

CASE STUDY: VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



EASTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, EASTON, MD – The Easton, Maryland Volunteer Fire Department (EVFD) is a non-profit with a staff of 120 firefighters and other personnel. With the exception of a paid administrator who manages day-to-day operations, EVFD's staff is comprised solely of volunteers.

The EVFD serves a community with a population of roughly 13,000 residents.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

While EVFD's number of monthly purchase orders (POs) and invoices was increasing, its accounting software was becoming further obsolete.

EVFD's administrator had been creating POs manually and extracting information from each PO to determine what had been spent — a very cumbersome process.

The treasurer was getting requests from the auditors for more detail on expenses than the old software could deliver. The need to acquire new accounting software was apparent, but finding a package specifically suited to non-profits that also met EVFD's needs was not easy.

Three individuals performed tasks requiring use of the accounting software: the administrator, who was the main user, the treasurer, and EVFD's accountant. Since the administrator is not an accountant, EVFD needed accounting software that was flexible, integrated and easy to use. Also, because volunteers have only a few hours to contribute each week, EVFD required a system that reduced the time it took to complete tasks and generate reports.

EVFD had two requirements that the software must meet:

1. Provide the ability to track departmental costs, both budgeted and actual, and track purchase order activity. They required a system that would allow them to enter the budget, POs and invoices one time and enable all this information to be integrated and available in all corresponding areas in the system.
2. Produce professional-quality financial statements, a critical requirement as reports had to be submitted annually to auditors.



THE ACCUFUND SOLUTION

EVFD's accountant suggested they graduate from their current outdated software program to using a Windows-based product. He contacted a local reseller, Non-Profit Perspective, which conducted a needs analysis for EVFD. Non-Profit Perspective provides software for its clients that best fits their environment.

They recommended the AccuFund Accounting Suite, since it provides all the capabilities that EVFD needed as well as ease-of-use — all at a price that is very affordable for nonprofits.

The EVFD installed AccuFund in April 2003 and has been using it with great success. They are now managing accounts payable and receivable, processing purchase orders, generating detailed reports, and producing specialized financial statements. The software system's functionality has helped EVFD's treasurer, accountant and auditors to better understand every aspect of the business.

All three of the software's users — the administrator, treasurer and accountant — applaud its flexibility and user-friendly interface.

THE ACCUFUND SOLUTION

EVFD's administrator, Carol Prettyman, states, "I thoroughly enjoy using AccuFund. I had not ever used this type of software before, but I found it very understandable and easy to learn."

Most of all, the EVFD's three users are impressed with AccuFund's data integration capabilities. AccuFund's Accounts Payable module tracks and pays bills, allowing Prettyman to input invoices only once for automatic posting to all appropriate accounts. The data is organized, up-to-date and immediately available for viewing or generating reports. When the treasurer marks specific invoices for payment processing, he can immediately view the resulting cash balance. He can also specify the amount of each invoice to include in 1099 reporting.

Gary Ball, EVFD's former treasurer who used AccuFund 2-3 times per month for almost 2 years, states, "With AccuFund, it is very easy to make any corrections and have them reflected wherever they apply in the system. You can also create customized reports that are very in-depth and deliver the exact information you're looking for."

Ball also reports that AccuFund is exceptionally fast when paying bills. EVFD's weekly task of processing invoices and producing checks was reduced from six hours to two.

Customized laser checks can be created in Accounts Payable and printed to include MICR check coding. All data contained in Accounts Payable is integrated with Bank Reconciliation, which combines checks and deposits, and records fees or interest earned, for full reconciliation of all bank accounts.

Purchasing with Inventory tracks all purchases, monitors inventory levels, and generates customized purchase

orders. When applicable, this module obtains real-time updates from Accounts Receivable and integrates with Requisition Management.

AccuFund's General Ledger serves as the repository for all the financial information entered into the system, performing automatic accounting, classifying accounts for easy assembly of financial statements, managing multi-fiscal period information and automating year-end processes. With AccuFund, EVFD is assured of the accuracy of its financial information for auditing purposes.



A major reason EVFD purchased AccuFund's Accounting Suite was the Financial Report Writer. EVFD's accountant, Paul Haddaway, uses AccuFund at the end of each year for reconciling accounts and structuring end-of-year financial reports in formats suitable for auditing. He can also prepare worksheets, particularly for completing the 990 Federal Tax Return required of non-profit organizations.

AccuFund's Report/Forms Designer, which is available in every module, enables EVFD to create customized checks, purchase orders and general reports. They can design report templates for each user of the software. Once the templates are created, report formatting is very flexible. EVFD has report formats for numerous purposes within the department. For example, Prettyman regularly generates committee reports that detail which staff members are responsible for different duties.

USER COMMENTS ABOUT ACCUFUND

Each of EVFD's three users of the AccuFund Accounting Suite report their overall experience with the software has been very positive.

"I have been very satisfied," states Prettyman. "I would highly recommend AccuFund to any non-profit."

Ball confirms, "AccuFund has been such a great product for us. I always tell other fire departments about it."

"AccuFund is exactly what we had been hoping to find and install as Easton Volunteer Fire Department's accounting software," adds Haddaway. "It is very cost-effective, as it has delivered precisely what we needed it to without being a costly investment."

LEARN MORE ABOUT ACCUFUND

Visit our website at www.accufund.com, call your local reseller, or contact our sales department at 877-872-2228.

We would be pleased to discuss this case study, explain the benefits of AccuFund for your fiscal department, and put

you in touch with a local reseller certified to install and support the AccuFund Accounting Suite.

AccuFund Accounting Suite is available online or onsite.