

ITK Success Story



In The Know
Solutions Group

Process first. Technology second.

FTC and Microsoft AX were a great match for ITK's Telco Template Approach to drive their digital transformation.

Executive Summary

Farmers Telephone Cooperative (FTC), a rural telco coop, provides phone and other services to more than 60,000 rural customers in South Carolina within an area of 3,000 square miles. Government funding has supported Rural Telcos but has been shrinking, so FTC's CEO was particularly interested in a digital transformation to modernize to improve efficiency today and also to pave the way for future growth. Members of the ITK team had implemented the legacy Lawson software FTC is still using almost eighteen years ago. That long-running relationship is why FTC reached out to the same team, again.

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Challenges

- How can we be more efficient with IT spending and fixed costs while encouraging growth in the future?
- How can we move away from growing monthly maintenance costs for outdated software?
- What ERP System should we use that integrates with our systems?
- How can we get our patchwork of Lawson, smaller archaic systems, customer code and age hardware upgraded?
- How can we become more competitive and market-driven?
- How do we update our IT skill set and tool set to keep up with best practices? (FTC was using AS400 technology, which was very fast twenty years ago but outdated by today's standards)
- FTC needed the business process and software tech become more competitive, more market driven even while funding to do so is shrinking
- Telco Coops have a history of being supported in their mission to bring phone coverage to rural areas by government subsidies but the government is no longer investing as heavily in rural phone lines since broad cell phone adoption

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Solutions

- Microsoft Dynamics AX
- Finance/General Ledger: Accounts Payable, light Accounts Receivable, Project Accounting (project and financial accounting consistent with FCC Part 32 Accounting regulations)
- Microsoft Dynamics Payroll - Customized web timesheet entry w/approval process (FTC had a customized timesheet entry form that we were able to improve upon)
- Inventory & Expense Purchases - Customized internet requisitions with workflow approval to control inventory and expense purchases
- ITK Template Approach: a less expensive, more time efficient, streamlined ERP Implementation. Makes a modern ERP system affordable to Telco Coops like FTC
- Change management plan to ensure adoption of new (more efficient) business processes in line with industry best practices and the newly implemented technology

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Results

- Nine Month Implementation
- Lowered the Financial barrier to entry by using the ITK Template Approach
- Modern ERP system with the same business processes as Fortune 500 companies
- Reduced ongoing IT expenditure
- Business Insights made possible by shared access to data throughout the company
- Allows for ease of acquisition of new legal entities, corporate assets and strategic investments (because FTC now has a more flexible system, which can easily integrate with new assets.)

Bottom Line

Microsoft Dynamics AX along with ITK are a great match for Rural Telco Coops. ITK's business process expertise, our Telco Template Approach and IP that we've created for FTC and other clients in this vertical make this project as well as future projects ideal for Rural Telco/Broadband Coops.