

BuzzBee Company

Projector Empowers BuzzBee Company to Exceed Profitability Targets by 160%

AT A GLANCE

- **SUMMARY:** By deploying Professional Services Automation, Projector helped BuzzBee gain insight into project and business performance, enabling the firm to exceed profitability targets by 160 percent.
- **INDUSTRY:** Marketing/Advertising
- **LOCATION:** Seattle, WA
- **CHALLENGE:** BuzzBee needed better visibility into accurate project and financial data in order to support strategic growth plans.
- **PARTNER:** West Monroe Partners
- **SOLUTION:** Projector Professional Services Automation
- **RESULTS:**
 - Centralized, accurate, and actionable operational and financial data
 - Full integration with QuickBooks
 - Decreased billing lead time by an estimated 10 hours per month
 - Real-time visibility into revenue, resource needs, and cash flow
 - Increased client satisfaction with on-time and on-budget delivery of projects

“Before Projector, all of our financial forecasting was done with a Ouija board. Within one year of using Projector, we had a 28 percent increase in our project margins.”

– Michele Keeffe, CEO, BuzzBee Company

COMPANY PROFILE

BuzzBee Company is a strategic marketing consulting firm that helps guide companies in their efforts to take innovative technology products and services to market. As business-to-business marketing experts, BuzzBee helps companies position and strengthen relationships with other organizations to expand the reach of their offerings, further knowledge sharing, and promote collaborative solutions.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

BuzzBee relies on information produced by engagements between its consultants and their customers to inform strategic decisions for the business. In the past, BuzzBee lacked accurate insight into the health of its projects. Time tracking for employees was cumbersome, and valuable financial data for each project was locked in complicated Excel spreadsheets—making even simple analyses of the data labor-intensive and error-prone.

BuzzBee wanted to expand by acquiring more clients and hiring more staff, but did not have enough visibility into its internal data to make strategic decisions. The company needed several things that its former Professional Services Automation (PSA) was not providing—insight into client projects and profitability, a way to manage resources, and cash flow forecasting. Because project managers lacked the right tools, they relied on the accounting team to manually compile reports to determine the status and health of their projects.

“We couldn’t see the impact of what work was in the pipeline,” CEO of BuzzBee, Michele Keeffe, explained. “Our managers wanted to make hiring decisions because we believed we were growing but I didn’t have data to back that up. We were counting on cash flow, but there was no way to track or manage it.”

The original PSA solution BuzzBee implemented in 2007 lacked the scalability needed. Additionally, it required a dedicated person to manage the system, which contributed to the company’s overhead costs. This experience left BuzzBee management hesitant to invest in yet another potentially exhaustive and costly PSA. In early 2009, West Monroe Partners was engaged to help find a more suitable solution for BuzzBee.

PROJECTOR PSA PROVIDES:

- Visibility into projected revenue, utilization, and staffing needs
- Easily accessible, actionable operational and financial data

“We talked to ten different PSA providers and chose Projector because of its fact-based solution, total investment, and flexible model.”

*– Jon Magin, Senior Consultant,
West Monroe Partners*

“We helped BuzzBee think about deployment more strategically, and demonstrated how Projector is aligned with the company’s other two business systems,” Jon Magin of West Monroe Partners said.

SOLUTION

With the guidance of West Monroe Partners, and after extensive evaluation of nine other PSA systems, BuzzBee chose to deploy Projector. It was how Projector interacted with the organization’s core business systems that made it the right solution. The ability for the software to integrate with QuickBooks and provide a holistic view into business performance by working with the company’s CRM application proved invaluable.

“We chose Projector because it lets us know if a project is about to come off the rails, and helps us get it back on track,” Keffe explained.

Projector’s robust project and financial management tools equipped BuzzBee with the insight to increase operational efficiency and profitability. Projector’s pricing structure allowed BuzzBee to implement more of Projector’s modules with ease as its needs expanded.

RESULTS

BuzzBee saw a change in how the company operated immediately. “After implementing Projector, we were able to spend all of 2009 holding staff accountable and delivering great work for our clients without unintentionally over-servicing,” Keffe said. Additionally, BuzzBee was able to decrease staff by operating more efficiently, allowing managers to focus on business management. BuzzBee now has visibility into how the company is doing on a day-to-day basis and is able to accurately project revenue and utilization into the future.

“Projector is at the core of our business; it’s one of the three systems we use every day, and it’s critical to the management of our business. We can now develop plans and resource accordingly to support our strategic objectives,” Nathan Wright, Managing Director at BuzzBee, said. Since the deployment of Projector, BuzzBee has been able to refocus on executing the business decisions that make it a successful consulting firm, rather than having employees spending time searching for data.

Projector has had a significant impact on the way BuzzBee operates through its accommodation of real-world situations. As projects change, Projector makes it easy for project managers to have an ongoing dialog with their clients about scope and overall project progress. “Projector helps us manage our projects better to deliver to our clients better,” Wright said.

“With Projector, we can look backward and forward on our data and make smarter, more effective decisions for BuzzBee. We finally found a business system that fit our company,” Keffe said.