

BUILDING SUCCESS



featured

- HTH Companies
- Foundation Software

FOUNDATION gives ABC Contractor Tools to Improve Labor Management

Since 1984, HTH Companies have provided quality workmanship for all types of mechanical insulation and general contractor projects – from new installations and plant expansions to rehab and remodeling.

Today, this open shop mechanical contractor employs more than 150 workers in six Midwest states and specializes in thermal insulation for process piping systems, tanks and vessels, as well as general contracting services for commercial and industrial facilities. By utilizing the highest quality materials available and maintaining excellent standards for safety, HTH Companies has earned steady profits ... and award winning recognition... over the past 20 years.

As a member of the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), HTH Companies is the recipient of numerous awards for excellence in construction. The company was recently awarded the Accredited Quality Contractor (AQC) award, an honor given to firms that have documented their commitment in four key areas: safety, employee benefits, training, and community relations. Of the 23,000 members of ABC, only 450 contractors have achieved AQC status. In addition, HTH has received ABC's Excellence in Construction Award in 1991, 1998, and 2003.

According to Dale Winters, Vice President and Assistant General Manager for HTH, the company owes much of its success to progressive leadership combined with sound financial management.

"We constantly strive to find more efficient methods to achieve a high level of quality while reducing our costs and remaining competitive," Winters said. "The key to reducing our costs is having accurate and readily-available information regarding our current spending."

But that was not always the case at HTH. Prior to January 2002, the company was using a popular off-the-shelf accounting package that was not capable of tracking important financial data for multi-state payroll or producing required withholding reports.

THE CHALLENGE

While business and service territories grew at HTH, their accounting department struggled to keep pace with basic accounting functions. One of the greatest frustrations for the accounting staff was their system's limitations regarding multi-state and prevailing wage management and reporting.

"Any time we had an employee switch between states, which we do in this trade, the system didn't track the information correctly," said Susan Hellebusch, Controller. "We were going back to an actual manual reporting to make sure that the withholding in certain states carried forward accurately."

CUSTOMER



CORPORATE PROFILE

HTH Companies
Union, MO
Mechanical Insulation,
General Contractor
Employees: 150
Annual Revenue: \$12 Million

SYSTEM PROFILE

Foundation Software Modules in Operation

- Job Costing
- Payroll
- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- DataGenie Designers
- Time and Material
- Executive Management

BENEFITS

- Detailed job costing system allows for more thorough labor management
- Date sensitivity feature has simplified year-end and project reporting
- Accurate reporting leads to greater productivity analysis
- Integrated system has reduced redundant accounting tasks

Prevailing wage reporting was another area that created a lot of extra work under the old system. Because the system was not sophisticated enough to track by various trades and wages, the accounting staff had to set up a separate procedure to calculate wages.

"We actually had an outside database system that we put all those rates and payroll hours into from timesheets," Hellebusch said, "Then we had to manually re-enter it into our old system. Now we have the ability to set up rates for every job and every trade with FOUNDATION® for Windows®."

The fact that the previous system was not date-sensitive was another big issue at HTH. "When we got to our year-end and wanted to have things posted in the prior year, it didn't even have the capability of doing that," Hellebusch explained. "And it couldn't handle jobs that crossed over months because it always posted to the current month."

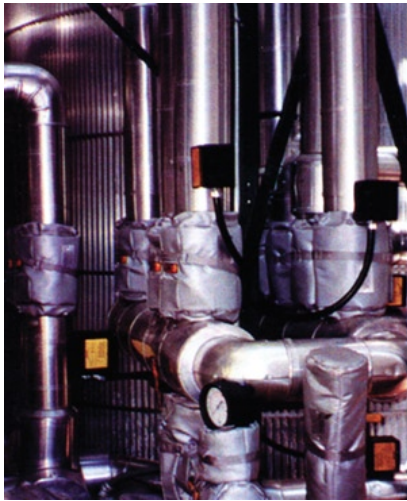
THE SOLUTION

In the fall of 2001, HTH decided it was time to switch accounting programs. The search began among construction-specific software that offered flexibility of user-defined fields and good reporting capabilities. After considering several programs, FOUNDATION was ultimately selected because it offered everything the company was looking for at a very competitive price.

"Because FOUNDATION runs on Microsoft® SQL database," Winters said, "we knew the integrity of the date-sensitive data was insured. We also liked the user-friendly format, the complete integration between modules, and how it easily integrates with external interfaces."

After purchasing the software in early December and getting trained a week before Christmas, HTH went live on FOUNDATION on January 1, 2002. "The short time frame associated with our conversion is a good indication of how user-friendly this software is," Winters said.

Today, the HTH accounting staff no longer spends long hours on menial accounting tasks. Thanks to a detailed job costing system, productivity analysis is simpler and more effective, Winters said. "What's more, FOUNDATION has allowed for more thorough labor management."



Industrial clients rely on HTH for expert pipe insulation that includes custom removable covers



HTH installed the insulation and lagging on this mixing tower at a chemical processing plant

Hellebusch offers the following advice to companies currently in the market for accounting software: "You need to ask the right questions," she said. "For example, is it construction-specific... and is it date-sensitive? Does it track the data you need and produce the kinds of reports you require? Finally, you should expect it to be flexible enough to grow along with your business."