

Reseller Success

BLUM, SHAPIRO & COMPANY, P.C.

BlumShapiro is the largest regional accounting, tax and business consulting firm based in New England. The firm, with nearly 300 professionals and staff, offers a diversity of services which includes auditing, accounting, tax and business advisory services. In addition, BlumShapiro provides a variety of specialized consulting services, including financial software solutions and implementation services to not-for-profit organizations and municipalities. Drawing on the years of public accounting experience, the company offers and supports a product suite that helps organizations meet the needs of their complex financial environments by diminishing those complexities and maximizing the benefits of automation.

REALIZING A BUSINESS NEED

Trained as a Certified Public Accountant, Jim Clarkson, a partner at BlumShapiro, spearheaded the company's development of non-profit solutions offerings when he saw there was a market for reselling software and providing consulting services to non-profits. At the time, the non-profit sector was experiencing changes as a result of new requirements from the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB). These requirements necessitated that non-profits acquire specific accounting capabilities.

"Non-profit organizations face unique challenges when it comes to financial management," says Clarkson. "They need to keep track of the various fundraising channels that support their cause and how those funds are distributed. They have limited resources in terms of budgets, staff and time and they need to administer those resources very closely and carefully."

With a focus on selling accounting software that is geared to the needs of not-for-profit organizations, BlumShapiro sells their products and consulting services in all six New England states. With a staff of experienced CPAs serving as consultants, BlumShapiro offers a wealth of accounting expertise, which separates them from the pack and benefits their customers who have numerous and varied accounting needs and highly value the company's financial insight.

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"We saw there was a market sector with very specific financial management needs and an opportunity to leverage our accounting expertise and business knowledge to help them address those needs," says Clarkson.

PARTNERSHIP WITH ACCUFUND — EVERYTHING ADDS UP

When AccuFund decided to open up its New England reseller channel in 2006, BlumShapiro was thrilled to come on board.

"We had approached AccuFund a couple years earlier about serving as a reseller, but they had just started the company and were not quite ready," says Clarkson. "Many of our clients receive government funding, which AccuFund's Accounting Suite easily manages with its Grants Management and Allocations modules, among others. We joined with AccuFund in May 2006 and we have since formed a great partnership."



From July 2006 to March 2007, BlumShapiro received training on the AccuFund Accounting Suite, while also implementing a marketing campaign to the market niches in which they have expertise. In April 2007, the company started selling the AccuFund Accounting Suite. Customers to date include a performing arts center, a charter school, an educational services organization, and a private, independent school. They have begun to penetrate the government market with municipal clients in New Hampshire and Rhode Island.

“AccuFund’s Accounting Suite sells itself because the end-user can see it is very simple to use, especially when they compare it to their existing system,” says Clarkson. “That ease is further supported by AccuFund’s multi-faceted reporting functionality and its tremendous flexibility, which upper management requires and which meet the extraordinary demands of the typical non-profit’s back office.”

AccuFund’s flexibility also appeals to the end-user and the implementer because it allows the software to be “forgiving.” “For the end-user, it allows changes to mistakes — it’s not stringent, but still maintains required audit controls.” explains Clarkson.



James H. Clarkson, Jr.,
CPA, Partner

“AccuFund’s Accounting Suite is also easy to install, train and support,” reports Clarkson. “That allows us to focus more on our other core competencies — our accounting and consulting services — and to sell more of those services. We provide people, processes and technology, all of which customers can come to us for.

“Efficient as well as cost-effective implementation is very important for not-for-profits,” continues Clarkson. “Customers gain huge efficiencies with AccuFund beyond what they were using previously, which saves them time to focus on more important things, such as their mission.”

Summarizing his team’s impressions, Clarkson affirms, “AccuFund’s Accounting Suite is really fun to use and we get excited about working with it. The ramp-up is short, which allows organizations to reallocate resources very quickly.”

WHAT REALLY COUNTS

Due to their success selling AccuFund, BlumShapiro has been the recipient of five AccuFund Partner Leadership Awards in the past six years, including the AccuFund 2011 Non-profit Volume Leader Award.

“With AccuFund, we have a great collaboration,” says Clarkson. “The partnership has helped us grow our business, and it has grown with us and taken us to the next level. Our yield is strong and we’re seeing growth. We expect to double our current revenue over the next 3-5 years.”

Partnering with AccuFund is “refreshing,” he adds. “With other companies, we felt like they were competing with us. AccuFund is more pleasurable to work with — the relationship is very complimentary.”

Kevin White, partner in charge of the BlumShapiro Massachusetts office adds, “Adding the software consulting business has been great for us. It complements our core audit and tax practice and provides an opportunity for our staff to work in another aspect of the business.”

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ACCUFUND

Visit our Website at www.accufund.com or contact our sales department at 877-872-2228. We would be pleased to discuss this case study and explain the benefits of our reseller program and the **AccuFund Accounting Suite** for your non-profit and government product offering.