Balgord Software Solutions set up alias account numbers for each general ledger account number that would be included in the Ministry's reports.

With the alias account numbers in place, Balgord Software Solutions created new reports and export files that enable the organization to meet the Ministry's requirements. It is a straightforward solution to a complex issue.

The time and effort savings has been extraordinary, reports Burns. “We are saving a week's time every quarter. We are faced with a deadline every quarter, and the push to make that deadline caused a lot of stress. Now we have no trouble meeting the deadline.”

Boost Visibility and Accountability

Balgord Software Solutions also showed Pathways how to take advantage of a key feature in Sage Accpac that allows for account segmentation. Using segments to represent both funding source and program, Pathways is able to roll up expenses based on either attribute.

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This change allows Burns to give the organizations' program managers detailed reports about their programs. It also aids in budgeting and increases accountability throughout the organization. “Before we could only provide the breakdown by program, not by funding source,” Burns explains. “Now we can provide our managers with the detail they need and still produce the reports we need to share with our funding agencies.”

The organization uses the Orchid Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Processing module for Sage Accpac. Using EFT has allowed Pathways to reduce the number of accounts payable cheques it prints by 45 percent—saving paper, staff time, and postage costs.

A Winning Combination

“The real credit for this project's success goes to Balgord Software Solutions. Their professionalism and talent made the difference. I don't think we could find a better partner,” says Burns.

“Staying with Sage Accpac was the best decision we could have made—it was far less costly than switching to the 'free' system,” he concludes. “And Sage Accpac offers us so much more than reporting compliance.”