

## JMW Values Strafford's Financial Software Expertise and Experience

When an international management consultancy and executive education firm needed help deciding whether to upgrade or replace its existing finance and accounting software it turned to prior trusted partner, Strafford Technology, for advice.

JMW Consultants, Inc. supports clients with implementing critical strategies requiring cultural change and performance breakthroughs. JMW assists with the development of people in areas including leadership, management, and innovation. With offices in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, JMW serves clients in North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions.

### Needing a Better Way to Meet Business Requirements

Microsoft Great Plains served JMW well for many years as the accounting and enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. But as business grew and needs expanded, the time-consuming, overly manual process needed new technology to streamline reporting.

JMW used a combination of Oracle Essbase, Hyperion Enterprise, and Microsoft Excel to address its budget, planning, and reporting needs. The company was able to perform the planning procedures through Enterprise and Essbase, but many of the desired results were unattainable due to the amount of time to produce that data; by the time reports came out, the information was already out-of-date.

Reporting of financial results and comparable analytics was also a very manual process maintained largely through several linked Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Due to an increasingly difficult business environment and the dependence on largely manual processes, the technologies JMW used were not viable to meet the challenges of timely, accurate data and reports.

JMW needed a robust and reliable ERP solution to keep up with business growth and development. It needed a global solution that supported traditional processes around the general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, project management, human capital management, financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting. The company also needed the new solution to allow for true business-user support and offer a streamlined approach in its implementation.

### JMW Consultants

**Stamford, CT**

[www.jmw.com](http://www.jmw.com)

**Technology:** ERP Tool Assessment

**Business Challenge:** Need for assistance with reviewing available options and making selection for more robust and reliable global ERP solution to keep up with business growth and development.

**Strafford Solution:** Replace existing system with a fully integrated, cloud-based ERP solution, allowing JMW to keep its IT department small and focused on existing systems.

**Result:** Streamlined approach for implementing multi-dimensional, automated accounting system to provide timely and accurate data and reports.



*"We had a very successful partnership with Strafford for this evaluation project. The entire project was well managed and definitely met our expectations."*

~ Patricia Santini

## Selecting a New ERP Solution

JMW worked with Strafford previously to upgrade and implement Hyperion Enterprise software and the two companies developed an excellent relationship. Although Strafford does not implement ERP solutions, JMW didn't hesitate to call on Strafford to assist with evaluating upgrade and replacement options.

"We needed assistance in reviewing ERP solutions," said Patricia Santini, controller at JMW Consultants. "Our existing system was on a platform that was no longer sustainable. It involved too much manual effort. We were looking for a new way to become current, to move forward and improve our accounting and analysis functions."

## Strafford as a Partner

Before meeting Strafford, on prior projects, JMW sought out references in order to find a partner or consulting firm that had the comprehensive financial solution expertise that could carry a project from idea to implementation. They wanted a company with industry knowledge and experienced consultants who could understand their particular needs. JMW needed a company who could work with them to get a successful final result in a cost-effective, efficient manner.

Strafford became that partner then, and was the first choice now. "Strafford consultants have lots of background knowledge of ERP," Santini said. "They are aware of struggles and challenges companies have and they bring their strong financial industry knowledge to the table every time."

For this project, Strafford learned about JMW and the entire business process. The consultants had strong skills and offered a lot of business and client support. "The consultants were quite detail oriented and made sure we had everything we needed," Santini said. "Whenever we had a question, they had an answer. Or if they didn't know the answer immediately, they were able to get it quickly."

## Selecting and Implementing the Solution

With Strafford's expertise, JMW decided upgrading was not the way to go. "Strafford was very proactive," Santini said of the firm's involvement.

Because of their experience, Strafford consultants knew the questions to ask that would focus and drive the JMW team to identifying the best ERP solution for their company. "The consultants offered suggestions for us to think about," Santini said. For instance, Strafford had JMW consider the functionality and benefits of having a fully integrated solu-

tion versus a best-in-class solution. "They pointed out areas we should be concerned with, asking us questions about things we hadn't thought to consider initially, but needed to resolve."

JMW had a critical need to simplify the general ledger. The old general ledger contained individual accounts over 15 characters long. Each time a new division was added, over 200 accounts had to be entered into the system – instead of only the new division – in order to use the existing chart of accounts. The best solution had to be multidimensional and allow for easy handling of future changes and growth.

Decisions had to be made and JMW trusted Strafford's approach. "There was very good support on their end."

JMW replaced its existing system with a fully integrated, cloud-based ERP solution from Deltek. In addition to addressing the needs above, the solution allowed JMW to keep its IT department small and focused on existing systems. The entire project, from evaluating options to selecting a solution to full implementation took less than nine months.

## Looking Forward

"We had a very successful partnership with Strafford for this evaluation project," said Santini. The consultants helped JMW evaluate and select the best solution and then they developed a detailed and well-documented implementation plan for JMW to follow. "The entire project was well managed and definitely met our expectations."

Santini also commented on the synergy between the Strafford consultants and members of the JMW team. "Everyone worked well together. This was another great experience with Strafford."

Another important aspect that made this project a success was having it stay on time and on budget. "Strafford was very professional and helped us meet our goals. I look forward to working with them again."

With Hyperion Enterprise software no longer being supported, JMW will need to upgrade soon. When the time comes, Strafford will be the consultant of choice to assist with moving JMW to Hyperion Financial Management (HFM).

