

CASE STUDY

CLIENT:	Outward Bound
INDUSTRY:	Not for profit
LOCATION:	New Zealand
PRODUCT SUITE:	EXO Business
MYOB ENTERPRISE PARTNER:	Very Impressive Software

Overview

Outward Bound (formed in New Zealand in 1962) is an amazing experience that teaches people about themselves and gives them the confidence to go beyond their limits, think about their goals and how they can achieve them. Courses are designed on the principle of learning through the experience. Students learn about themselves through adventure and challenge in the outdoors.

The outdoor centre based in Anakiwa, in the Marlborough Sounds, while Outward Bound's management and financial base is in Wellington.

A focus on development

Upgrading to EXO Business (formally MYOB Exonet) has allowed Outward Bound to focus on its own development – not just the personal development of the many New Zealanders taking part in one of its many fantastic outdoor courses.

Outward Bound Trust of New Zealander Manager of Systems and Finance, Diane Leyten, says the system has made a huge difference to the organisation, with Outward Bound able to customise a lot of the functionality in Exonet to gain maximum benefit.

A convert to MYOB EXO Business

"I am a convert for EXO, it has more than met our needs. We have also adapted it and linked it into our other system development," says Mrs Leyten, "with the best part of the program being its easy integration into Outward Bound's new customised CRM system, OBTAINS, which is also written in SQL."

The company's original Winaccs software, while being able to handle large amounts of transactional data, was ineffective for reporting purposes.

"I used to have to export the reports into Excel and

then format them to suit our Board of Directors," says Mrs Leyten.

Tried and tested solution

"I had discussions with Peter Chung from Very Impressive Software, who had been supporting Outward Bound's financial software for five years, particularly when it came to the purchase of alternative software. He brought EXO to us – they had tried and tested it as a suitable software for their own business."

Outward Bound began using EXO in January 2001, after installing the software itself.

"Although we used Very Impressive Software as consultants for the implementation, given that we are a 'not for profit; and had a clear need to keep any consultancy costs to a minimum, we worked in conjunction with the company but did most of the data cleansing and other setup in-house. It went smoothly with minimal fuss," says Mrs Leyten.

Taking control of the business

There have been many improvements in the organisation's operations since the program's introduction.

"Since using EXO we have implemented a Day Zero financial reporting strategy – where we close off our accounts and report all on the first day of the new calendar month. We also now run a revolving budget process where each budget is reviewed and updated on a quarterly rolling basis," says Mrs Leyten.

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The program is used to its full capacity, says Mrs Leyten, and there has been some customisation along the way, mainly by Very Impressive Software – including having reports written in crystal reports that pull information from EXO and other databases.

The software has had several positive flow-on effects, and has given Outward Bound the ability to implement great straight-forward systems, improve its report writing, and the ability to be able to extract information into one off reports, says Mrs Leyten.

It has provided extra transparency for staff, making it easier to co-ordinate between the organisation's two centres.

Getting maximum benefit in less time

“It also allows management more time to spend actually analysing and implementing new systems rather than getting bogged down in day-to-day financial matters.”

EXO has also provided ongoing training in its software, putting Mrs Leyten through one of its training courses about six years ago.

“I have an in-depth knowledge of how it works as I am a certified EXO consultant, and I'm extremely comfortable in trouble-shooting issues. My philosophy is to utilise any software's maximum benefits.”

Client and Enterprise partner details

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