

# CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



## Samish Indian Nation



**INDUSTRY**  
Local  
Government



**LOCATION**  
Anacortes,  
Washington



**FEATURED SOLUTION**  
Abila MIP Fund Accounting™  
and Microix Workflow  
Requisition Module

### CHALLENGE

Labor intensive for accounting staff to manually manage multiple funds, programs, timesheets and PO/travel requests.

### SOLUTION

Abila MIP Fund Accounting™ and Microix Requisition Module

### BENEFITS

Abila MIP Fund Accounting™ automated financial tracking and management, while Microix Requisition Module streamlined the PO and travel processes.

## Maintaining Tribal Traditions in a Changing World

The Samish are a strong, committed Tribe known as “the giving people”. Much like their ancestors, who quickly adopted useful tools brought by settlers, the current leaders of the Tribe strive to both preserve the traditional Samish ways and utilize technology to connect members and inform decisions. The Samish Indian Nation is governed by a seven-member Tribal Council elected to oversee the welfare and resources of the Tribe consisting of its constitution, economic development, policies, legislation, enrollment, and justice. A General Council, and all voting age members, maintain active participation in both the governance responsibilities and cultural gatherings of the Tribe.

The Samish are focused on reestablishing their homelands, strengthening tribal culture and language, demonstrating traditional stewardship of cultural and natural resources, and being a contributing force in the economic base of the region. The Samish work with state, federal, and other local agencies on grants to support the health, social service, housing, and education needs of tribal members as well as protection of the environment and preservation of cultural resources. They proudly own and operate the Fidalgo Bay Resort and RV Park – a full-service RV park that also includes furnished guest cabins near the waterfront.

**abila**™

BUSINESS PARTNER  
SELECT ADVISOR

## Systems for a Modern Tribe

The Samish Indian Nation historically used QuickBooks to manage their accounting system. Carey Thurston, now the current Controller, worked for a CPA firm in 2001 where he audited the Tribe and discovered their system lacked a clear audit trail. With a huge chart of accounts, the system was cumbersome and error-prone. Consultants recommended Samish convert to a true fund accounting system, which the Tribe acknowledged and implemented Abila MIP™ in 2003. In 2007, Thurston became the Controller for the Samish Indian Nation and has been an ongoing proponent for continued process improvement and eventual automation.

After implementing Abila MIP™, they attacked the paper time sheet process to reduce/eliminate the accounting staff's labor-intensive task of collecting and manually inputting the employee data every two weeks. By implementing MIP Human Resources (HR), Payroll, and Employee Web Services (EWS) modules, the Tribe streamlined time sheet entry and provided employees and managers 24/7 web access to their pay stub, benefit information, and other important employee information.

More recently, the Samish Indian Nation automated the travel and purchase order requisition process. Previously, paper requisitions had been routed between five separate buildings for approval. "This physical process took about two weeks to complete causing managers difficulty in maintaining an accurate budget – especially as they neared the end of a grant period," stated Thurston. "Then there would be incomplete requisitions that had to be sent back, or some lost in route," Thurston added, "the result was a lot of paper going back and forth which was slow." With help from Software Simplified, an Abila business partner, the Microix Requisition Module was implemented enabling accountants and non-accounting staff to create purchase requests from their desktop computer. Once a request is submitted and approved through a multi-level approval process, it is automatically converted to a purchase order and seamlessly transferred to Abila MIP Fund Accounting™ software as an un-posted encumbrance or A/P transaction. Thurston summarized, "Our Treasurer loves it because she can see the entire request along with the budget. The program managers love it because the system automatically updates their budget without additional manual effort. The AP staff likes it because they no longer input data, they review content for completeness. And I like everything stored electronically which eliminates the physical space and effort of filing paper information."



***"My advice to other organizations needing to automate their accounting processes – Just Do It!"***

***- Carey Thurston  
Controller***

## Continuing the Tradition

Thurston's interest in process automation has spread to others across the Tribe. They continually search for improvements which will allow members more time to focus on other more important Tribal needs. Thurston actively participates in the Abila Community Forum which he finds helpful to himself and to others. As a "seasoned" user of MIP, Thurston enjoys sharing his knowledge which further promotes the Samish Tribe as "the giving people".

### About Software Simplified

Software Simplified is a consulting firm specializing in financial management and time tracking. Industries served include the legal sector, nonprofit organizations, small governments and tribal nations. As a Business Partner for software publishers since 1999, Software Simplified works directly with public and private organizations to provide added value to software procurement, implementation, training, and support. We fully understand the unique financial reporting and management requirements imposed today for organizations. Our methodology includes four key phases: Planning, Implementation, Training, and On-going Support. This proven process is our way of continually providing our clients with the best service possible. Our professional services team members are financial executives, information technologists, business managers and grants developers. Each project has a single professional team member assigned to the project ensuring efficiency and 100% satisfaction.

### About Abila part of the Community Brands family

Abila, part of the Community Brands family, is the leading provider of software and services to associations and nonprofit organizations to help them improve decision making, execute with greater precision, increase engagement, and generate more revenue.

Community Brands is a purpose-driven company that delivers technology solutions to nearly 100,000 leading associations, nonprofits, K-12 private schools, and faith-based organizations worldwide to help them thrive and succeed in today's fast-paced, evolving world. Our focus on accelerating innovation, fulfilling unmet needs, and bringing to market modern technology solutions and engagement platforms helps power social impact, effect positive change, and create opportunity.

To learn more, visit

### LEARN MORE:

866-914-2287

[www.softsimp.com](http://www.softsimp.com)

[vicki@softsimp.com](mailto:vicki@softsimp.com)

