

The Challenge

Sunbelt Holdings of Scottsdale, Arizona has been a recognized leader in real estate development, management, and investment throughout the Southwest since 1979. Like many other businesses in the industry, Sunbelt found TimberScan on their quest to simplify invoice approval routing, reduce AP personnel burdens, and improve their cash flow forecasting.

With 70 entities, 30 approval groups and four locations, Sunbelt's logistics of getting invoices to the correct location and people for approval was inefficient. "Fin Loison, our accounts payable clerk would have to remember which invoice goes where, who has it, and when it's due for the check run," explained Susan Fisher, Corporate Controller. "She literally had 70 invoice folders." Sunbelt needed a more efficient approval routing system. Additionally, chasing around to locate invoices, nagging approvers, and filing papers added unnecessary work. Invoices would not be entered into the Sage accounting system until Fin got them all back and approved a couple of days before Sunbelt's check run once a month. "It could take a week to get something approved—and you're never



Case Study

Sunbelt Holdings Saves Hours per Month and Improves Cash Forecasting with TimberScan



quite sure who it's with," said Fisher. "Plus," she adds, "I could not forecast how much money it would be unless I went to Fin's desk, found her folders, and ran a tape of the invoices sitting there." Regarding investors who needed advance notice for funding calls, Fishers stated, "Before TimberScan, you had to scramble if it was different than expected."

The Solution

To address these growing challenges, Sunbelt began seriously looking at TimberScan, by Core Associates, the leading AP approval processing and content management software for Sage 300 CRE users. "We sat through all of the demos and it looked like a great product," relayed Fisher. "We liked the routing rules and that you could see where an invoice was in the process." Sunbelt also appreciated TimberScan's e-mail, annotation, and reporting capabilities. "You can make a vendor invoice register



entity specific, or select by GL account or whatever you want, whereas in Timberline [Sage 300 CRE] you can't," explained Fisher.

"The culture at Sunbelt is to be the most efficient and accurate they can be, so it's no wonder they chose TimberScan," explained Michelle Jardine, Client Services, Core Associates. The TimberScan installation for Sunbelt took just two hours and implementation was complete after two training sessions. "Susan is a quick learner and she was motivated to complete her setup and go live," said Jardine.



With TimberScan, Sunbelt is able to automate routing, get invoices into their accounting system up to three weeks sooner, generate reports to help with cash forecasting, and easily locate information. They no longer needed to file paper copies of invoices once they were scanned and project managers enjoyed a current view of project job costs. "Fin can also acquire invoices straight from e-mail," explained Fisher. "And, she can attach emailed lien waivers from her desk, instead of going back to the paper copies to attach."

TimberScan is loaded with added features and functionality to improve the data management experience for users and to help



aid management in decision making. "We use the sticky notes in TimberScan, which is great," explained Fisher. "It gives you an idea of what's going on without having to ask. And comments pop up so you can't avoid seeing them." Fisher further explains, "With TimberScan we are able to run a report by Vendor, and attach all of the Invoices. It gives us an idea of what we are spending our money on, and where we can cut costs."

TimberScan saves Sunbelt's AP clerk at least 20 hours per month. "I save about eight hours per month chasing around, eight hours filing, and four hours on folder maintenance and accessing invoices," explained Loison. "At year end I save another two days by not creating new file folders." With TimberScan reports, Fisher makes accurate cash forecasts weeks in advance. "You have a better grasp on what is out there now, management has more information to compare to budgets and spot problems faster—we also save money not having to print the paper and not needing the space for 30 file cabinets," explained Fisher. At competitive lease rates, the 200 square feet required for that many file cabinets would have cost \$4,000 per year, so Sunbelt recognized more savings from the mere paper-free nature of TimberScan!

Today, Sunbelt's overall AP operation is definitely running much smoother. They enjoy online access to files and seamless integration with their Sage 300 CRE database. "Fin just doesn't have to nag as much and doesn't have people rifling through her desk looking for invoices. She doesn't have to file or even move from her desk," stated Fisher. "About once a week we say: I love TimberScan!"

