

SUCCESS STORY



PROFILE

As the Web's most widely recognized search engine, Google provides fast, accurate and easy access to billions of web pages, documents, files, images, videos, maps, and more. The company also provides corporate clients, including advertisers, content publishers and site managers with cost-effective advertising solutions and a wide range of revenue generating search services. Google's breakthrough technology and continued innovation serve the company's mission of "organizing the world's information and making it universally accessible and useful."

INDUSTRY

Web/Internet

QUICKBASE SOLUTIONS

Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) Compliance Management

WHO'S USING QUICKBASE

IT Risk Manager Erik Jonte, along with more than 20 auditors, leverage QuickBase as a corporate governance solution to manage their SOX compliance initiatives.

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Google - The Challenge

- Need efficient document management of Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliance
- Difficulty collaborating with dozens of auditors
- Time-consuming reporting of SOX data – visibility into data
- Need for more control over the compliance process

Google has become one of the world's most prominent publicly traded companies – which in turn, has given rise to extensive challenges when it comes to compliance auditing and reporting. Google employs a number of professional internal auditors and managers to ensure the company complies with ever-changing, ever-growing regulatory frameworks, including Sarbanes-Oxley. According to Erik Jonte, IT risk manager, Google's Internal Audit group previously relied on a collection of spreadsheets containing hundreds of rows and dozens of columns.

"Managing document test plans, reviews, controls, and other SOX materials spanning finance and technology in Google's governance processes was extremely difficult via single-user spreadsheets," he said. "It was a frustrating process and not a scalable solution for what we were trying to accomplish. In fact, it required a full-time employee whose sole responsibility was to manage the compliance data alone.

"To collaborate effectively and securely, we knew that we needed to centralize our information and that functionality, such as multiple-user access, version control, and user security, was critical to our success. Plus, we wanted to improve our reporting that had always been problematic for the team."

The Solution

- An online, hosted solution that's immediately available at a lower cost
- Power and flexibility in a completely, customizable SOX compliance application
- Rapid creation and deployment in just four weeks – without provisioning servers, scheduling maintenance, or assigning IP addresses

Seeking a better way to foster collaboration among its dozens of internal auditors – and a handful of external auditors as well – Google recognized that an online, hosted solution would be the right approach. But high costs, complexity, and IT headaches were major concerns. "We wanted a product that we – the business users – could customize to meet our unique needs," said Jonte. "And we wanted a cost-effective solution that delivered value quickly without costing hundreds of thousands of dollars."

After investigating alternative solutions, Google selected Intuit QuickBase to help manage its compliance initiatives. QuickBase applications are designed to let you solve common business challenges, customize them to suit your processes, and share them with your team. Finally, Google found the solution that offers the flexibility and speed it required to organize, track, and share information – and take action. "It's even simple enough for our users to modify applications on their own, without enlisting help from the IT department," said Jonte.

"As soon as we saw the demo, we signed up for the free trial. The trial proved to be a great way for us to actually work with the product and convinced us that QuickBase was in fact the right choice for us." And now QuickBase is used by more than 20 SOX auditors. "I built the SOX application that we now use from scratch using QuickBase; but I started with one of the ready-made QuickBase Project Management applications for our project management application and simply modified it to meet our requirements.

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THE OVERALL EXPERIENCE

“QuickBase delivers tremendous value for the money. We estimate that our cost savings are in the \$100,000-200,000 range because we’re managing our SOX compliance efforts with far less effort and much more clarity. We believe we’ve saved 1,500-2,000 administrative man-hours over the course of a year.”

“It took me less than a month. It’s actually two different modules: compliance management and project management and there are two versions of each – one for finance and one for IT. The controls application helps us manage all of our SOX controls, whereas the project management application enables us to map out our plans and processes.”

The Results

- Tremendous ROI – \$100,000-200,000 savings in software and technology alone
- Between 1,500-2,000 fewer man-hours spent administering SOX compliance efforts
- Ability to continue working according to Google’s work processes. QuickBase adapts to existing workflows – not vice versa
- Streamlined, more efficient management of all SOX compliance efforts

Since deploying its SOX application, Google has achieved very positive results. “It was very easy to get this underway because QuickBase isn’t some six-figure expense line-item,” said Jonte. “QuickBase delivers tremendous value for the money. We estimate that our cost savings are in the \$100,000-200,000 range because we’re managing our SOX compliance efforts with far less effort and much more clarity. We believe we’ve saved 1,500-2,000 administrative man-hours over the course of a year.”

Leveraging the e-mail notifications functionality of QuickBase has resulted in a more streamlined work paper review process. “We use work papers to validate a control,” said Jonte. “Once someone completes a review, he checks a box and it triggers a notification to a manager who reviews the document and adds his/her notes. Now, we have all of our control documents in QuickBase, which simplifies the process internally and for external auditors as well. The online help is very good and the product itself is very simple and intuitive.

“QuickBase adapts to how we work – not the other way around. It’s flexible enough to let us do what we want in a customized fashion – unconstrained by the assumptions of a typical packaged software application. It integrates very easily with other systems and data – often taking an hour or less to import data into QuickBase. QuickBase gives us a high-value, low-cost platform that has enabled us to centralize our information, streamline our workflows, improve security, and improve our overall compliance processes.”

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