

CASE STUDY

Winshuttle Powers Murray Energy through SAP Data Transactions

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Robert Glitch, Treasury Manager/Financial Analyst at Murray Energy

Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, Murray Energy Corporation is the largest privately held coal mining company in the United States. With eight underground and surface mining operations, plus 40 subsidiary and support companies, the organization employs 2,500 people and produces approximately 25 million tons of bituminous coal per year. For the past 22 years, Murray Energy has been dedicated to providing low-cost electricity to households and businesses located across the country.

Seeing the need to connect its separate in-house accounting and sales/distribution programs, the company decided to implement SAP in 2009.

Challenge

It didn’t take long for Murray Energy’s accounting team to realize just how labor-intensive uploading data into standard SD module of SAP could be. A/R clerks were spending between four to five hours of data entry time on a single invoice. “The CFO basically told us we had one month to get this process fixed or automated,” explains Robert Glitch, Treasury Manager/Financial Analyst at Murray Energy. “If we couldn’t pare down the manual requirements of generating an invoice, he felt we would be better off going back to our legacy system.”

Glitch and his team immediately went back and consulted with SAP to see if some ABAP code could be written to accelerate this process. Given the time table and expected costs, they knew that custom programming was out of the question. “We were at the point where we either needed to find an alternate solution or we simply wouldn’t perform SD transactions in SAP,” says Glitch.

Solution

During its SAP implementation, Murray Energy engaged with a Winshuttle partner, Optimal Solutions, to help with the transition process. This is how Glitch and his team first heard about Winshuttle. “It was pitched to us as a one-time legacy data conversion tool,” he says. “But after we used it for the mass data transfer from the legacy system, I got to thinking, ‘Well, if we can use it once, can we use it every day?’”



Industry

- Coal Mining

Challenge

- Accelerate financial transactions in the SAP SD module
- Minimize data entry in SAP without resorting to ABAP programming
- Make invoicing improvements within one-month time frame

Solution

- Winshuttle Transaction and Runner

Results

- Reduced data entry on individual invoices from five hours to five minutes
- Shifted focus of A/R clerks toward more strategic, analytic tasks
- Improved accuracy of data being entered into SAP system

SAP Version

- ECC 6.0

SAP Modules

- SD, FI, CO, MM, PP

SAP Transactions / Types

- VA01, VF01, MIG0, VL02N, VL06G, VA02, VF02, F-32, MSC2N, MB1A, MBST



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The company’s CFO also wanted to make sure that Winshuttle was easy enough for frontline employees to use. “We had been looking at another software option, but it was geared more toward actual coding,” says Glitch. “We didn’t want anything complicated, which was the main reason why we decided to go with Winshuttle. We needed a solution designed for a non-IT user.”

Murray Energy’s finance team now uses both Transaction and Runner to handle its day-to-day invoicing. “Winshuttle makes the process very simple,” says Glitch. “I haven’t needed to call on IT for a single recording or table-related issue, so it really takes the load off of our IT department.”

Results

Now that SAP data transactions are automated, A/R clerks spend significantly less time on invoice generation. “Generating an invoice used to be a four- to five-hour process. But with Winshuttle, it only takes four to five minutes,” says Glitch. “We went from potentially hiring two or three A/R clerks, to actually being able to move one A/R clerk over to the A/P side, which eliminated the need to hire someone entirely new to fill that position.”

This reduction in data entry enables Murray Energy’s financial team to redirect its time and resources toward more analytic and strategic tasks. A/R clerks are no longer entering data, but rather reviewing it—a responsibility that had previously belonged to the people working above them.

Glitch has also noticed a great improvement in the accuracy of recordings. “Since Winshuttle relies on Excel as the front end, we can do VLOOKUPS or build in multiple table comparisons to validate all the data going into the system,” he says. In the end, however, what really matters is that Murray Energy can continue using the SD module in SAP. “Winshuttle has enabled us to use SAP more efficiently,” says Glitch. “With all the time Winshuttle has saved us, we can now focus on true value-added projects.”

Future plans

Winshuttle will continue to play a key role as Murray Energy enhances existing processes or rolls out other SAP modules “Considering the success of this implementation, I’m sure we’ll use Winshuttle for many other transactions going forward,” says Glitch. “It’s the best tool we’ve found for keeping up with the day-to-day demands of SAP.”

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