



CASEWARE

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

CUSTOMER

City of Fort Worth

LOCATION

Fort Worth, Texas

Operating Budget

\$1.6 Billion

CaseWare Solutions

CaseWare Working Papers

CaseWare Delivers a Rapid Return on Investment for the City of Fort Worth

Fort Worth began as a tiny outpost on a lonely frontier, and still embraces its rich Western heritage. Today, this metropolitan area of more than 800,000 people blends its frontier heritage seamlessly with an ever-growing, diverse array of new businesses and industries.

The City of Fort Worth (the City) is charged with the delivery and oversight of a vast array of vital programs, including emergency services, municipal courts, parks and recreation, water, sewer, and transportation. With over 200 separate funds and a combined annual operating budget of more than one billion dollars, the City has an enormously complex set of financial statements. To tame the complexity and ensure its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is completed on time and with the utmost accuracy, the City of Fort Worth relies on CaseWare.

A Vision to be the Best

“The City and our City Manager, David Cooke, have a shared vision to be the most livable and best-managed city in the country,” says Brian Hickman, CPA/CGFO, one of the Financial Reporting Coordinators for the City of Fort Worth. “Realizing that vision means producing our CAFR in an accurate and timely manner. However, because of the enormous complexity and intricacy of the



reporting required, we have sometimes fallen behind schedule in the past.”

Producing its CAFR using Excel spreadsheets and Word documents was simply too onerous and time consuming to effectively manage, and the disconnected systems introduced too many opportunities for error.

Hickman describes the process: “We had more than 25 Excel workbooks, plus multiple Excel spreadsheets embedded as tables in Word documents. If a single sum needed correction, we might have to manually update that number across dozens of files. And printing the report took us ten hours, as each individual page was converted to a PDF file. It had simply become unworkable.”

CHALLENGE

A large annual operating budget and hundreds of individual funds overwhelmed the City of Fort Worth’s spreadsheet and document based system of preparing its annual CAFR.

SOLUTION

The City of Fort Worth implemented CaseWare as it was implementing a new ERP solution, bringing its technology firmly into the modern age.

RESULTS

Spreadsheets and documents and the opportunity for error they introduce have been eliminated. Hours of report printing time saved. CAFR produced ahead of schedule. CaseWare being extended to tackle additional tasks.

“With CaseWare, the CAFR was completed on time to achieve the GFOA Certificate of Excellence in Reporting. It looks almost flawless, and the people of Fort Worth can have confidence and pride in it.”

Brian Hickman, CPA, CGFO
Financial Reporting Coordinator

About CaseWare International Inc.

Accountants and auditors in practices large and small, in corporations, and government recognize CaseWare International as the premier creator of assurance, reporting and analysis tools. In over 130 countries, the CaseWare family of products helps accounting professionals perform their work more easily and efficiently.

Which Comes First – CaseWare or ERP?

When Hickman joined the City, it was going through a large transition, migrating to PeopleSoft from a 25-year-old mainframe application. The City’s finance department had also researched and selected CaseWare, but had initially planned to wait until after the ERP “go-live” to implement it.

“Our CaseWare consultant encouraged us to move ahead with the CaseWare implementation,” recalls Hickman. “The consultant believed that having CaseWare in place and operational would help as a validation tool of the ERP conversion, and they were right.”

CaseWare Identifies Data Anomalies

“We started by recreating our prior year’s CAFR in CaseWare as a proof of concept, and then planned to roll the files forward for the current year,” explains Hickman. “It was during this process that CaseWare helped us identify some data issues that arose during the ERP conversion – issues that we might not have caught without CaseWare.”

Transformational Changes

The move to CaseWare has been transformational says Hickman. “CaseWare automated the CAFR production. We eliminated all of the Word and Excel documents, and all of the duplicate data entry associated with them. Printing the CAFR, a process that previously took us 10 hours, now takes two minutes.

He adds, “Without CaseWare, it is probable that we would not have completed our CAFR before the deadline and would have had to apply for an extension. With CaseWare, the CAFR was completed on time to achieve the GFOA Certificate of

Excellence in Reporting. It looks almost flawless, and the people of Fort Worth can have confidence and pride in it.”

Monthly Management Reports to Provide Clarity

The City of Fort Worth is currently working with its consultants and CaseWare to extend the use of the solution to the production of monthly management reports. “For the past few years, the City has been producing quarterly management reports, but in a not so timely manner,” Hickman says. “It will be of tremendous benefit to the City’s department heads, our council, and the mayor. We will be able to identify areas of concern a few months earlier than we could have previously.”

The City is also considering utilizing CaseWare to prepare its Single Audit Report in the future. “It just makes good sense to use CaseWare in any way possible,” says Hickman. “At its heart, CaseWare is a powerful financial report writing tool, so it’s a natural fit for all of these types of reports.”

Ongoing Return on Investment

With one successful reporting season behind it, Hickman is confident that the time and labor savings realized with CaseWare will begin delivering a rapid and ongoing return on the City’s investment. “The finance department would like to formally thank the Mayor and City Council for their support in funding CaseWare,” he concludes. “We believe that through the ease of data exchange with our auditors, and the accessibility and visibility they have into our trial balance and supporting documents, we will be able to minimize the audit fees and save the City money.”



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