

“Human Touch” Pays Off

Process Improvement



Objective

The Sourcing Group was asked to provide a detailed quote on printing and mailing county tax bills out for a large county. In an effort to gain a full understanding of the scope of the project, TSG reached out to the client and asked if they could do a in-depth research study to make sure all the details could be covered. Once the analysis was done, it was evident that the process that they wanted to bid out was very costly and not efficient. TSG worked to interview various key client personnel to learn just how many manual processes were involved. In the end, TSG presented a total process improvement analysis since multiple departments interacted with each other to produce these bills.

Strategy & Execution

When dealing with large businesses, it is critical to understand where the data starts and where it ends. Typically, it starts in the IT department and it ends at the bank when money is deposited. The Account Executive met with the IT department to learn that the data that came out of the Assessor’s department was not very accurate, and producing the data took weeks of spreadsheets and multiple calculations. The accuracy issue was critical to understand as the county needed to assess 300,000 parcels appropriately. It took 6 -9 weeks to produce a file that was only close to being correct due to the many calculations and spreadsheets involved.

TSG pulled together people from a couple departments, along with IT individuals and programmers, to understand each calculation and line of reasoning. After a couple of weeks of collecting data and testing custom programming, a process was produced to accurately process these property values, place the proper assessment and turn the file around in 4 hours. The values that were produced saved them of over \$2,000,000 in assessed value. Once that file was created, we converted it into a new file format that could be imported and validated in hours, not weeks and months by the auditor.

Once the calculations were completed, the data now needed to print and mailed. TSG printed the bills in 8 different formats and color coded the bill stubs to reflect payment type. This saved accounting a lot of time by properly placing the payment to the correct areas. A detailed pie chart was also created so each taxpayer could see how the county’s money was spent.

Results

The result was an efficient, timely, accurate process that saved the county hundreds of thousands of dollars. The key component of any process improvement is to look at the origin of the data and determine the output format to determine how the document is used. By understanding the entire process and properly using the correct resources, the client (we) can often accomplish the desired results; **SAVING MONEY AND WORKING LESS**. Bidding is old school and rarely results in true savings.