



“A successful changeover to a more sophisticated SQL database has clearly made a difference.”

Western Irrigation

Solution: Sybiz Vision and Sybiz Visipay

Business Partner: Advanced Accounting Systems

They say ‘man goes where water flows,’ and it’s thanks to Western Irrigation the water is flowing!

Western Irrigation have been servicing the commercial and industrial irrigation market in metropolitan Perth since 1969, and now as part of a group of companies with Elliott’s Irrigation, Western Drilling and Twist Engineering.

Together over the decades, the group has continued to demonstrate their expertise in design, supply, installation and maintenance of all forms of groundwater pumping, water supply & storage, distribution equipment and filtration systems.

Western Irrigation CFO Wayne Howells says it is the expertise of staff that has made Western Irrigation so successful.

“I think what we’ve done well over the past 50 years is been consistent. We retain all the technical knowledge of all the jobs. We’ve employed the right people and kept them.”

Making the change to Sybiz Vision

Wayne, who was among those using the previous Sybiz Vision Classic system and helped oversee the transition to the new Sybiz Vision, said the move to a more powerful, modern ERP solution was a logical decision for the team at Western Irrigation. But changing business management software can be a daunting proposition, especially when needs can vary so widely between businesses.

For Western Irrigation, word of mouth testimonials from other Sybiz Vision users helped them see they were on the right track.

“To get some references from other people and speak to them individually and frankly... it was pretty powerful to be able to get that comfort level.”

“We decided not to look at other options at that point after we’d been able to see and then hear from referrals which we felt were genuinely independent. So that was pretty important.”



Planning for success

Drawing on the experience of the whole team, Wayne says Western Irrigation were able to take a considered and structured approach to implementation.

"We pretty sensibly did one company first, learned from that and then a year later did the next one."

"In the scheme of things, we barely interrupted the operations of the business in amongst the changeover, which was the goal."

"On the highest most intensive level we completely changed our work process in one of our departments and moved to the service functionality, so that was a significant change and has had the most significant impact in productivity and effectiveness."

"Next level down we did a lot of tweaking; took the opportunity to review our processes in a big chunk of areas. They collectively gave us some pretty fundamental gains."

At the final level, Western Irrigation were able to capitalise on familiarities between Classic and Sybiz Vision to keep the team working efficiently.

Small changes making a big difference

The real advantages of Sybiz Vision for Western Irrigation have come in the many ways the solution can be customised for staff types.

"The main part that Sybiz Vision is used for is job costing. We might create 250 jobs per month."

And with up to 35 staff working throughout the company in Sybiz Vision, making sure information is accessible and understandable is key to productivity.

"Monitoring the data and getting it in an available form - so that all users are able to see and use that data in its various forms - a lot of people can relate to that and easily do it within Sybiz Vision without any assistance."

As information moves up the chain, the executive team needed more control and visibility across the solution.

“All the directors work in the company and have an intimate knowledge of the day to day. One really effective move for the managing director is for him to be able to design his own grids and oversee jobs, manage them, write them down, close them off, using some automated processes as well.”

“A successful changeover to a more sophisticated SQL database has clearly made a difference.”

Sophistication also came in the form of workflow breakpoints, opening up even more opportunities for customisation and control over processes.

“We use a couple of breakpoints. A fundamental one we use for jobs.”

“We have a data folder that has traditionally kept all our job data in there. There’s a significant amount of data; that’s your technical stronghold for each job. And the breakpoint is for when a job is created, that sub-folder is automatically created in our share drive.”

For Wayne and other staff, the productivity gains save hours of work every week.

“You switch from doing all those manual things to creating a different role; to be the watcher and not necessarily the doer.”

Looking to the future

As Western Irrigation continues its successful journey with Sybiz Vision, Wayne says they’ll be keeping a keen eye on ways to further streamline and grow their business capability.

“A forever problem for enterprises is underutilising their software and then finding out at some subsequent date, ‘Oh I didn’t realise it could do that.’”

“We’ll be looking at Sybiz Vision to tap into anything else we can do to help our business into the future. You know a lot of it is about mobility and things you can do in the field. Clearly that will be of interest to us.”

