

Research Triangle Institute



Research Triangle Institute discovers time-saving results on the web

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Karen Davis, Director of Information Systems with RTI

THE CHALLENGE

Research Triangle Institute (RTI) is an independent organization dedicated to conducting innovative, multidisciplinary research that improves the human condition. With a worldwide staff of more than 1,800 people, RTI is active in health and medicine, environmental protection, technology commercialization, education, and decision support systems. Universities in North Carolina founded RTI in 1958 as the first scientific organization in and centerpiece of the Research Triangle Park. RTI serves clients in government, industry, academia and public service throughout the United States and abroad.

Acknowledging that the Institute’s system of timekeeping was inadequate; executives at RTI authorized an effort to replace the system in early 2000. The project team requested proposals from a select group of firms and was impressed with the fact that Deltek offered an integrated solution designed specifically for professional services firms.

The timekeeping solution RTI chose would also have to be compatible with Deltek® Costpoint®, RTI’s project and financial accounting software.

“We tried to be scientific about this,” declares Davis. “There just do not seem to be that many products that are large enough to handle 1,800 plus timesheets every two weeks, run on SQL Server® and understand government contracts.”

THE SOLUTION

RTI began implementing Deltek Time Collection for 1,838 employees on May 1st and was finished by August 16th. “We had a small implementation team and were not sure how many new users we would be able to support in any two-week period, so we phased people in,” says Davis.

Through this process, RTI implemented the system for 200-300 people every timesheet period. RTI worked with Phil Parry, Deltek Time Collection’s Director of Consulting, and Jon Echelberry, a Deltek Time Collection Senior Consultant.



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Deltek is a global leader dedicated to delivering enterprise management software that meets the unique needs of project-focused organizations. With over two decades of experience, Deltek enables companies to maximize profitability and productivity, integrating all aspects of their businesses. More than 11,000 customers worldwide rely on Deltek to streamline operations, improve performance and win more business.

"We got immediate answers for lots of questions that we had, such as why our project numbers weren't getting updated. We were reminded to re-execute the charge groups after each project number import. We were pleased with the quick response to these kinds of questions," Davis states.

Before making the switch to Deltek, many RTI employees were comfortable using paper timesheets, and others were using an old online system; many were not convinced that something new would be better. This was a major obstacle that RTI management had to overcome.

"A major thing we had to do was reassure everybody that the new system was going to work as long as they use it to fill out their timesheets. We had to explain that since paper timesheets have no project number validation it took a great deal of effort to get time reports entered into the financial system accurately," says Karen Davis, RTI's Director of Information Systems.

"Managers that in the past had concerns about their labor cost reports being correct," Davis continues, "were skeptical that the new system would improve that; many are now concluding that not only has accuracy improved, but it is easy to log onto Deltek Time Collection, fill out their timesheet and log off."

THE BENEFITS

RTI now has over 1,800 employees actively using the system and over 30,000 active tasks at any one time. Under the old system, it would take two to three employees up to two days, twice a month to manually enter timesheets. "Now," says Davis, "each employee is essentially doing his/her own timesheet and can only charge valid project numbers. This results in much more accuracy."

To finish such a large and complex project on time and under budget was quite an accomplishment. "We had committed to be up and running by the end of the summer (September). We were under budget because we used less consulting than originally planned. Once the Deltek consultant was here for the initial set-up, we pretty much knew what we needed to do it ourselves," Davis concludes.

The Deltek Time Collection solution, combined with Deltek Costpoint, met RTI's needs, offering more efficient timesheet processing, reducing paperwork, and providing ready access to labor-related project and financial information.

This true systems integration is helping to ensure data integrity, maintaining consistency throughout the system, while providing clear and complete audit trails for increased efficiency and accountability. RTI is moving full steam ahead, and Deltek is right there with them.