OMS Photo Gets the Big Picture with QuickBase Sync

For a busy commercial photography studio, keeping track of all the people, props, equipment, expenses, and deadlines for every job is a daunting task. While OMS Photo tracked its financials in QuickBooks Online, the company struggled to track day-to-day expenses and match them to specific jobs. The answer was QuickBase Sync, which enabled OMS Photo to create fast, flexible reports on job profitability that update automatically.

“We now have the Holy Grail of accurate, automatic reporting of profit and loss percentages on every project. We can tie every transaction to a related job, and that lets us do some great things.”

Paul Lanterman
Creative Technical Specialist
OMS Photo
The Trouble with Data

Commercial photographs are like icebergs — the visible part is only a fraction of the whole. For OMS Photo, a busy commercial photography studio based in Cincinnati, tracking all the lighting, lenses, props, staff, models, stylists, deadlines, expenses, and extras required for each shoot is a herculean effort that required a suite of apps built on Intuit QuickBase.

But while OMS Photo knew how to plan and track the elements of a photo shoot, the company still didn’t have the ability to quickly compare expenses to budgets for a clear picture of profitability. As a result, OMS Photo had no meaningful way to control costs on any particular job.

“Getting accurate information was a real headache,” says Paul Lanterman, Creative Technical Specialist, OMS Photo. “QuickBase was extremely adaptable to our needs, but it was only as good as the information people entered. There was no way to cross-reference with the actual numbers from the bank, unless someone parsed out the credit card statements and account entries manually.”

OMS Photo found a solution with QuickBase Sync — a built-in feature of QuickBase that enables users to automatically import data from other cloud apps. Because OMS Photo manages its finances in QuickBooks Online, Lanterman could build automated connections between the two systems to drive fast, accurate reporting in QuickBase.

“How it Works

Each time OMS Photo is booked for a job, the team creates a new project with a unique job number in QuickBase. That number is then entered into the

The Challenge

• Disparate systems for accounting (QuickBooks Online) and job management (QuickBase)
• No way to track real-time expenses for a given job
• No automated data collection of job-related activities
• Too much time spent calculating with spreadsheets

The Solution

• QuickBase Sync to connect QuickBase and QuickBooks Online
• Real-time expense tracking by project
• Automated notifications to trigger invoices
• QuickBase reports for tracking individual job profitability

The Results

• Accurate view of job costs and profitability
• Better management of cash flow
• Automated updates keep all information current across multiple customized reports
• Instant insights that drive better decision-making

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corresponding financial record in QuickBooks Online. Each subsequent QuickBooks Online transaction includes the job number as a tag.

From there, QuickBase Sync does all the work, automatically pulling data from QuickBooks Online into QuickBase at regular intervals, so the OMS Photo team can see all the relevant estimates, invoices, and payments for each job alongside expenses, job status and other project information.

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Because QuickBase offers versatile reporting options, Lanterman can create and automate highly-customized reports to serve many different needs. For example, he created an executive dashboard that shows each project highlighted to indicate the profit percentage.

The Benefits of Automated Syncing

Now that OMS Photo has a clear picture of its business, Lanterman has seen several results. First, OMS Photo can better manage job profitability when it can see how closely its expenses match the budget on a job. Second, historical information on job profitability helps OMS Photo create better quotes. Third, automated payment notifications from QuickBooks Online helps OMS Photo pay vendors quickly and keep its cash flow moving.

Ultimately, QuickBase Sync allows the team at OMS Photo to spend less time fiddling with spreadsheets and emails, and more time doing what they do best.

“We’re photographers, not accountants. Having accurate information at hand is a huge deal for us.”