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City of Radford Financial Applications Grow Up

Virtual IT Facilitates Upgrade From Home-Grown System To State-Of-The-Art.

It was high time for some IT upgrading in Radford. "Our system was getting age on it," says Scott Pochick, Director of Finance for the City of Radford in southwest Virginia. "The language it was programmed in was very old. And most of the people who knew that language were either retired or dead."

"We had a home-grown system, and we were running into limitations due to the programming," he continues. "For example, when it was first programmed – in the 1970s – no one dreamed that salaries would be in the six digits." With additional problems afflicting the billing and the tax systems, "it got to be a bit much," he says.

"We wanted to have up-to-date features such as a GUI interface and a windows-based system." To that end, Pochick engaged Virtual IT to facilitate the selection of a custom off the shelf financial applications package.

Pochick identified several daunting challenges to this initiative, including the very notion of replacing such a massive system. He also cited the necessity of working within a very defined entity structure, required by City and State charters, that encompassed three different departments (Finance, Treasurer, and Commissioner of Revenue).

Furthermore, he adds "...because not one person understands all the operations, that's primarily why we felt Virtual IT would be a big benefit to us. We needed someone to come in and work with each of us to assess the needs of the city as a whole. We wanted someone who had experience with [this type of] process before, and was familiar with the vendors."

Virtual IT consultants served as facilitators for the system acquisition process. "Sam Carlson and Juliet Silver came in and assessed our needs," recalls Pochick. "They interviewed each of us, documented [our needs], and went through each of our business processes. And Virtual IT wasn't just looking at software, but also at hardware and networking."

While the City is currently working on implementation of Virtual IT's recommendations, Pochick anticipates future benefits – better information, better access to information, and better efficiency. "I don't think we could have done this without Virtual IT," he says.

Virtual IT is a full-service information technology consultancy, providing high-level strategic and tactical support for businesses, contractors and government agencies. The firm provides services in the areas of business strategy, IT strategy, and enterprise application integration and development. Headquartered in southwestern Virginia, with branch offices serving central and northern Virginia, the company provides clients with high-quality corporate services within a small company setting.

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