

CASE STUDY

SHENTEL Telecommunications

“ We selected Alithya because of their Customer Support and Optimization (CSO) services team. The fact that they had a dedicated organization not focused on implementation, but more focused on the care and feeding of a client after go-live. It’s a very consistent, stable team and it’s always the same folks that we work with. It eliminated my having to work with internal IT to set up access for a new consultant over, and over, and over. ”

Jimmy Stewart, Director, Financial Operations

Key Benefits

- Scalable System which easily handles incremental volume
- Streamlines processes
- Allows company to continue to grow organically and by acquisition
- More flexibility than previous system
- Improved workflows
- Better compliance and audit information
- Improved Accounts Payable
- Better integration with Microsoft Office and easier access to financial information
- Improved fixed assets process



Shenandoah Telecommunications Company

(“Shentel”) is a diversified telecommunications holding company that, through its operating subsidiaries, provides both regulated and unregulated telecom-

munications services to end-user customers and other communications providers in the southeastern United States. Shentel offers a comprehensive suite of voice, video and data communications services based on the products and services provided by their three business segments.

A Flexible and Scalable System

Shentel is headquartered in Edinburg, Virginia, and has three different divisions: wireless, cable, and wireline. The company is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol “SHEN.”

Shentel was previously running a green screen system, but wanted a system that would be much more flexible and scalable, and would serve as a change agent across its three divisions. The company also needed to improve compliance, as it’s monitored by the SEC, FCC, as well as other local state telephone agencies. “The shorter list is a list of who doesn’t monitor us,” laughs Jimmy Stewart, director, financial operations for Shentel.

Shentel selected Microsoft Dynamics 365 (formerly Microsoft Dynamics AX) as its new ERP system, along with Atlas from Globe Software, which builds financial and operational reports with drill-down capability in Excel, and Fastpath GRC (governance risk and compliance) Studio.

“We selected Microsoft Dynamics AX five years ago to really bring some change to the company,” says Stewart. “We really liked the workflow capabilities [within Microsoft Dynamics] to help us with internal control and compliance,” continues Stewart.

Although happy with Microsoft Dynamics, Shentel was unhappy with its original Microsoft partner, which seemed incapable of providing on-going support after go-live. Shentel selected Alithya as its new partner because of its dedicated Customer Support and Optimization (CSO) services team. "Alithya responds quickly to help desk tickets," says Stewart. "If they don't receive a response from me, they politely remind me to get the information for them. They've helped us with a couple of customizations as well as to navigate our way through the Microsoft maze to get answers from Microsoft," continues Stewart. "The Alithya team helps us resolve the issue, or opens a ticket with Microsoft, so we don't have to. They play a key role of interpreter, or middle man, with Microsoft."

The team at Shentel has taken advantage of the workflow functionality within Dynamics to improve internal control compliance. "Workflows within Dynamics reduce the risk that an invoice or purchase order would slip through without approval."

Regulations and audits are also more easily managed by Dynamics. "KPMG performs an annual audit for Shentel and files it with the SEC," explains Stewart. "We can now more easily extract information and provide it to KPMG. We gave them a login into Dynamics for read-only access to supporting documentation that they may need for key transactions. We no longer have to print the documentation and hand it to them."

Shentel is pleased with the additional functionality in the areas of Accounts Payable and Fixed Assets. "Now we can more easily extract information out of Dynamics, which was close to impossible with our old green screen system," says Stewart.

Shentel has grown both organically and through acquisition. "Dynamics has helped position Shentel for the future in several different ways," says Stewart. "One, the product is very scalable. We recently acquired a company called nTelos, which doubled the size of Shentel, and Dynamics easily handles the increased volume," continues Stewart.

Shentel was able to more easily assimilate nTelos because both companies were using Dynamics. "The nTelos employees already knew how to use Dynamics, and it made data migration much smoother. Alithya played a key technical role in the data migration project."

Shentel and nTelos were using Dynamics differently for many different processes, so the team evaluated the pros and cons of each way, and trained team members extensively on the new processes through webinars.

To further maximize the value of its Dynamics investment, Shentel has recently engaged Alithya to perform a utilization review. "The idea is to get a little more bang for our buck, and help us chart a course for the next platform," explains Stewart. "Do we need to upgrade? And if we do move to a different version, how can we best take advantage of the new functionality, further streamlining processes"?

Jimmy Stewart, a founding member of the Microsoft Dynamics AX user group in Virginia, remains one of the chapter leaders. "Our first year, we received the honor of being chapter of the year, and even received a trophy," says Stewart. "I've met great people in the D365/AXUG, and we are able to call each other and bounce ideas around. nTelos was actually a member of D365/AXUG prior to our acquiring them, which made the transition more comfortable since we already knew each other."

Future Plans

In addition to reviewing the latest upgrade of Microsoft Dynamics AX (R3), Shentel has future plans in store for its Dynamics implementation. "In the future, we'd like to add AP automation capabilities, and we're currently upgrading to Office 365," says Stewart. Shentel purchased tools from both Jet Reports and TARGIT. Shentel will use the combination of these tools to provide a data warehouse to present data for analysis. Within Microsoft Dynamics AX R3, there are several updates to analytics, including three new data cubes for business analysis:

- Demand forecast cube
- Demand forecast accuracy cube
- Trade allowance management cube

"RECENTLY THE QUESTION WAS ASKED, 'IS ALITHYA THE RIGHT PARTNER TO TAKE US TO THE NEXT PLATFORM'? AND OUR VP OF IT SAID, 'ABSOLUTELY.'"

– Jimmy Stewart

AS A NORTH AMERICAN LEADER IN STRATEGY AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY, Alithya designs and builds innovative and efficient digital solutions for business challenges. Our clients cover a large spectrum of sectors including Banking, Investment and Insurance, Energy, Manufacturing, Retail and Distribution, Telecommunications, Transportation, Professional services, Healthcare and Government. Our 2,000 professionals in Canada, the US, and Europe combine pragmatic understanding and creative thinking to structure and streamline intricate operational ecosystems, help transform their businesses, and drive their growth every single day.

alithya.com | MSsales@alithya.com | 866 420-7624