

Co-op Taxi

Personal Transportation Co-op Moves Business From Point A to SAP Business One with Vision33

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Uday Kumar, General Manager

Company

Name:

Co-op Taxi

Location:

Edmonton, Alberta

Number of Employees:

80

Industry:

Taxicab

Customers:

- Metropolitan fare

- Corporate accounts

Services:

Transportation

www.co-optaxi.com



Business Challenges

- Need for an integrated business management solution for taxicab industry

ERP Solution

- SAP Business One®

Benefits

- Real-time reporting for accurate snapshot of company performance
- Inventory management for greater cost control
- Consolidation of accounting software for visibility across each department
- Single integrated business management solution for more efficient operations

Why Vision33?

- Vision33 TOTAL Care support program
- #1 global value added reseller (VAR) for SAP Business One
- SAP certified implementation consultants with decades of experience

Existing Environment

- Industry specific software
- Non-SAP accounting software
- Debit and credit software

For the passenger, it's a simple question: how do I get from point A to point B? But for Co-op Taxi, the answer involves charting out how to best equip its fleet of 1,500 drivers with the right technology to accept customer payment, navigate the most efficient routes in traffic, and locate the next fare with punctual and courteous service. Now, driven by the power of SAP Business One, the Edmonton-based Taxi company has the answer.

"We serve the customer," tells Uday Kumar, General Manager, Co-op Taxi. It's a simple approach to a primary service - transportation. But when you empower highly skilled and safe drivers with technology, that service quickly becomes the first choice for passengers.

Started in 1971, by three taxi drivers alone but in a business that puts its employees in the driver seat of the company's success through a direct ownership structure, the company took off in a hurry. Years later, with a fleet of 525 vehicles, 1,500 drivers and thousands of satisfied customers per day, Co-op Taxis has become one of the most successful transportation services in the country.

A success that owes not only to the company's focus on customer service but also its progressive take on technology and its ability to empower its fleet to be even more efficient. "We are one of the first companies to move to dispatching our taxis with a tablet and gone with data services with virtually no downtime," explains Kumar.

Co-op Taxi knows that its customers are consumers of electronic media, which is why it is meeting them halfway by offering online bookings through its Android and iOS apps; enabling drivers to locate its next passenger with mobile-age savvy.

In the transportation industry, every second counts, and for Co-op Taxi, improving business efficiency takes high priority. However, amidst rapid growth, the off-the-shelf business software that the company had been using, turned out to be a middle of the road solution. Co-op Taxi identified several challenges it would have to overcome with its next business solution.

Overcoming an Uphill Struggle

When you operate in the fast lane like Co-op Taxi, growing at rate faster than business management software will support, financial compliance, audits, and bank reconciliations become a challenge. Having grown to four departments large, the company was facing communication challenges between each department; lost and found, public relations, and driver's supervision were each using a separate application.

Payroll was also a challenge, with over 1,500 drivers to pay biweekly, manually crediting and debiting the accounts was becoming time consuming. Using a small business accounting package, the company managed its accounts payable, and at the same time would do a reconciliation. However, the challenge was that these applications were unable to talk to each other. "With the company's sales reaching a daily average of \$30-\$40, 000 in transactions, we needed software that could automatically create an invoice for the driver and make a payment," recounts Kumar. Co-op Taxi realized that it would be too labour intensive to have an employee manually process transactions for 1,500 drivers on a daily basis.



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Changing Course for a Greater Business Management System

The company created a project plan, establishing several objectives for adoption of SAP Business One. Key was to improve efficiency, improve integration and better service not only the customer, but its own employees as well. After identifying its options, the company decided to go with an enterprise resource planning (ERP) application.

SAP Business One offered the best choice for the company since in addition to the many core features that the company needed to support efficient operations, the application also possesses the ability to be tailored to suit any industry. So the company outlined what it wanted from an ERP solution and from an implementation partner.

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Working with Vision33

Co-op Taxi contacted local SAP gold channel partner, Vision33, for help. As part of the implementation process, Co-op Taxi's employees got the 411 on SAP Business One with the renowned Vision33 TOTAL Care support program. Beyond the implementation phase, the program enables the company to fully leverage its investment in the transformative SAP Business One application.

No stranger to customer service, Co-Op Taxi, enjoyed a close partnership with Vision33 and its team of certified implementation consultants. "We know everyone by name," says Kumar. We really enjoyed working with Vision33's implementation consultants. We are very satisfied with the solution that Vision33 has provided Co-op Taxi," says Kumar.

Paying it Forward to Customers and Employees

Since implementing SAP Business One, Co-op Taxi has already begun to see measurable results. The dispatcher's office can now, at the push of a button, close out all transactions automatically in under twenty seconds - a process which used to take hours in the past. For corporate customer charges, such as vouchers, Vision33 has integrated the company's taxicab scanners with SAP Business One. Now when a driver scans the voucher it is automatically uploaded to the system, tagged with a unique ID number and automatically creates an invoice for each customer.

Co-op Taxi also sees how technology can benefit their employees as well. Going forward, the company's goal is to implement an employee portal seamlessly integrated with SAP Business One, where drivers can query transaction details over the last few years for taxation purposes. Kumar explains, "If drivers want to pull up details on a transaction within the last few years for taxation purposes, they won't need to physically go to the Co-op Taxi dispatch and look for the transaction. Everything will be available on the website, fully integrated with the accounting and dispatch system. That puts the fast growing cab company miles ahead of their local competitors."

Taking the Wheel with Real-Time Information Access



Working with Vision33's implementation consultants, Co-op Taxi has currently implemented several of SAP Business One's modules including finance, accounting, and inventory management. Using the business solution's standard reports as well the extensive custom reporting options, Kumar says the company has the insight necessary to operate more efficient. "We have accurate and complete accounts receivable," says Kumar. "It's easy to measure company performance at a moment's notice." In the area of inventory management, Co-op Taxi can now track orders from vendors which helps provides control expensive inventory such as radios, antennas, tablets, and top lights for the taxicabs.

SAP Business One custom reporting is also beneficial in meeting the requirement of company stakeholders. As a cooperative, Co-op Taxi is required to provide financial reports to its board of directors each month. The reports multiple layers of detail, and the ability to drill down for a closer look with P & L statements, salaries as well as overhead costs for a specified period of time.

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Heading Up the Road to Continued Success

With Co-op Taxi's dispatch system now fully integrated with SAP Business One, the company has given the green light to Vision33 to find additional ways to leverage the solution. Kumar already has some ideas: the completion of a new customer portal for Co-op Taxi's corporate customers to log in and manage their accounts.

The company is also looking into a new SMS service to provide even more value to its technology-enabled customers by providing an easier way to call for a taxi; an added service made possible by the flexible foundation offered by SAP Business One. "We haven't seen a business management solution specific to a taxi company on the market but that is exactly what Vision33 has provided for Co-op Taxi," concludes Kumar.



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