

Flatrock Engineering & Environmental: De-Stressing the Month-End Close

Flatrock Engineering & Environmental, SafZone Field Services and DataWing Global share ownership, employees and accounting staff.

Flatrock serves the oil and gas industry with engineering design, construction of pipelines and environmental compliance services. SafZone provides safety consulting and training for the oil and gas industry. They also have safety equipment available for sale or rent. DataWing Global employs a national network of FAA-certified drone pilots who combine video with proprietary analytics and reports for construction, insurance, and emergency response.

The three companies are headquartered in San Antonio, Texas, with additional offices in Houston and Oklahoma City.

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**Sarah Bastyr, Accounting Manager
Flatrock Engineering & Environmental LLC**

Fast growth creates a challenge for accounting

Serving the oil and gas industries means that employees and contractors are nearly always on the road, so employee expense reports are a major piece of what accounting manager Sarah Bastyr’s team of four accountants handles for all three companies. With nearly 100 employees across the three companies, plus a national network of drone pilots for DataWing Global, Bastyr’s team has their hands full every week reconciling and coding expense reports to the correct company, and to the correct clients in each company.



Industry

Gas and oil engineering; gas and oil safety; custom drone visualization and reporting

ERP

Sage Intacct

Objective

Develop a system for managing daily, weekly and monthly tasks at three rapidly growing companies.

Why FloQast

- Clear and simple task management
- Easy to use
- Customizable checklists to make sure everything gets done

Benefits

- Saves ten hours per month for each of three companies
- Easy to monitor status of tasks
- Relieves stress of managing multiple companies
- Review notes keep track of conversations and act as placeholders for interruptions
- Streamlines complex process of invoice preparation and approval

To add to the accounting challenge, many oil and gas companies have their own quirky preferences for vendor billing practices. Some pay a flat rate or a day rate, while others are charged time, materials and mileage.

Invoices need to precisely follow each company's idiosyncratic requirements for presentation and formatting. Bastyr says, "The major challenge is making sure that you're billing out how the client wants it because otherwise, it's going to get rejected."

Rapid growth meant that "it just started to be a lot of work to manage getting everything closed and making sure that everything was being done," says Bastyr. "What's falling through the cracks? What isn't being done? I needed to have something to help me manage the little details of reconciling accounts."

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Bastyr was using an Excel schedule of balance sheet accounts for reconciling data, but tasks weren't assigned, there was no sign-off, and it was difficult to tell if the schedule still tied out to the General Ledger. "I knew that I needed something far more robust that was really going to help me manage what needed to be done on a daily and monthly basis," she notes. Those Excel checklists also didn't let her know if a month was closed or not. Bastyr continues, "It didn't give me all the information that I needed."

When two members of her accounting team took leave at the same time for family medical emergencies, Bastyr had to scramble to pick up their workloads. She recalls, "I had no idea what was on their desk, what was completed, and what hadn't been started yet. Prior to implementing FloQast, I was stressed out because I didn't have a clear view as to what needed to be done."

FloQast: Love at first sight

In January of 2017, Bastyr's team moved the accounting for all three companies from QuickBooks to Sage Intacct. Later that year, Bastyr attended the Sage Intacct Advantage Conference specifically looking for a solution for the month-end close. She needed something to help her manage the daily, weekly and monthly tasks and a way to assign those tasks and monitor their status.

After a stop at the FloQast booth, "It was pretty much love at first sight," says Bastyr. Seeing FloQast in action sealed the deal. She continues, "I came back from Intacct Advantage and told my boss 'We need this.'"

Bastyr loves the monthly lists of assigned tasks and signoffs that reassure her that everything is being done, and that she doesn't have to worry about "the little things falling through."

Implementing Sage Intacct for three companies simultaneously had been challenging, so Bastyr was gearing up for another tough period of transition. But to her delight, the FloQast team was able to have her up and running in just two days. She signed up for FloQast in December, and then used it to close December, a full month ahead of the anticipated schedule.

"The training is great," Bastyr says. "But the really amazing thing about FloQast is that it's so easy to use, I haven't had to send any new team members to training. I just show them what to do myself and they can figure it out from there."

A de-stressor in the face of constant interruption

With the ease of assigning tasks and being able to see at a glance on an intuitive dashboard which tasks still need to be done, Bastyr is no longer constantly asking team members about the status of their work. She loves the review notes feature that keeps conversations attached to the relevant items “so that I’m not having to constantly remember what happened the month before.”

In addition, the fast pace of growth at the three companies means that producing financials every month hasn’t been a top priority, so Bastyr’s work in closing a month is interrupted constantly as she is pulled in many directions to work on different projects.

“I never have to figure out where I left off,” she says. “That is the joy and the de-stressor of having FloQast because I’m closing three companies at once,” and sometimes three months at a time. But it isn’t a problem. Bastyr simply leaves herself a note to remind herself where she left off, then can pick it up and keep going when she comes back. “It just makes it a lot less stressful,” she says.

Bastyr estimates that FloQast saves her personally about ten hours per month for each of the three companies. With that extra time, Bastyr and her team can focus more on strategic projects. She says, “We’re trying to kick out a lot more metrics, in terms of utilization, and profitability. We’re delving into the numbers to see where we can make things better or tighten up processes.”

Recently, Bastyr had a recurrence of the crisis that spurred her to originally seek a solution, when a team member was out on a family medical emergency. This time though, “All I had to do was go in, see what was assigned to him, and I knew exactly where we stood,” she says. “Just by looking at what was assigned to him in FloQast, I knew what had already been done and what still needed to be completed.”

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Flatrock Engineering & Environmental LLC**

Customer billing flows easier too

Bastyr’s team also uses FloQast to manage the tricky multi-step process of billing for gas and oil customers. “It allows me at any given point to know exactly where we stand in the process. If I need to step in and do something, I know exactly where we’re at,” she says.

Bastyr can’t say enough about the stress relief she’s gotten from implementing FloQast: “For anyone that needs a way to track what needs to be done on their team, it’s a beautiful tool. It really helps in terms of lowering managerial stress.”