

## MEDA sees mega-results with Sage TimeSheet

“What can we do to address issues of poverty, crime, and unemployment in the Twin Cities’ minority communities?” a group of executives asked in 1971.

Their answer was to form the Metropolitan Economic Development Association (MEDA) to foster self-sufficiency in minority entrepreneurs. Since then, MEDA has helped more than 350 businesses get started and has assisted 14,000 clients through its financing, consulting, and training programs.

### Flexible and Customizable Time Tracking

For three decades MEDA used spreadsheets and paper-based systems to track employees’ hours. But the systems accepted non-standard input, making it difficult to extract meaningful data, and they required a lot of maintenance. So in 2001, MEDA decided to follow the advice it gives entrepreneurs and automate their records.

“We had three big needs,” says Gary Hobart, director of strategic services and operations. “One, we wanted a simple way to summarize time by project at the end of each month.

Two, we needed a cleaner method of capturing time to make us more accountable to our donors. And three, we needed standardization and powerful reporting features to determine how to make more effective use of our time.”

Hobart conducted an extensive Internet search of time-tracking software. He selected Sage TimeSheet because it would not require substantial changes in MEDA’s workflow and promised to be easy for staff members to learn.

### Attaining Higher Goals

“Our transition to Sage TimeSheet was very smooth,” Hobart says. “The Professional Services group worked with us to build a database, asking what we wanted the system to look like and how it should be structured. We sent them our data in machine-readable form and they created what we needed. They did a marvelous job.”

MEDA uses Sage TimeSheet to record employee time and allocate hours to three main categories: fundraising; administration; and programs and



### CUSTOMER

Metropolitan Economic Development Association (MEDA)

### INDUSTRY

Minority Business Development

### LOCATION

Minneapolis, Minnesota

### NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

One

### NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

21

### SAGE PRODUCTS

- Sage TimeSheet

### CHALLENGE

Agency seeking a way to streamline tracking of employee hours, to be more accountable to donors, and more effectively manage their resources

### SOLUTION

Sage TimeSheet for collecting and tracking employee hours by task, integrated with Crystal Reports® for sophisticated reporting features

### RESULTS

Saving four hours a week on manual data entry; standardization has made it easy to get meaningful information from the system; reports for funding groups are now timely and accurate.

services. Their goal is to spend 80 percent of all resources on programs and services. Last year they came very close, within two percent of their target.

“We also needed to create reports with a custom look, so we implemented Crystal Reports®,” Hobart notes. “It integrates perfectly with Sage TimeSheet and allows us to format data exactly how we want, whether we need to compile year-end statistics for the government or prepare our own annual report.”

### Smarter Management

Rarely does Hobart need technical support for Sage TimeSheet. When he does, he’s been very satisfied.

“Without exception, the support of Sage Software has been prompt, easy to reach, and knowledgeable. I called support when we upgraded our database from Access to SQL, and they went above and beyond the call of duty to help me. No matter what the issue, they do whatever it takes to get things running smoothly.”

Sage TimeSheet has eliminated about four hours of data entry tasks every week, plus countless hours spent on manual report preparation for MEDA. But the major benefits to the organization are more difficult to quantify.

“Thanks to Sage TimeSheet, we are managed more efficiently,” Hobart explains. “The software has allowed us to shift resources for greater impact. Most importantly, it gives us not just data, but usable information—so we can run our organization the way it ought to be run.”

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Director of Strategic Services  
& Operations  
MEDA

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The Sage Group plc, formed in 1981, was floated on the London Stock Exchange in 1989 and now employs 14,800 people and supports 5.7 million customers worldwide. For more information, please visit the Web site at [www.sagenorthamerica.com](http://www.sagenorthamerica.com) or call **866-308-2378**.