



CUSTOMER

Clerk of Courts,
Leon County, Florida

HEADQUARTERS

Tallahassee, Florida

Operating Budget

\$223 Million

Leon County Clerk Cuts Time to Produce CAFR by 40 Percent

Leon County, Florida is located in the center of the state’s panhandle, and is home to more than 275,000 people.

Two of Florida’s major public universities, Florida A&M and Florida State, are located within the county, as is the state’s capital city of Tallahassee. The Leon County government is responsible for delivering a wide range of services to its citizens through a network of constitutional officers, including the County Commission, Clerk of Courts, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections, and Tax Collector.

Meeting the reporting requirements of such large and varied organizations is a challenging task for the Clerk’s financial team. It is a task vastly simplified by the use of CaseWare Working Papers and CaseWare GASB Financials.

Disparate Systems Prove Burdensome

“Before CaseWare, we had a system of 21 linked spreadsheets that held the data used to produce our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR),” recalls Betsy Coxen, CPA/CGFO, the Assistant Finance Director for the Clerk. “In addition, we had numerous Word® documents holding our notes — and no link between the two. It was a burdensome system to



maintain, and we were concerned that it was not as secure as it should be.”

A Solution Designed to Fit

Coxen and her team began looking for a software solution that would meet their needs, and found that solution at the annual meeting of the Florida Government Finance Officers Association (FGFOA). “We saw CaseWare in action at the conference. We knew our auditors use it, so we looked closely at its capabilities and found it is designed to do exactly what we need,” says Jordan Steffens, General Accounting Manager for the Leon County Clerk.

The Clerk’s office moved quickly to implement CaseWare Working Papers and GASB Financials. A CaseWare Certified Partner helped the County set up its templates, and Steffens took over from there, creating consolidation trees

CHALLENGE

Multiple spreadsheets and text documents used to produce Leon County’s annual financial reports complicated the cycle and potentially introduced the opportunity for error.

SOLUTION

CaseWare Working Papers and GASB Financials are an ideal fit for the complex reporting needs of a large municipal government.

RESULTS

Time spent to produce CAFR is reduced by 30-40 percent. Two weeks saved in the production of state financial report. There is increased confidence in the data and improved security.

“Using CaseWare, we eliminate the manual data entry and redundant updates. It will cut the time spent generating our CAFR by 30 to 40 percent.”

Jordan Steffens
General Accounting Manager

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.

and formatting the reports to meet the precise needs of the County. “It was a fast implementation, and a successful one,” he says.

Staff imported the prior year’s numbers into CaseWare and recreated its financial statements as a proof of concept. Next, they simply rolled over those figures and imported the next year’s data to produce the current statements.

Meeting Unique Reporting Requirements

With all the County’s current financial data residing in CaseWare, the application became an ideal tool to meet another specific reporting need — a financial report specific to each elected official. With the report template in place, these reports can now be generated without additional data input, saving staff time and effort.

The County also has unique consolidation requirements that CaseWare was able to satisfy. “For each Constitutional Officer, we must produce separate financial statements that roll up to the CAFR,” explains Coxen. “With all of our data in CaseWare, we were able to isolate the data relating to each officer and produce the required statements. It is now almost automatic.”

Time and Money Savings

The time savings involved in the production of these reports is significant. “Staff used to spend one week on each of these reports, manually imputing the data for each officer,” says Steffens. “Now that we produce these reports from CaseWare, we will easily save two weeks of labor each year.”

Both Coxen and Steffens agree that substantial time savings are realized during

the production of Leon County’s annual financial reports. “Using CaseWare, we eliminate manual data entry and redundant updates,” Steffens says. “It will cut the time spent generating our CAFR by 30 to 40 percent. Our prior year figures roll forward, then we import our budget numbers and ending balances, update the notes, and generate the reports.”

“I like that we maintain control of the statements throughout the process,” says Coxen. “We used to send all the spreadsheet and document files to our auditors who would compile everything for the CAFR. Now, we create the CAFR ourselves. We have access to our data much more quickly, and by providing the auditors with a finished product, we will be able to reduce our audit fees.”

Confidence in the Data

Steffens appreciates the linkage between notes and statements, which saves the time and effort of updating the notes each time a change is made to the statement. “Information flows accurately throughout the system,” he says. “When we make a change, the necessary updates are made automatically.”

“Our CAFR is 300 pages long,” Coxen notes. “That’s a tremendous volume of data and when the data is coming from different sources, there is always a concern that something was overlooked or not updated properly. CaseWare eliminates that possibility. All of our data is in one database and our reports draw from that database. Our confidence level has increased significantly. The data is secure, yet accessible to those authorized to access it.”



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