



The Answer Company Helps DVBIA Keep Downtown Vancouver Vibrant

Vancouver, British Columbia perennially makes the list of the world’s most beautiful — and livable — cities. At least some of the credit for the honours must go to The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA). DVBIA represents the shared goals of its 7,000 businesses by driving creative solutions forward and taking meaningful action to improve the downtown Vancouver experience.

Helping power DVBIA’s ambitious vision is The Answer Company and Sage Intacct.

Manual Processes Can’t Scale

When Jane Talbot joined DVBIA four years ago as its Director of Operations, the organization relied on Sage 50 as its financial management application. “We were doing fine, but fine isn’t always enough,” says Jane, now the organization’s Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. “Our budget was set to increase and we needed systems in place to support it. Overall, we were too reliant on paper and manual processes that weren’t maintainable, let alone scalable.”

Jane began looking for a next-generation financial management solution for DVBIA, one that would help the organization streamline workflows, would run equally well on Macs or PCs, and would provide secure remote access. “I started with a Google search,” she recalls. “We quickly narrowed our selection to either Sage Intacct or NetSuite. Sage Intacct had a local partner, The Answer Company, so we reached out to them.”

Local Partner Makes Good Neighbor

The Answer Company is headquartered in Vancouver, which DVBIA sees as a real advantage. “Local partner support is important to me,” Jane says. “I’m not an accountant, so in some ways I didn’t know what I didn’t know about selecting accounting software. The Answer Company came to our offices and gave us a comprehensive demonstration. They were straightforward, patient, thorough, and very personable. The Answer Company demonstrated how Sage Intacct was an ideal fit for the unique needs of our organization, and we agreed.”



Company
Downtown Vancouver
Business Improvement
Association

Headquarters
Vancouver, BC

Employees
37

Industry
Member Association

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“I feel empowered by Sage Intacct and The Answer Company. When a board member or another stakeholder asks me a question, I no longer have to say, ‘I’ll get back to you.’ Now I’ve got all the answers.”



Next-Level Efficiencies

The Answer Company introduced next-level efficiencies to the organization. Perhaps the single biggest efficiency gain surrounds cheque signing. Previously, DVBIA would need to walk or courier accounts payable cheques across town to be signed by a board member. "Cheques over a certain amount require a second signature," Jane explains. "You can imagine the time waste and work disruption involved in running across town every single week."

The Answer Company helped establish a new accounts payable workflow in Sage Intacct. Now, the Board's Secretary-Treasurer receives a notification when a payment requires their approval and are able to review the original invoice, payment advice, and any notes added. "They can perform the entire review and authorize the signature online," notes Jane. "No more trips across town. That alone saves us several hours every month."

File Cabinets Have Moved Out

DVBIA is also achieving its goal to reduce or even eliminate manual, paper-based processes. "I used to have to dig through massive filing cabinets organized by year and then alphabetically to find a single report," recalls Jane. "That's over and done. With Sage Intacct all our financial data is available online. And it's not just the main report data that's accessible; I can drill down into any number and see the individual transactions that make up the number. It definitely saves time, but more importantly, it's empowering to have that data so easily accessible."

Secure Remote Access Boosts Productivity

Previously, only the organization's bookkeeper had access to the software. "It was installed on her desktop," explains Jane. "Every transaction, every question, every report, every *everything* had to go through the bookkeeper. That robbed her of her productivity and it robbed the rest of the organization of accessible insights into our operations. With Sage Intacct, we can provide role-based security to individual users to allow everyone who needs access to our business data to gain that access."

DVBIA made the move to Sage Intacct at an opportune time. "We went live in the summer of 2019," recalls Jane. "Thank goodness we had it up and running before the pandemic. I'm not sure how we could have kept operating with the old system, since no one could access it remotely. And I can't imagine how we would have handled the second check signature challenge."

Empowering Stakeholders

Quarterly board meetings used to require hours of manual preparation by Jane and the bookkeeper. "It took us hours to do," says Jane. "The Answer Company replicated the board reports for us in Sage Intacct. Now it's as simple as printing the reports and sharing them electronically with board members." The team has gained hours of their time back and are giving their stakeholders better information.

"I feel empowered by Sage Intacct and The Answer Company," Jane says. "When a board member, a vendor or another stakeholder asks me a question, I no longer have to say, 'I'll get back to you.' Now I've got all the answers."

She concludes, "The Answer Company makes an ideal partner for DV BIA. We're a smaller organization, but they treat us with the utmost respect and make us feel valued. We feel like they've helped us establish a future-proof financial management solution that will perform for us for many years to come."

New System Sage Intacct

Results

- AP Automation saves hours each month
- Online data access makes filing cabinets obsolete
- Remote access empowers workforce
- Local partner provides personalized support

About The Answer Company

The Answer Company is a leading supplier of business management software and technology consulting services.

Since 1995, we have been helping businesses answer the difficult questions with regards to investments in technology and information systems. Our goal is to make businesses more successful at what they do and gain confidence to make profitable moves in their respective industries.

Our software solutions support accounting, operations, CRM, human resources, time tracking, merchant services, and the specialized needs of the manufacturing, construction, distribution, healthcare, nonprofit, and real estate industries.



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