

Keystone Engineering:

Unlocking profitable growth — Keystone uses software to streamline operations.

Sage Timberline Office

When Nancy MacLean joined Keystone Construction in the late 1980s, she was pleased to learn that the firm had embraced software as a strategic growth driver. Upon her arrival as office manager, MacLean discovered that Keystone owners Sheila and John Burke and their finance team were working with United Solutions, New England's leading distributor of Sage Timberline Office software. Deciding to tackle their accounting needs first, the team bought the Payroll, Job Cost, Accounts Payable, Financial Statements, General Ledger and Report Designer modules.

"Instead of relying on bookkeeping services completed by hand, the accounting is now accomplished in one step," MacLean observes. "We then post the accounting to all modules, thereby saving time and reducing errors."

Strengthened by the software, Keystone continues to thrive and grow. Today the firm employs approximately 100 people who help customers meet critical construction, maintenance and repair needs in the industrial and power generation industry. Keystone manages up to 20 projects and works with as many as 10 unions at once, across several different states.

But as the firm grew the top line, it kept a close watch on the bottom line.

"Even as we secured more business, we kept our staffing at manageable levels," says MacLean, whose firm recently erected its first wind turbine on the Massachusetts Maritime Academy campus in Bourne, MA. "We had to find better ways to perform. That's why we decided to increase our investment in software."

Keystone's next step was to purchase the Accounts Receivable, Billing and Contract modules.

"These modules will help us to get out of the Excel spreadsheets and manage everything in Sage Timberline Office," MacLean states.

In another move to bolster interaction between field and office employees, Keystone purchased the Project Management module. Before adding the module, project managers would enter data in an excel spreadsheet and MacLean would then have to re-key the numbers into Accounts Receivable.

"We wanted to give our project management team what they needed to become self-sufficient," she says. "With this module, they can simply enter the needed information themselves, which ensures that the whole team has the information that they need."

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MacLean says that she and her nine colleagues who now use the software tap only a small portion of what each module offers. But that’s changing too. The Keystone team is relying on United Solutions’ experts to help them scale the learning curve. On a regular basis, Doreen Bell from United Solutions’ office in Marlborough visits the office to train the team. When new employees are hired, they too receive software training from the firm.

MacLean herself has taken many courses. In one payoff of that commitment, when standard reports don’t provide the information she needs, MacLean has learned to use the Report Designer module to revise the standard reports or create new ones.

Always eager to achieve process improvements, MacLean recently attended United Solutions’ Sage Timberline Office annual user conference.

“The user conferences are great,” she remarks. “I like to see how other companies use the software.”

At the conference, MacLean was intrigued by a demonstration for a new product — a handheld device

that allows project managers to enter and send payroll data from the field. Keystone currently uses one customer time sheet for both payroll and T&M billing, so MacLean is working with United Solutions to learn how to use this handheld device to enhance this process.

“I’m very excited about that,” she says. “Entering payroll data takes up a lot of time!”

A while back, MacLean put an ad in the paper for a payroll clerk familiar with Sage Timberline Office. A few days later, she got a call from someone who had seen the ad and noted that Keystone uses Timberline. The caller asked MacLean what her experience was like.

“I told the person that the software is great and that United Solutions is very supportive,” she says. “They are cooperative and they are positive. They really want you to get the most out of the software.”

“THE SOFTWARE IS GREAT AND UNITED SOLUTIONS IS VERY SUPPORTIVE. THEY REALLY WANT YOU TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE SOFTWARE.”
– Nancy MacLean,
Office Manager,
Keystone Construction & Maintenance Services Inc.

CORPORATE PROFILE

Headquarters: Rowley, MA

Type of Business: Industrial contractor and maintenance services.

Website: kecservice.com

Software: Sage Timberline Office Accounting, Project Management, Job Cost, Payroll, Reporting & Inquiry Suite, Purchasing

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION	RESULTS
Use software to manage growth and control costs.	The full line of Sage Timberline software.	Keystone has achieved higher levels of efficiency across its daily operating process.