

Real Estate Lending Firm Leverages
Armanino Expertise to Replace
Outgrown Financial Systems With
Sage Intacct

CASE STUDY

armanino 

At A Glance

Customer Profile:

During its rapid growth, a real estate lender quickly outgrew its QuickBooks software and spreadsheet-based processes for reporting and analysis. With help from Armanino, the lender consolidated its financial and accounting processes into Sage Intacct, including automation of loan data entry and revenue recognition processes.

Software & Services

- Sage Intacct
- Armanino consulting, implementation and customization services

Benefits

- Replaced multiple software solutions with Sage Intacct
- Eliminated reliance on spreadsheets for loan reporting and analysis
- Enabled insight into department-level profit and loss

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-VP of Finance

Challenge

A real estate lending firm had experienced particularly rapid growth, with a nearly fivefold increase in loan originations in less than two years' time. This rapid growth, which also included more than doubling the number of employees, proved too much for the lender's QuickBooks accounting system to handle.

For the company's new vice president of finance, implementing a modern financial technology stack became the top priority. “On the loan side of the house, we were using Excel spreadsheets to create reports and analysis of the loan portfolio for management decisions,” he says. “For the rest of the financials, there was no profit and loss insight at the department level, not enough budgeting detail for a growing company, inefficiencies and complexity in the expense report process, and no way to connect loans to cash.”

The final straw was the knowledge that the company was paying thousands of dollars each month for a separate solution to manage expenses. If a new accounting system could replace both QuickBooks and the expense system, the company could reduce its technology spend while gaining the robust capabilities and scalability it needed to support continued growth.

Solution

Armanino, one of the 25 largest accounting and consulting firms in the U.S., used its industry expertise, technology skills and experience with other real estate lending clients to guide the lender in its decision on a new financial system. With help from Armanino, the company realized that the only option that offered everything it needed to consolidate its financial management and reporting needs into a scalable, robust system was Sage Intacct, a cloud-based accounting and financial management solution.

“The tipping point for us was the ability to incorporate loan data and consolidate expenses into one financial management system,” says the VP of finance. “At that point, it was clear to us that Sage Intacct was the right solution and that Armanino was a best-in-class implementation partner.” Armanino is an end-to-end Sage Intacct implementation, customization and integration consulting provider.

The original scope for the deployment included replacing QuickBooks with Sage Intacct, consolidating loan and expense management into the new system, and creating department-level reporting and budgeting. During the project, the scope was increased to include full automation for loading loan data as well as automating revenue recognition processes with a custom module created by Armanino.

The timeline for accomplishing all the lender's goals was “extremely aggressive,” according to the VP of finance, but the project stayed on

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track. “Despite expanding the scope and going live immediately following a major holiday, we hit all of our objectives,” he says. “With Armanino’s clear roadmap, expertise and well-organized, systematic approach to implementation, I could manage the project on our side with a very lean staff and still remain on schedule.”

Results

The VP of finance at the lender credits Armanino’s extensive experience for the successful deployment of the new financial system and the resulting transformative business outcomes. “The timing, cost and limited use of resources on our side would not have been possible without Armanino,” he says. “The combination of accounting and industry know-how and Sage Intacct skills on the Armanino team was invaluable to us.”

To successfully replace the entire accounting system, including moving from spreadsheets and multiple systems, the lender relied on the ongoing guidance of its Armanino team. “Armanino was an excellent counselor for every implementation decision that we had to make,” says the VP of finance. “With clear, helpful insight into potential advantages, shortcomings and cost impacts, Armanino helped us quickly make informed decisions and keep the project moving forward.”

Today, the lender has the financial accounting automation, scalability, accuracy, visibility and efficiency it needs to support continued, rapid growth of its lending business across the nation. “For the first time, every department has a budget and we’re having conversations on profit and loss, with detailed insight into expenses,” says the VP of finance. “This type of conversation wasn’t even possible last year.”

Next Steps

With Sage Intacct as the core financial system, the lender’s finance team will soon be ready to work with Armanino on selecting and integrating a new technology solution to support the company’s financial planning and analysis efforts. “We will be looking to deploy software that integrates well with Sage Intacct and supports financial modeling for things like different pricing and draw structures, as well as forecasting,” says the VP of finance.

As the lender continues to transform its finance and accounting department, it can rely on Armanino for industry, technology and accounting expertise and support.

About Armanino^{LLP}

Armanino provides an integrated set of accounting services—audit, tax, consulting and technology solutions—to a wide range of organizations operating both in the US and globally. You can count on Armanino to think strategically, to provide the sound insights that lead to positive

action. We address not just your compliance issues, but your underlying business challenges, as well—assessing opportunities, weighing risks, and exploring the practical implications of both your short- and long-term decisions. When you work with us, we give you options that are fully aligned with your business strategy. If you need to do more with less, we will implement the technology to automate your business processes. If it's financial, we can show you proven benchmarks and best practices that can add value company-wide. If the issue is operational, we'll consult with your people about workflow efficiencies. If it's compliance, we'll ensure you meet the requirements and proactively plan to take full advantage of the changes at hand. At every stage in your company's lifecycle, we'll help you find the right balance of people, processes, and technology.