



# CASE STUDY

## E-470

### Public Toll Road Increases Efficiencies and Improves Reporting

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-John McCuskey, Director of Finance, E-470 Public Highway Authority

#### Overview

#### Industry

Public Sector

#### Situation

Outsourced construction projects created the need for better tracking and reporting

#### Company Profile

Public highway toll road authority in Denver, Colo.

#### Benefits

Increased efficiencies and better reporting

#### Solution

WennSoft Job Cost and Microsoft Dynamics™ GP

E-470 Public Highway Authority is a government entity that owns and operates the toll highway that runs along the eastern perimeter of the Denver metropolitan area. In the late 80's the state and local governments and private citizens felt there was a need to extend C-470 in Denver. There was no funding for the project so the idea for a toll road concept was introduced.

In 1991 the first five miles of the toll highway, named E-470, was opened to the public. Fifteen years later E-470 totals 47 miles. As a financially self-sufficient public highway toll road authority, 85% to 90% of E-470's revenues come from toll fees and the rest come from vehicle registration fees and other sources. Around 65% of tolls are collected electronically with the EXpressToll transponder.

“We consider E-470 users our customers,” said Director of Finance for E-470, John McCuskey. “They have the choice to use E-470 which is why we stress the service part of what we do. Time means money, and our goal is to get our customers where they need to be, as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

E-470 operates with 50 direct employees and five main departments – engineering, IT, roadway and land management, toll operations and finance. They outsource many of their road maintenance and construction projects to third party companies, as well as their toll collectors and call center. Day-to-day accounting was originally outsourced and they relied on consulting engineers to manage the projects.

In 1999 E-470 implemented Microsoft Dynamics™ GP (Great Plains) giving them the ability to handle the accounting side of the business. E-470 is required to report its financials to the Authority's board of directors and the State of Colorado. With \$65-\$70 million in ongoing construction projects there was a need to start better tracking projects and improve reporting.

“We were using our general ledger as a job costing product which became very difficult to manage,” said McCuskey. “The data was not clean and we couldn't readily get the information we needed.”

To solve this problem E-470 attempted to custom integrate a job cost product with their existing financials. After about a year, they realized it was not going to work so they hired a consultant to assess the current system and bring in some new options.



“We were looking for something that could help us with our budgeting and reporting,” said McCuskey. “The engineers did a good job of tracking their contracts but we couldn’t get good total job reporting on what the budget was compared to what was spent.”

“The consultants we hired brought several software vendors to the table,” said McCuskey. “If we were going to make a change we wanted to get the best bang for our buck and if that meant changing our GL then we would have done it.”

As it worked out E-470 did not need to change out their financials. In the summer of 2003, with the help of IronWare Technologies, E-470 implemented WennSoft Job Cost.

WennSoft develops and supports software for project-oriented, field service and equipment management industries. All of the WennSoft products, Job Cost, Service Management Series and Equipment Management Series, integrate and enhance Microsoft Dynamics GP.

“The integration is so tight between WennSoft and Great Plains that you don’t even know which product you are in,” said Consultant for IronWare Technologies, Kathy Fry. “It really helped with training the users at E-470. Everything works and feels the same.”

“Having the integration between our financials and our various projects is huge for us,” said McCuskey, “There is a comfort level that all the data is accurate giving us the confidence we need to pull status reports. The best part is that the employees can see all the data in one system and they don’t have to go between two products.”

Most of E-470’s projects are multi-year contracts. Before WennSoft, they would track each project annually. An estimate for that year would be given for each project. At the end of each year they would look at where they were and then re-budget for the next year. They had no way of tracking day-to-day details.

“Before WennSoft when we looked at the budget it appeared we were double budgeting and project costs would creep up but we had no way to control it,” explained Joe Donahue, Controller for E-470.

With WennSoft E-470 now enters the budget for each job as an estimated cost in Job Cost. Each job has six to eight different categories of work, or cost codes, that can be tracked against the job. When someone issues a contract via a purchase order for a job it is committed against the appropriate cost code for that job. This allows E-470 to track all activity throughout the life of the job.

“WennSoft has added a tremendous amount of control to the finance department,” said McCuskey. “It really clamped down on who could spend what and who could approve what.”

In addition to having more control over their projects by accessing project details, E-470 can now get more accurate information out of their system for reporting.



#### About WennSoft

WennSoft, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, provides innovative business management solutions for public and private sector organizations focused on project management, field service and equipment/fleet management.

WennSoft services include assessment, training, implementation and go-live support. With more than a decade of experience in delivering superior applications in the field service and construction industries, WennSoft is the solution provider of choice.

“With the addition of the WennSoft Job Cost product, we now have the ability to go into the system at the end of the year and submit our budget numbers to the board of directors,” said McCuskey. “We know exactly how much was spent the year before.”

“WennSoft has helped us get our hands around the issues better than we have ever been able to,” added McCuskey. “When I meet with the executive director and our board I have the ability to talk confidently about project details.”

In the past eight years E-470 has grown from about \$5 million in tolls to about \$85 million. As their customer base grows, the need for expansions and maintenance to the highway will continue. With Microsoft Dynamics GP and the WennSoft Job Cost solution E-470 can now increase their focus on day-to-day operations helping to improve efficiencies.

“At this point we have really begun to maximize the system,” said Donahue. “With all the outsourcing we do, the ability to have everything flowing through one solution has been great. Once everyone had learned to use the solution we were able to eliminate overtime hours.”

“Using WennSoft has changed the way we run our business and improved our overall efficiency,” added McCuskey. “We now have assurance that our data is accurate and we can run reports with confidence. WennSoft has given us the tools we need to track what we need to track, control what we need to control and report what we need to report.”

When E-470 decided to go with the WennSoft Solution they connected with IronWare Technologies to help with the implementation. IronWare Technologies is a single source solution provider specializing in software sales, support, training, development and network services specifically designed to meet the needs of construction and project-driven businesses.

Having had some bad experiences with past vendors, E-470 was thrilled to be working with IronWare. In addition to being responsive to their needs, IronWare had the staff and ability to deliver the support services they needed.

“It was important to have a partner that would provide the services we needed,” said McCuskey. “IronWare has done a terrific job. They want us to get the results we want.”

“IronWare helped us implement and get WennSoft off the ground,” added McCuskey. “They provide great support, perform our upgrades and make sure everything is backed up.”

By working with IronWare Technologies and WennSoft, E-470 feels they have made great progress since deploying the solution. They plan to continue to move forward and expand how they are using the solution.

“We are really happy with the path we are now on and how things are looking for the future,” finished McCuskey.