



**WATER MISSION**

# **UPDATING THEIR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE**

Was the Next Step in Providing Safe Drinking Water to Millions of People Around The World

Since its founding in 2001, Water Mission has worked to provide safe water, sanitation and hygiene solutions to 3 million people in dire need around the world. To put that number into perspective, that's the equivalent of helping every person living in Chicago, Illinois, the third most populous city in the United States. In an effort to continually increase their reach and make a positive impact worldwide, Water Mission identified updating their organization's resource management infrastructure as a crucial next step to achieving their full mission.

“It was less about cost savings and more about the fact that QuickBooks wasn't meeting our needs. We wanted to have consolidated accounting, to be able to see in real-time, and to manage complex projects.”

**Carrie Melchers**, Program Manager, Water Mission



“I’m very excited about the functionality and innovation I see in NetSuite, and that is where we’re going to start getting the value. NetSuite will give us the ability to scale our organization as we continue to grow and allow us to allocate more donation funds to our safe, clean water solutions.” **Bernard Drackwicz**, Vice President Of Finance, Water Mission

Water Mission entrusted Eide Bailly as their business advisor to provide industry-specific expertise in the implementation of NetSuite as a nonprofit resource planning solution. The project goal was to provide their charitable organization with the visibility needed to maximize the impact of donations and resources, ensure a stable platform for future growth, and ultimately, empower them to save more lives.

### **Mission & Vision**

Transform lives through sustainable safe water solutions and be recognized as a global leader in transformational safe water solutions by 2017.

### **Rising to World-Class**

Water Mission’s key objective was establishing true, real-time visibility across all of their locations, as well as creating an infrastructure that would allow for operational scalability into the future. This was the motivation to engage with Eide Bailly and NetSuite.

“If you look at our vision and mission statement, we talk about being a best-in-class or world-class operation,” said Bernard Drackwicz, Vice President of Finance for Water Mission. “While that focuses on the engineering side, I want to take that concept

and apply it to the accounting and finance world. We’ve got a great tool and great partners in NetSuite, and together with Eide Bailly, we will get there.”

In the past, Water Mission utilized QuickBooks as its financial control center, but as they grew globally and continued to expand their reach, they began experiencing significant oversight limitations in global accounting, inventory control, project management and manufacturing operations. Each of their international offices were running a separate instance of QuickBooks, totaling 10 disparate tools powering their global organization. This required extensive consolidation and importing at their main office in Charleston, S.C. to make sense of their monthly figures.

“In general, we outgrew QuickBooks in a lot of ways,” said Carrie Melchers, Program Manager with Water Mission. “It was limited in manufacturing functionality and also limited in our ability to understand in real-time what was going on in all of our different offices.”

Real-time strategizing and coordination remained out of reach due to data inconsistencies and delayed visibility. An environmental engineering organization at their

basis, the need for project reporting, complex scheduling, and inventory tracking was met with the realization that QuickBooks could no longer drive their organization forward

### **NetSuite and Nonprofit**

Eide Bailly's industry and solution expertise enabled Water Mission to reap the most of their new resource planning solution and raise their level of performance organization-wide. Lead consultant Dana Larson's passion for enabling nonprofit organizations to achieve their mission is furthered by her first-hand experience with NetSuite's ability to drive success for nonprofit organizations, having co-founded one herself.

"Her background in nonprofits was really helpful because she understood a lot of the struggles that we had and the uniqueness of how Water Mission operates," explains Melchers.

Together, they outlined existing processes and designed how NetSuite's interconnected modules would empower operational transparency and control across geographies.

### **Global financial reporting**

After Water Mission's NetSuite OneWorld implementation went live in June 2014, a synergic confidence swept through the organization. Gone were the days of tedious double entry at month-end as each international office was now an established subsidiary within NetSuite, automatically consolidating their individual figures at the parent level for a holistic view of the organization's overall health and progress. Moreover, NetSuite's currency exchange functionality meant transactions were able to be made in local currencies—from Haiti to Uganda—and reported at the current foreign exchange rate on reports for optimal financial insights.

### **Inventory management**

NetSuite's inventory management feature provides total visibility into an organization's supply chain, allowing Water Mission to effectively track thousands of components and clean water installations across office and storage locations. The ability to input relevant inventory data by physical location to build a holistic view of their current supply levels, costs and demand enabled Water Mission's management team to run operationally lean while providing in-country resources with the necessary equipment to complete project assemblies and respond agilely to disaster situations.

"Being able to know, in real-time, the status of our inventory across other country programs enables us to equip our staff with the resources they need to get the work done," Melchers said.

### **Project management**

Previously, Water Mission struggled to manage and track budget to actuals throughout the life of a project in QuickBooks. With NetSuite's project management solution, however, their team is able to monitor expenses against a project in real-time to effectively measure progress and operational health, ensuring their global efforts remain within budget and on timeline. When asked of NetSuite's project management capabilities, Melchers explains it's been a real benefit to their organization by providing valuable insights they previously operated without.

### **Manufacturing**

Because each Water Mission project is customized to the unique community it will serve, the complexity of manufacturing safe water solutions requires end-to-end visibility, making NetSuite's single platform solution

an ideal fit for their organization. From the initial work order to scheduling and fulfillment, every step of their production process is now optimized in real-time to ensure timely and cost-effective project installation. Assigning production to an open project in NetSuite synchronizes the scope and budget requirements, providing accurate reporting on product costing, from materials to machine and labor overhead. And because providing safe and clean water solutions around the world doesn't stop after the initial build, coding of each assembly allows for consistent and effective component maintenance tracking.

### Scalable Value

One year after implementing NetSuite, Water Mission is impacting positive change around the world with renewed vision. Increased control and visibility across resources, operations, and projects has invigorated and excelled their clean, safe water initiatives.

"The more effective and efficient we are at managing our administrative operations, the better we do our work," explains Drackwicz.

Expanding their work also means expanding their technology solution's functionality, and with NetSuite and Eide Bailly, Water Mission has established a valuable foundation for future success and growth. "We realize there are more capabilities in NetSuite than we are currently utilizing today," said Melchers. "That's something we're still in the process of

developing, and as we grow, we'll utilize those resources and the additional functionality better. We're excited about this system and its ability to grow alongside the ministry."

"We were looking for a gain in value," said Bernard Drackwicz, Water Mission's Vice President of Finance. He explains the choice to move to NetSuite was driven by an understanding that the true return on investment would be the value increase to the organization, "whether that be data insights or future efficiencies and effectiveness" as they continue to grow in their mission.



### Company Snapshot

**Company:** Water Mission

**Location:** Charleston, S.C.  
(Global Offices in 10 Countries)



**Partner Name:** Eide Bailly

**Headquartered:** Fargo, N.D.