



CUSTOMER

City of Mobile

HEADQUARTERS

Mobile, Alabama

OPERATING BUDGET

\$200+ Million

City of Mobile Takes Control With CaseWare Working Papers and GAAP Financials

Mobile, Alabama was founded more than 300 years ago by the French and enjoys a rich and colorful history. Nearly 200,000 people live within its borders and 350,000 more live in the surrounding metropolitan area. The City of Mobile is a municipal agency responsible for providing fire, police, public works, parks, trash collection, and urban development services to residents.



The City takes its fiscal responsibility very seriously. It has always worked closely with its accountants and auditors to ensure compliance and best accounting practices. Recently, the City elected to take on the primary role of generating its complex financial statements and chose **CaseWare® Working Papers** and **GAAP Financials** as its tools in this initiative.

In House For Better Control

“The Statements of Auditing Standards and the Government Finance Officers of America encourage organizations to prepare their own financial statements,” explains Patricia Aldrich, comptroller for the City of Mobile “Our external accounting firm had been preparing them for us. We needed to investigate what it would take to bring this process in house.”

In addition to gaining insight and control over the process, Aldrich and her staff

reasoned that by performing this task internally, the City could complete its financial reporting cycle more quickly, thereby providing more timely and pertinent data to stakeholders throughout the organization.

“It just makes sense for us to have a better handle on what makes up the numbers on the City’s reports,” says Celia Sapp, internal auditor at the City of Mobile. “We would turn over the data to our external auditors and accept the reports they prepared. By doing it ourselves, we gain valuable insight that can help in our overall planning and budgeting processes.”

Professional Tools. Professional Partner

At an annual meeting of Government Accounting Officers, Aldrich and her team were introduced to CaseWare Working Papers and GAAP Financials.

CHALLENGE

The City of Mobile had always outsourced the preparation of its financial statements to its accounting firm but sought to gain better visibility and control by bringing the task in house.

SOLUTION

CaseWare Working Papers and GAAP Financials are the ideal tools to manage this municipality’s complex financial reporting requirements.

RESULTS

Two months are saved in the preparation of annual financial statements. Visibility into the numbers provides insight for better decision-making. Solution will pay for itself in 2 years.

“CaseWare provides us with the mechanism to better analyze policies and procedures. This analysis helps us seek out efficiencies and ways that we can improve. We’ve taken ownership of a vital piece of our financial operations.”

Patricia Aldrich
Comptroller

About CaseWare International Inc.

Accountants and auditors in practices large and small, in corporations, and government recognize CaseWare International as the premier creator of assurance, reporting and analysis tools. In over 130 countries, the CaseWare family of products helps accounting professionals perform their work more easily and efficiently.

“We discovered that both our current and prior auditing firms used CaseWare,” says Rebecca Christian, accountant for the City of Mobile. “We initially thought it was a tool meant strictly for auditors, but we found out it is a tool we can use too.”

The City of Mobile purchased Working Papers and GAAP Financials and engaged Gail Gray, CPA, a CaseWare certified trainer and consultant to implement the solution.

“Gail was a great asset to us,” says Aldrich. “She built the financial statement templates and worked with us to perform the groupings and mappings of our general ledger accounts. Gail really went above and beyond to make the implementation a success. We could not have done it without her.”

Instant Success

The City of Mobile recently completed its first set of financial statements — all 200 pages of them — using its new solution.

“We can definitely see how CaseWare will streamline this process,” notes Christian. “We expect to shave two full months off the cycle next year.”

“We had a clean audit, absolutely no adjustments,” says Sapp. “And our auditors were able to complete their review more quickly than ever before, saving the City money on fees.”

In fact, Aldrich estimates that CaseWare will pay for itself in under two years by saving the City auditing fees.

Informed Decision Making

In addition to meeting the expectations of the Government Finance Officers and the Auditing Standards, the City of Mobile has been empowered with information it can

use for informed decision making.

“After our year-end processing, we pull the trial balance into Working Papers and instantly know where we stand,” explains Christian. “We now know what the year looks like in a few weeks after year end, rather than in a few months.”

“CaseWare Working Papers and GAAP Financials are so flexible that we feel confident that it can handle any new accounting standards we may face in the future,” notes Aldrich.

Impress The Audience

The City must provide copies of its financial statement to various entities, including bond rating agencies, the FCC, and grant providers. With CaseWare Working Papers and GAAP Financials, it now has a newfound ownership in the reports it delivers.

“It is comforting to know precisely what makes up the numbers,” says Aldrich. “Of course we trusted our auditors, but now we have access to the summarized numbers and the intricate detail that makes up those numbers. This gives us increased confidence.”

Others have taken notice of the City’s accomplishments and it recently was awarded the Certificate of Excellence in financial reporting by the Government Finance Officers organization.

“CaseWare provides us with the mechanism to better analyze policies and procedures. This analysis helps us seek out efficiencies and ways that we can improve,” concludes Aldrich. “We’ve taken ownership of a vital piece of our financial operations.”



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