

SUCCESS STORY

ZAS Architects + Interiors Saves 400 Hours and \$50,000 Annually with Unanet A/E powered by Clearview



Canadian architecture and interior design firm ZAS takes pride in innovative problem solving, so when support for the firm's aging ERP software was discontinued, they didn't see an obstacle—they saw an opportunity. "We relied on an outside consultant to be the primary user of our old ERP software, and we weren't using it to its full capacity," says ZAS Accounting Manager Rochelle Manalansan. "Though we were forced to look for a new software system, we saw it as an opportunity to provide project managers access to more timely information and streamline many of our accounting processes."

One of the biggest challenges with the firm's old ERP software was a lack of visibility into project time and expenses. "We would be spending many hours on projects, but we wouldn't know until it was done how many hours were spent or whether someone was working on additional services," says Manalansan. "Plus, the process of manually entering the timesheets and ensuring batch and project numbers were correct was taking at least a full workday every week."



"One of the biggest efficiencies we've seen with Unanet A/E is closing our books at the end of each cycle. The complexity of our old ERP system meant we had to pay a consultant to help with that process, but within six months of implementing Unanet A/E we no longer needed outside support and are now saving \$50,000 a year on consulting fees."

**- Rochelle Manalansan, Accounting Manager,
ZAS Architects + Interiors**

ABOUT ZAS

ZAS Architects is a full-service architecture, interior design and planning firm that builds high-performance environments of lasting value. ZAS was founded in 1984 as a Canadian architectural partnership focused on high-quality design supported by expertise in service and management. ZAS employs 100 professionals including architects, planners, technologists, interior designers and graphic designers. High-profile projects include the Lassonde School of Engineering at York University, Honda Canada Headquarters, Dubai's Burjside Boulevard Tour, Adidas Headquarters in Vaughan, Canada and Dubai's Promenade Towers.

A CLEAR SOLUTION

ZAS began the search for a new ERP solution early in 2012 and quickly found that moving forward with their current vendor wasn't an option because of the new product's cost and complexity. When they heard about Unanet A/E powered by Clearview's all-inclusive ERP solution, Manalansan says the way forward became clear. "They were able to offer a full conversion of our data and the ability to handle our three separate operating companies under one reporting structure, all at a very affordable price."

At the end of 2012, ZAS moved forward with their Unanet A/E implementation. "They were able to handle the complex data conversion resulting from our multiple companies, and we had a very good trainer that helped us get going quickly with the software's accounting functions," says Manalansan.

THE SAVINGS ADD UP

Though ZAS started by using just two of Unanet A/E's many included features, the results were immediate. The software's time and reporting functions were used to automate the time reporting process, providing both a time savings of more than 400 hours annually and improving visibility. "With Unanet A/E, our staff enters the timesheets directly into the system and are able to provide many more comments and backup documentation," says Manalansan. "Now when we send invoices to clients they don't have to ask us for additional documentation—all the information is already there."

Unanet A/E's intuitive accounting functions have also saved ZAS both time and money. Due to the

complexity of their old ERP system, the firm was paying an outside consultant \$50,000 annually. Now, all accounting functions can be performed easily in-house and the consulting costs have been entirely eliminated. "We've more than covered our costs for Unanet A/E with the consulting savings alone," says Manalansan.

Not only can all accounting functions now be performed by the firm's two-person accounting department—they can also be completed more quickly than ever. "The biggest improvement for us is that by the 23rd the previous month's books are closed—before it was a month or two," says Manalansan. "That gives more extra time to assist project managers with the planning and budgeting of projects."

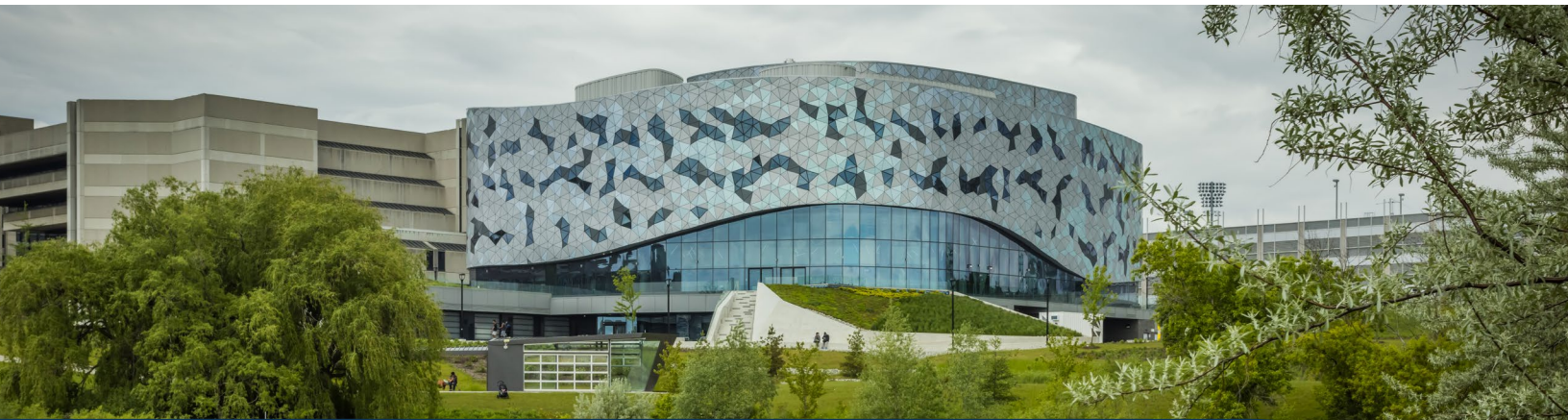
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Soon, ZAS plans to roll out several more of the included features of Unanet A/E to gain additional business benefits at no additional cost. First, they plan to introduce the project management module. "This will give our project managers increased access to more timely information and allow us to manage our projects even better," says Manalansan. In addition, they expect to take advantage of Unanet A/E's ability to produce invoices and email them directly to clients. "Currently we create our invoices manually in Excel," says Manalansan. "Producing the invoices out of Unanet A/E directly will improve the design of our invoices and make billing even faster and more seamless."

With its many advantages and clear return on investment, Manalansan says choosing Unanet A/E powered by Clearview is an easy decision for AE firms like ZAS. “I would definitely recommend Unanet A/E—it is powerful software that delivers results and is user-friendly.”

After implementing Unanet A/E powered by Clearview, ZAS Architects + Interiors:

- Automated the timesheet process, providing needed backup documentation for invoices and saving accounting staff more than 400 hours annually on manual data entry
- Improved client service and communication with access to detailed backup timesheets for work performed and more timely financial statements
- Eliminated the need to hire an outside consultant to close the books at the end of each accounting cycle for a cost savings of \$50,000 annually
- Reduced the time needed to close monthly books by two weeks, freeing up accounting staff to assist project managers with project planning and budgeting.
- Provided the ability to manage the firm's three operating companies through a single reporting structure



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