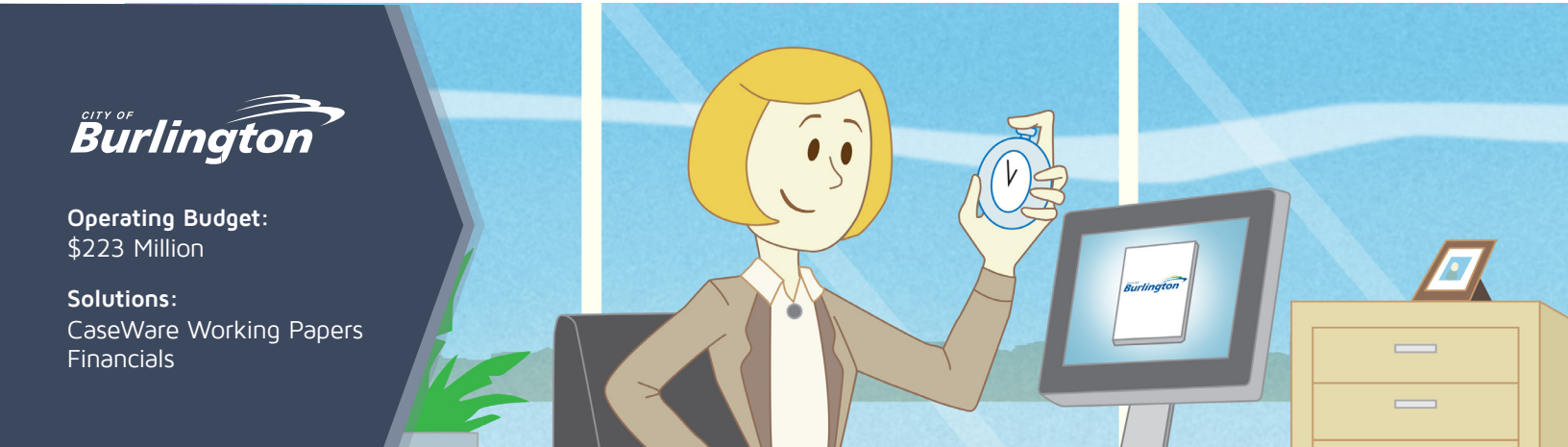


City of Burlington Increases Financial Statement Preparation Automation and Makes the External Audit Process More Efficient



CITY OF **Burlington**

Operating Budget:
\$223 Million

Solutions:
CaseWare Working Papers
Financials

Boasting over 1,400 acres of parkland,

Burlington has been consistently ranked as one of Canada’s “Best Places to Live”. This year, MoneySense magazine named Burlington the best mid-sized city (population of around 175,000) in which to live in Canada, the best place for new immigrants, and the fourth best place to retire. The city supports 47 service lines, which are represented by 15 departments and 6 local boards.

Less than Excel-lent

The City of Burlington’s Finance Department used to create their annual financial statements in Excel. While spreadsheets can be useful for analysis, they found that efficiently converting large volumes of data into financial statements was challenging.

Another significant issue with Excel was the time consuming process of creating the financial statements. They would often take weeks to

complete, and require several attempts to get in balance. If a change was required, it needed to be entered manually across the entire statement. Since the numbers were hardcoded into the spreadsheet, rather than being linked directly from the source data, the process was tedious and prone to inaccuracies.

F.H. Black & Company Incorporated to the Rescue

F.H. Black & Company Incorporated (FHB), met with the finance team at the city to understand their challenges and recommend a solution designed to save significant amounts of their valuable time. FHB recommended a tool they have had lots of previous success with — CaseWare Working Papers. FHB then stepped in to aid in a smooth implementation. “[They] were great support for us especially when we started out,” says Moore. Moore also commented that FHB’s consultants were always available

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CHALLENGE

Improve accuracy and efficiency in the preparation of year-end financial statements for the City.

SOLUTION

FHB analyzed their needs and recommended a switch from Excel to CaseWare Working Papers & Financials for financial statement preparation.

RESULTS

Automated preparation of financial statements and enhanced relationships with auditors.

City of Burlington

"We usually didn't have our financial statements ready until the end of the audit, but now we are producing them before the auditors even arrive. That is a huge win for us."

Michelle Moore
Coordinator of Accounting
City of Burlington

whenever they were needed, and were happy to answer any questions. Moore complimented the team, stating, "They have so much knowledge and they know how to do things instantly." To have that level of support available was comforting. Two of the finance department associates attended basic and advanced training on CaseWare provided by FHB, and liked how hands-on the training was. Some of the training materials provided are still used today when any questions or issues arise.



Impact on the Audit

Upon switching to CaseWare, the Finance Department found that the time spent preparing year-end financial statements was dramatically reduced. "We usually didn't have our financial statements ready until the end of the audit," explained Michelle Moore, Coordinator of Accounting at City of Burlington, "but now we are producing them before the auditors even arrive. That is a huge win for us."

Moore continued that last-minute changes would previously take hours to apply throughout the financials, but with CaseWare now only took a few minutes. Getting the financial statements to the

auditors early in the audit has provided the Finance Department with more time to assist with any requests while the auditors are still on site.

"Our auditors were extremely happy when we told them that we were implementing CaseWare," Moore shared. CaseWare has allowed both the Finance Department and the auditors to be more confident in the information they are working with, which can be attributed to creating reports directly from a central database with referencing to the original source.

Time for a Change

Change is never easy, and implementing a new software is no different. Due to the numerous account groupings and cost centers used by municipalities, it can be a tedious process to make sure that all of the groups are set up appropriately from the onset. Although the initial setup took some effort, the City of Burlington remained positive. Moore noted, "It was a good educational process for us to learn and really understand how we have developed our financial structure."



For 25 years, F.H. Black & Company Incorporated has worked with finance and budget departments in government, education and corporations across North America to crush waste, & eliminate inefficiency.

Our mission is to ensure that our finance & budget departments do more with less, do it better than it was done before and do it in less time.

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