

New Accounts Receivable Platform Pays Off Big for Gilmore & Associates



Gilmore & Associates, Inc., is a century-old regional civil engineering and consulting firm that offers civil engineering, surveying, landscape architecture and environmental services, chiefly for municipal clients and projects. Founded in 1918, G&A's staff includes 175 employees across seven offices in eastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey.

CHALLENGES

The company motto at Gilmore & Associates (G&A) is, **"Building on a foundation of excellence."** In the past several years, executives at the 102-year-old engineering firm came to realize that G&A could further shore up its foundation—and capture important new operational efficiencies—by strengthening its enterprise resource planning capabilities, and in particular, its handling of client invoices and payments.

Among the inefficiencies and bottlenecks with which the firm was contending:

A vast **majority of clients** (municipal agencies comprise roughly 80% of the G&A client base) were **paying by mailed check**, an inefficient process that extends time to cash.

A **lack of client access** to convenient **payment options** and a central payment portal was **detracting from the customer experience**.

The firm was **inconsistent in following up with clients about their outstanding invoices** because it lacked the ability to automatically send those reminders

G&A **lacked visibility into client engagement** with invoices once they were sent.

"Unanet's invoice delivery and payments features have streamlined our operations and enabled our accounting department to work much more efficiently, so now they can focus on important responsibilities and tasks that they didn't have time for previously."

Jeffrey Gilmore
Accountant
Gilmore & Associates

The Unanet Solution for Gilmore

While Gilmore & Associates has been using Unanet ERP AE for more than 12 years, only in June 2020 did it turn to Unanet's powerful AR Automation tool. Among its features the firm is using are automated invoicing with email delivery, enhanced invoice tracking and management, and automated email reminders with embedded links to the AR Automation, which provides secure and convenient credit card and ACH payments.

IMPACT



Significantly shorter DSO (days sales outstanding) enables the firm to recognize revenue faster. DSO has declined by five days, largely as a result of the firm's expanded electronic payments capability, resulting in an estimated \$50,000 to \$60,000 increase in monthly receipts.



The G&A accounting department can view recipient opens and clicks in real time to track customer engagement with emailed invoice



The time spent by accounting staff on check processing, check posting and redundant data entry has been cut by 2+ hours each week, thanks to the AR Automation features such as automated posting. Meanwhile, with the ability to automate invoice reminder emails, project managers no longer have the burden of following up with clients about past-due invoices, saving them 2+ hours each week. That in turn frees PMs to focus more on billable hours that bring value to clients and the firm.



The number of Gilmore & Associates clients paying invoices electronically via the AR Automation portal has at least doubled, according to the firm. Customers can pay via ACH or credit card, and the automatic invoice reminders the firm sends include a link to the payment portal. Integrated digital payments increased 50% in the span of a couple months, and these payments post automatically.

Elevated customer experience



G&A clients appreciate the ease with which they can pay invoices, and the flexible payment options within the AR Automation portal

Keys to Success

- 1 Automate wherever possible.**
"We love automation," says staff accountant Jeffrey Gilmore. "The client is basically doing the work of processing payments for us when they pay through Unanet's AR Automation tool."
- 2 Embed payment links in invoice emails to clients.**
Including a "Pay Now" link to the portal in invoice email reminders has lowered time to cash and increased monthly revenue for G&A. Next, the firm plans to include a payment link in initial invoice emails.
- 3 Value visibility.**
The ability to see client engagement with invoices is a game-changer.
- 4 Emphasize the customer experience.**
As focused as firms should be on using payment tools and other ERP capabilities to capture operational efficiencies, using these tools to improve the customer experience is just as important to the bottom line.

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