

Compatibility Solves Weighty Problem



featured

- RB Robinson Contracting
- Gerhart Scale
- SMS Turbo®
- FOUNDATION® for Windows®

RB Robinson Contracting Uses SMS Turbo and FOUNDATION for Windows to unite scale management and accounting functions

THE CHALLENGE

Working primarily in central New York, RB Robinson Contracting is a site work construction company that also supplies gravel and crushed stone from three separate locations. Since the early 1990s, RB Robinson has relied on scale management software from Creative Information Systems to provide accurate scale tickets, track customers and generate invoices for its gravel operations.

Until recently, integration between the scale management software (SMS Turbo) and RB Robinson's accounting systems had been anything but smooth. At first, when the company was running a DOS accounting system, there was no integration capability at all. For every customer sale (on average 40 or 50 a day), the accounting staff had to run the invoices through SMS and then manually type them into the accounting system. When the company switched to an off-the-shelf accounting system, integration became possible but not practical. The software's inflexibility created lots of extra work for the staff.

THE SOLUTION

In 2007, RB Robinson's general manager decided it was time to look for a construction-specific accounting system that could handle job costing for the company's site work operations. The goal was to find a system that would serve the gravel operations as well, and there was one final criterion: it must interface with SMS Turbo.

Upon the recommendation of another site work contractor, RB Robinson took a look at FOUNDATION® for Windows®... and they liked what they saw. In addition to the powerful job costing, reporting and construction-rich features, FOUNDATION's Microsoft SQL-based database assured them that this system would easily interface with SMS Turbo, also built on Microsoft SQL.

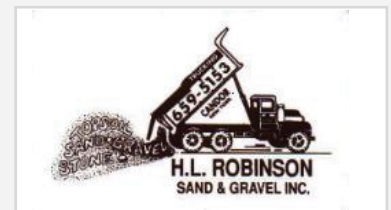
In October 2007, RB Robinson's contracting division switched over to FOUNDATION, and the gravel operations started on the software in January 2008.

THE BENEFITS

Today, the company's three gravel pits operate with considerable efficiency, thanks to seamless integration between SMS Turbo and FOUNDATION, as well as computerized truck scales from Gerhart Scale.

At each location, as a truck rolls over the Gerhart scale with a load of material, SMS Turbo produces a ticket for the customer that lists the truck, customer name, material, weight, cost, delivery charge, tax and even county. To invoice the customer, the accounting staff simply brings up the SMS invoice and prints it out. The invoice is then imported into FOUNDATION, where it flows automatically to

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Accounts Receivable and distributes the income to the appropriate General Ledger accounts and cost codes. Since most of the invoice data (such as customer ID numbers and cost codes) shares the same coding, the process is quick and effortless.

Considering the size and scope of RB Robinson's gravel operations, the ease of integration is impressive. The company borders several counties, and its pits are located in different counties, so RB Robinson must track six separate county taxes from three pit locations. According to Administrative Assistant Laura Schurter, SMS helped to customize their system to accommodate even the most complex transaction.

"It's feasible for us to have one customer hauling all kinds of materials out of three pits, and some of these jobs are taxable and some are not," Schurter explained.

"We are confident that when the billing information comes over from SMS to FOUNDATION, it will go to the right division, trucking delivery rates will be separated out from gravel income, and the sales tax will be correctly tracked. It works seamlessly, and it's so easy."

RB Robinson's gravel operations are operating so efficiently, in fact, that the company is currently working on opening an unattended scale operation at one of its sites. Using a specialized Gerhart scale, cameras and Internet connections, the company will soon be able to weigh and ticket a customer's truckload of material from the home office – 18 miles away. "Using remote communications, we can verify the customer and the material to issue a ticket, which will print out over there," Schurter said. "Minutes later, I could import the invoice into FOUNDATION," Schurter added.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Over the years, RB Robinson has been a satisfied customer of Creative Information Systems, developer of SMS Turbo scale ticketing software. The only challenge that it faced – integrating SMS data with accounting – has been solved now that the company has switched to FOUNDATION construction accounting system. In addition, with both divisions of its company using the same powerful accounting software, RB Robinson has opened the door to more cost-reducing and profit building opportunities.