Mickey Gilley, America's First "Urban Cowboy," Rides Again

"Before Gilley's, the only people who wore cowboy hats were, well, cowboys." This might sound like a Texas-sized boast, if not for the fact that Gilley's country-western club in Houston was certified by the Guinness Book of Records as the largest nightclub in the world. Gilley's could hold 6,000 people and attracted more visitors than the Astrodome. And when John Travolta and Debra Winger filmed "Urban Cowboy" on location in 1980, it was instant fame for the club and its notorious mechanical bull.

Mickey Gilley had been a popular singer since the early 1970s, recording 39 Top 10 Country Hits like "The Girls All Get Prettier at Closing Time" and "Stand By Me." So he knew how to come back in the face of disappointment. When his Houston club burnt down in 1989, he stuck to his motto: "We doze but we never close." He started a new restaurant and theater in the Ozarks, where he now performs nightly down the street from Andy Williams and Mel Tillis. In addition, his enterprise currently includes two cafes, numerous real estate holdings, and a major interest in a giant entertainment complex that is being built in Texas, to be called Gilley's Dallas.

Bucking the Old System

Cowboy culture may be terrific when it comes to music, bucking broncos, pool and food. But it has its limitations when applied to accounting, as Pat Marlin discovered when she joined the admin-istrative group. Gilley's entire network of businesses was being run manually.

Pat ended up doing most of the typing that resulted. "We sent out a tremendous number of checks and I was forever writing them," she says. "For four out of five days every week I was matching invoices to checks, tearing and separating, and putting them in the mail. I was pretty eager to get past that."

Back in the Saddle

When her supervisor retired and Marlin became the administrative manager, she seized the opportunity to computerize the entire system. But she didn't know where to turn or what was needed. The company's reseller introduced her to Sage BusinessWorks. "We went with it, changed everything over all at once, and never looked back. This is very exciting for us."

Customer:

Mickey Gilley Interests

Industry:

Restaurants and entertainment

Location:

Pasadena, Texas

Number of Locations: Four

Number of Employees: 220

System:

Sage BusinessWorks

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- General Ledger
- Payroll
- System Manager
- Cash Management

CHALLENGE

Introduce an automated system that can provide streamlined consolidation of 4 companies with integrated check and reporting capabilities.

SOLUTION

Sage BusinessWorks financial and payroll modules.

RESULTS

Streamlined automation and seamless data flow; extensive check writing and reporting capabilities; quick financial overviews of all four companies; reduced costs and improved productivity.

Sage BusinessWorks now generates hundreds of checks for Gilley's four separate companies in minutes. "The printer just pours them out," says Marlin. "It frees me up from having to sit at the typewriter, and lets me take care of other responsibilities." She enjoys the efficiency, and the ability to make better use of her time.

Gone are the days when Marlin waited for the office manager to hand-generate information. Sage BusinessWorks does it all, creating 1099s, W-2s, unemployment forms, and the various other documents required by the state and federal government.

Sage BusinessWorks gives Marlin the edge on planning and budgeting, too, with professional-quality reports. At a glance, she can now determine exactly the amount going out to each of Gilley's individual vendors, and project how much cash will be needed to pay bills. "Sage BusinessWorks gives me a great over-view on the financial status of all our businesses," Marlin observes. "I rely on it so much now that I can't imagine how we ever got along without it."

Has Sage BusinessWorks saved money for Gilley's? The answer is an unqualified yes. For one, the system no longer processes duplicate invoices that vendors might mistakenly submit. Double payments were common before, because there were simply too many bills to remember which had been paid. Now Sage BusinessWorks flags the duplicates and allows Marlin to question suppliers about possible errors.

The biggest savings, however, has come from reduced administrative costs. Productivity is way up, staff members are relieved from tedious tasks, and less time is wasted in data collection. Marlin comments, "Sage BusinessWorks helps all of us to be more valuable employees."

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ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software supports the needs, challenges, and dreams of more than 2.7 million small and midsized business customers in North America through easy-to-use, scalable, and customizable software and services. Our products help manage a complete range of business functions including: accounting, operations, customer relationship management, human resources, time tracking, merchant services and the specialized needs of the construction, distribution, healthcare, manufacturing, nonprofit, and real estate industries.

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