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Shangri-La Elevates Reporting with Business Central & Solver

Shangri-La Resort and Golf Club required a modern, cloud-based enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to meet their expanding accounting and operational needs. Discover how their leadership team gained new reporting advantages and streamlined financial close processes with Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central and Solver.

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The Situation

As Shangri-La Resort and Golf Club expands its memberships and attractions, department leaders needed a better way to accurately track increased transaction volume. The desire to automate manual tasks and gain real-time data visibility prompted Shangri-La Resort leadership to look for a modern, cloud-based enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

The Solution

Shangri-La leadership decided to migrate to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central—an ERP system that helps midsized companies connect finance, sales, service, and operations teams within a single, easy-to-use application—and pair it with Solver, a corporate performance management (CPM) service for advanced reporting functionality. While reviewing various business management systems, Shangri-La team members were introduced to FORVIS Business Technology Solutions professionals to assist with system assessment and implementation.

The Benefits

Since implementing Business Central and Solver, Shangri-La's operations team completes its month-end and year-end financial close processes significantly faster. Business Central and Solver are delivering new efficiencies across the organization, including reducing manual journal entries, providing real-time data visibility, and streamlining accounting and payroll reporting with third-party app integrations.

The Need for New Efficiencies

Shangri-La Resort and Golf Club, located in Northeast Oklahoma on Monkey Island, features a 119-room resort hotel with over 9,000 sq. ft. of meeting space, a 27-hole golf course (with a new 18-hole golf course opening spring of 2023), a marina, a full-service spa, a racquet club, an arcade with simulator bays, four full-service restaurants with bars, and more amenities.

With so many departments and increased transaction volume, Shangri-La's operations team required a modern, cloud-based ERP system to replace its on-premises accounting software that could no longer handle their needs.

"I've been with Shangri-La for more than three years. I was brought on board to reorganize and streamline our accounting and payroll systems and reporting," said Controller Marty Johnson, CPA, CGMA. "I worked with our president, Barry Willingham, to review several different systems to see which service would best meet Shangri-La's expanding needs."

Reporting & Planning Advancements

After reviewing several business management systems, Shangri-La leadership decided to migrate to Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central and pair it with Solver, for advanced reporting functionality. Some of the Business Central features that were key to the decision-making process included:

- Enhanced accounts payable (AP) options
- Custom reporting capabilities
- Clear system audit trails
- Expanded API and connector options

"The planning module in Business Central is the easiest I've ever used. It's also a wonderful thing to be able to pull an export from the bank and upload for a bank reconciliation," Johnson said.

In addition, Business Central allows users to click on hyperlinks to drill down to each original transaction detail. The navigation function can show all the General Ledger entry details—an advantage Johnson and his team use often.

For advanced reporting on critical information from across Shangri-La's data sources, Solver supports planning models and dashboards allowing for analysis of both financial and operational data. Solver provides real-time data visibility to empower Shangri-La's directors to take ownership of their results.

"Year-end closing used to take an extreme amount of time. Our monthly closing reports used to take 17 days on average to complete. Now, our monthly closing reports take about six days and our year-end financial close process is on track to be substantially faster," said Johnson. "With FORVIS' help implementing Business Central and Solver, we've elevated our reporting processes and capabilities. I view FORVIS as more than a vendor; they've become a trusted and reliable vendor-partner."

Making Informed Decisions Faster

Having been introduced to the Business Technology Solutions professionals at FORVIS during the assessment process, the Shangri-La leadership team chose FORVIS to lead the implementation project for Business Central and Solver.

The ERP and CPM systems are delivering new efficiencies across the organization, including:

- Reducing manual journal entries
- Providing real-time data visibility
- Streamlining accounting and payroll reporting with third-party app integrations

Shangri-La's data now can be shared quickly and securely with key team members across departments. The leadership team at Shangri-La can access accurate and current data to inform business decisions and strategy.

Learn More About FORVIS

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