



USA TODAY NETWORK

US media giant Gannett partners with Lineup Systems to deliver financial transformation

A modern media success story, Gannett has witnessed phenomenal business growth through a long history of wisely-chosen acquisitions and forward-thinking management approaches. This willingness to innovate, to push the boundaries of media and technology capabilities, is never more evident than when Gannett faced the challenge of how best to merge these acquisitions – with their disparate ordering systems, workflows and processes – to achieve operational excellence.

THE CHALLENGE

There were several key issues that Gannett sought to resolve:

- Legacy systems were aging, disparate, and costly
- Legacy financial reporting processes, operations, and data entry points were increasingly causing the company major, and time-consuming, revenue recognition problems
- Order system silos led to multiple customer invoices and statement of account formats
- The print-centric accounting systems and practices weren't suitable for the multi-channel, digital-first focus of the business

Gannett consequently sought a partner that could help centralize and streamline their multi-channel financial operations, while at the same time providing system flexibility for regional businesses.

“Our major challenge was how to create consistent billing and financial reporting across our network without having to replace the entire existing infrastructure.”



Mark Cole, Director, Governance & Business Alignment, Gannett

A rigorous tender process followed involving several leading industry players. In light of Lineup's client successes with large publishers such as News Corp, Time Inc. and Toronto Star, Lineup Systems was chosen to help centralize and optimize all aspects of Gannett's mammoth operations with the 100% web-based AdPoint platform.

KEY REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROJECT

1

A partner to help centralize and streamline their multi-channel financial operations

2

A single system, easily accessible across all financial locations, showing a common and consistent view of all data

3

Automation of all major processes from order to collections

4

Multi-channel and flexible invoicing delivering one customer viewpoint

ABOUT GANNETT

Founded
1906

100m+
Unique visitors
each month

100+
Daily
publications

400+
Digital
products

109
Local media
organizations

150
Local UK
news brands

“This partnership with Lineup has been transformative for us, freeing up so much time and significantly reducing our operational complexity. The agility the Lineup platform provides for the future is a real game-changer for Gannett.”

RICK BAKER
VP/Technology, Commerce Solutions, Gannett



THE SOLUTION

Achieving one unified billing, invoicing and accounts receivable solution

“At the core of our project strategy was the creation of a standardized, consolidated and auditable order to billing solution delivering accurate and timely data within one single platform.”

Mark Cole, Director,
Governance & Business Alignment, Gannett

A multi-stage rollout plan, coordinated jointly between members of Gannett's finance and technology teams, and Lineup Professional Services, commenced February 2016 to address these needs.

Fifty-two legacy systems were to be retired and accounting processes streamlined and automated including:

- Late payment, sales tax application, and payment matching processes
- Revenue recognition
- A single invoice and statement of account for each corporate customer
- Payment due dates consolidated into aging reports which appeared on the statement of account for corporate customers, and could be flexed according to local requirements

To minimize business disruption, existing ad booking systems were retained, but several major API Integrations (across 18 disparate ad booking, CRM, ad serving, and self service solutions) enabled real-time bi-directional integration into the Lineup platform. Information was then validated and enriched with additional meta data provided by the system to deliver one central, business viewpoint of the entire Gannett operation.

THE RESULT

This transformative project was to deliver several major business advantages for Gannett

Greater ROI and
business performance

With a single, consistent revenue recognition and financial performance perspective, delivering improved financial and business intelligence, Gannett is in a stronger position to identify major ROI drivers and performance improvements across their entire operation.

Better
customer experience

The one platform approach delivered, for the first time, a single customer view across Gannett's multiple operations and media channels, providing a vital foundation for more aligned CRM strategies and sales approaches. A single invoice and statement of account, with aging reports, also eased the payment process for customers, leading to faster payments.

Substantial
business efficiencies

The reduction in overheads from the retirement of multiple legacy billing systems and the adoption of a shared deployment model meant technical teams are able to focus on new business projects. The scrapping of several manual workarounds with SOX compliant automated invoicing, revenue recognition, and statement of accounts processes, also represents significant time-saving within the financial operation.

Greater corporate agility

Looking ahead, Lineup's flexible web-based platform infrastructure will ensure faster integration and reduced IT costs for future business acquisitions, providing greater corporate agility in the future.

Lineup Systems is the leading provider of advertising sales solutions to the world's most progressive media brands. Find out how we can transform your media business:

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