

Cloud-based ERP delivers visibility in a volatile market

When owners predicted an upsurge in business, Procon responded by updating to SAP and moving to the cloud.

Like any piece of equipment, computing systems need constant maintenance to keep doing what they need to do every day. But sometimes — whether it's a heavy excavator or complex IT hardware — age usurps usefulness, and it just must be replaced. Today, Procon runs its SAP applications in the cloud and everyday business happens like a well-oiled machine.

Client Profile

Procon is a North American mining contractor that provides an entire range of start-to-finish mining services throughout the world. The Burnaby, British Columbia-based company's ability to finance, build and operate the most complex open pit and underground mining operations makes it a global industry leader.

Challenges

An aging infrastructure

After 20 years of service, Procon's legacy ERP system simply couldn't keep up. With a large fleet of equipment to track, a workforce scattered across some of the most far-flung and inhospitable regions on the planet, and new ownership potentially pushing workload volumes and availability demands even higher, it was time for a change — especially considering the need for tighter cost control over projects.

"The resource sector is very volatile, and, at the time, it was in the doldrums," Al Harkness, IT Manager at Procon, explains. "In a downturn, customers expect us to drive down our pricing. So, it was important for us to track and manage costs much more closely to remain competitive."

"I would absolutely recommend 11:11 Systems, formerly Sungard AS, to other companies. They provide me with a hands-off solution that lets me make better use of my time... They've earned two thumbs up from me."

Al Harkness,
IT Manager, Procon

CHALLENGE

- Outdated infrastructure

SOLUTION

- 11:11 Cloud Services

BENEFITS

- 99.9% ERP system uptime
- Greater budget insights
- Automated process for fewer errors and effort
- Scalability

PROCON CASE STUDY

Benefits

At one time, some low- or no-bandwidth job sites were so remote, miners faxed their timesheets — sometimes scribbled on napkins or scraps of paper — to headquarters. Others emailed. Today, time reporting is automated and global, as workers interact with the SAP system themselves.

“We now have a stable ERP system with 99.9 percent uptime that is widely available to everyone who needs it,” says Harkness.

“Because the [11:11 Systems] data center is online virtually all of the time, our SAP applications are easily accessible, even to our remote sites.”

Since financial data flows securely into cloud systems straight from the field, Procon has greater insight into project costs and can stay abreast of production budgets to adjust on the fly. “Compared to our old system, the cloud is much more robust, so we can crunch the numbers easier and faster, and we have more confidence in the results,” Harkness says.

Procon also has visibility into other key information, like equipment maintenance costs and operating hours, along with material requisitions and approvals. Automated processes lead to more accurate data. “It’s all electronic now,” confirms Henry Wulkan, Manager of Projects at Procon. “With fewer people touching the data, there are fewer errors and less data sources for me to worry about.”

[11:11] also updated Procon’s firewall and managed a domain migration. “They did everything from building the machines and coordinating efforts with Illumiti to migrating live data and cutting over to the new domain,” reports Wulkan. “It was practically seamless.”

Looking ahead, the greatest cloud benefit is scalability. “As we venture into the United States, we can react much faster to growth,” Wulkan continues. “Our ability to scale up cloud resources is a simple process, since we can go to a web portal and get more CPU and RAM in an instant. Spreading internationally also requires strict security measures. Having [11:11] there means they can deal with the security headaches for us.”

Considering the success of the past two years, Harkness adds: “I would absolutely recommend [11:11] to other companies. They provide me with a hands-off solution that lets me make better use of my time. With the monitoring and resources they have in place, we have more eyes on the systems, which gives me greater peace of mind. They’ve earned two thumbs up from me.”

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11:11 Cloud Services Solution

When owners predicted an upsurge in business, Procon responded by updating to SAP and moving to the cloud, adopting 11:11 Cloud Services, formerly Sungard AS, to upgrade and enhance their infrastructure.

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