

**About Washtenaw County, Michigan:**

- 6th largest county in Michigan
- Approximately 352,000 citizens and 1,300 full-time County employees
- County seat is the city of Ann Arbor
- Annual operating budget of \$99 million
- County's use of technology to improve services for businesses and citizens recognized in recent years by Digital Counties Survey, CIO 100, Best of the Web award, and PTI Solutions award, among others
- www.eWashtenaw.org

**For Washtenaw County, Insight Software Suite for JD Edwards helps increase efficiency and reduce costs while enhancing service to citizens and regional businesses**

Insight is helping County staff solve problems on a daily basis. Insight is so intuitive they can answer their own questions without help from outside technical consultants or our IT team. By putting information directly at people's fingertips, we have unison between the technology and the business area knowledge, and efficiency goes through the roof. The bottom line is that we're saving time and money with Insight.

**Tom Fielder**

IT Project Manager

Washtenaw County

Business Challenge: Removing obstacles between users and information

Washtenaw County in southeastern Michigan encompasses 27 cities, villages, and townships. The County government provides a wide range of services to citizens and businesses in settings that span urban, rural, small town, and suburban environments.

Well known for successfully applying technology to help improve County services, Washtenaw County has achieved recognition from the Digital Counties Survey, CIO 100, and PTI Solutions, among other accolades.

A primary guiding principle for the staff and management team of Washtenaw County is to ensure long-term fiscal stability for the county. To achieve cost efficiencies while enhancing service to the community, Washtenaw County works to make the best possible use of the County budget. A reliable financial system is key to this effort, and therefore Washtenaw began using JD Edwards in 1999.

"We've found that in these challenging economic times, it's extremely important to have access to specific information and be able to get rapid answers to questions about that data," notes Tom Fielder, IT Project Manager for JD Edwards EnterpriseOne at Washtenaw County. "However, in a review of the use of JD Edwards at Washtenaw County, business users said that they simply weren't getting the information they required. The major obstacle was that access to the JD Edwards data called for specialized technical knowledge."

Benefits:

- Puts reporting and ad-hoc inquiries into the hands of end users
- Ease of use speeds and simplifies access to information
- Provides real-time data to support decision making
- Enables flexible formatting and time-series reporting
- Rapidly resolves integrity issues

Solution:

JD Edwards EnterpriseOne™

Insight Software Suite for JDE

- Insight Reporting™
- Insight Console™

The County put together a team to solve this challenge. “As part of the comprehensive plan, we began to investigate third-party reporting tools that are truly easy to use,” states Tina Gavalier, Financial Analyst, Washtenaw County. “County employees wanted access to real-time information to help them make even better decisions about county business, and we knew it would be best to give them direct access to information without assistance from IT.”

Solution: Insight Software Suite for JD Edwards

The Washtenaw team first saw a demonstration of Insight from InsightSoftware.com at a JD Edwards User Group meeting. The team had considered several reporting solutions, and Insight Reporting™ particularly impressed them because of its ease of use, according to Gavalier.

“We saw that we could put reporting and ad-hoc inquiries directly into the hands of the users with Insight Reporting, and that was a key goal. Insight’s flexibility amazed us: users can get nearly any report in nearly any format they choose and they can get multiple years of data in a single report,” Gavalier emphasizes.

Other factors that drove the choice of Insight Reporting for Washtenaw County were its real-time and integrity reporting capabilities and excellent performance, according to Gavalier. “The performance of Insight [Reporting] beat everything else I evaluated. For example, in Insight [Reporting] we can run a categoric rollup of the general fund in minutes: this is a tremendous amount of data and would take many hours with a standard tool.”

After an opportunity to clearly review the solution, the Washtenaw team chose the Insight Software Suite for JD Edwards. “We didn’t really know how powerful Insight was until we used it for ourselves. We got so much done during our first use of Insight that it was a simple decision to move forward,” Gavalier notes.

Today InsightSoftware.com is increasing efficiency for Washtenaw County and helping employees make informed decisions. The County is utilizing Insight Reporting™ and Insight Console™ to enhance their reporting capabilities.

“ We had several Payroll-related reports that were very time-consuming using a standard reporting tool, including a longevity report that didn’t provide FICA wages. We had to enter this data manually in Excel, and it took my staff months to process. Today we can run this report in five minutes in Insight. ”

Jonette Gibson

Payroll Manager

Washtenaw County

Payroll and HR modules speed access to accurate, real-time data

Washtenaw County was an early adopter of the Insight Reporting™. InsightSoftware.com provided support and made refinements to the solution based on the experiences and suggestions of the Washtenaw County team.

“The support was very good, and any fix that we needed, InsightSoftware.com resolved very quickly,” says Jonette Gibson, Washtenaw County Payroll Manager. “Today the Payroll and HR [Smartsets] are great timesavers. Insight [Reporting] is easy to use and one of the biggest assets is that the data is real-time.”

A dramatic example of time savings is the overtime report that Gibson prepares for the Finance Director. “I dreaded this report because we need overtime for business units with subtotals and grand totals. We had to put the data into Excel and manually add a line and a formula for each business unit to get the subtotals. This took five hours. I created the report in Insight [Reporting] in about a half hour and now I can run it in just a few minutes.”

Today Gibson uses Insight Payroll and HR [Smartsets] for nearly all of her reporting and ad-hoc inquiries, including reconciliation, arrearages, and integrity reports. “Insight [Reporting] is easy to use, you know the data is accurate, and you can have it nearly instantly,” Gibson states. “I sent a colleague a headcount report recently, and he emailed back, ‘wow, you delivered this much faster this year!’”

Efficiency “goes through the roof” for reporting and ad-hoc inquiries

“Insight has really proven itself here in Washtenaw County as we work to reduce the cost of conducting county business while also enhancing service to our citizens and regional businesses,” notes Peter Ballios, Finance Director of Washtenaw County. “County employees have powerful information right at their fingertips to answer questions, solve problems, and guide decisions using Insight.”

Fielder states that Inquiries that could have taken hours in the past now run in just minutes with Insight Reporting™. “I’ve heard about reports that are fully created in hours with Insight [Reporting] that required a week or even a month to build in the past.”

Sheryll Ashford-Wilson, Washtenaw County’s Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable Manager explains that she receives many calls from vendors each day inquiring about invoices and payments. “Before Insight [Reporting], it took me hours or even a day to get the answers. With Insight, I can find the answer in just seconds while they are still on the phone. I save time, and the vendors appreciate the speed. Insight also helps me be proactive instead of reactive: for example, using Insight Reporting, I can look quickly at the checks that have been reconciled for the quarter and can follow up on any that are outstanding.”

Insight Reporting™ has cleared up several long-standing integrity issues, according to Roberta Allen, Senior Accountant at Washtenaw County. “Before we had Insight Reporting, we had some integrity issues that remained even after a couple of years. With Insight Reporting we had resolved them all within a month. I’m pleased to say we don’t have any integrity issues now, and we can resolve them quickly and easily if any come up in the future.”



InsightSoftware.com’s Solution

Insight Software Suite for JD Edwards empowers users to create simple, real-time inquiries to answer business questions. This improves productivity for reporting, analysis and reconciliations.

Companies using Insight gain quick access to information to increase efficiencies, enhance revenues, reduce costs and optimize cash flows.

The Bottom Line:

For Washtenaw County, Insight Software Suite for JD Edwards puts rapid, efficient access to JDE data into the hands of County employees. Without help from IT, County staff can answer questions, solve problems, and support decisions with real-time information.

Reducing the cost of conducting county business while enhancing service to citizens and regional businesses is a guiding principle for Washtenaw County. Insight is making a significant difference by simplifying access to a wide range of information needed on a daily basis.

The Insight Software Solution provides a major time savings in Purchasing with a new quarterly open-order report. "Before Insight Reporting, a colleague prepared this report by exporting into Excel and distributing it to all the County departments," says Crystal Wake, Senior Buyer, Purchasing for Washtenaw County. "It used to take about three days. One of my first tasks in Insight software was to create this open-order report. I don't need to re-create it now; I just run it in Insight in a few minutes. An added 'plus' is that everyone is very happy with the new format, because in Insight, we can group each business unit with its orders instead of providing one long list."

"In the past, I needed to get technical support to help me write most reports, but Insight [Reporting] is so user-friendly I don't need that," comments Barbara J. Finch, PHR, Classification & Compensation Manager for Washtenaw County. "During the audit, I was asked for an integrity report based on which employees have the ability to make changes to salaries. I'd never been asked this before, but it was easy and accurate in Insight."

Gavalier describes what she calls "one of the biggest benefits of Insight": an unmet need for reporting for the County's multiyear and grant-year programs. "This was huge, because we had designed everything in JD Edwards on a calendar year or an October through September fiscal year. We had to run multiple reports to get the entire reporting year for some grants. With Insight [Reporting], we can run a time-series report going forward or back showing the entire project in one report, even if it is two or three years. This has really helped our grant accountants track grant funds and support their filings of quarterly and monthly reports to the state and federal government."

Ballios emphasizes that Insight Console™ raises team efficiency. "[Insight] Console is a nice dashboard: you click on what you want to see and there it is. I can go in electronically and pull up specific details of a report without printing it out or making a photocopy, and that also contributes to our goal of being as paperless as possible."

"Phenomenally easy" installation and excellent training

The installation was really fast, and Gavalier praises the smooth process. "I've had my share of software implementations, and this was phenomenally easy. That speaks a lot for Insight and also the for the InsightSoftware.com team. The training was great, and we feel that if we ever have an issue, the InsightSoftware.com team will take it seriously and address it."

Felder agrees, saying that Insight Solution has met and exceeded his expectations. "The ability for our business area specialists to pull out information using Insight is tremendous. And what I liked most was the smooth transition from the installation to having Washtenaw teams use Insight in a constructive way."

"Even after our first day of the proof-of-concept, we were already using the product to access information and investigate issues," Gavalier says. "With just a few hours of training on Insight [Reporting], I was well on my way to creating all kinds of reports on JD Edwards data that had not been possible in the past. During the proof-of-concept, we were not only 'test driving' Insight, we were developing reports for our auditors, troubleshooting integrity issues, and resolving some of the information needs that had been unaddressed in the past - that's how easy it is to use and apply Insight."

For more information please visit www.InsightSoftware.com

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