




## XLERANT

### Case Study



**Orlando Regional REALTOR® Association says:**  
We were looking for something cloud-based,  
and the only budgeting software that met our  
requirements *and* our expectations was BudgetPak.

#### The Customer

Founded in 1921, Orlando Regional REALTOR® Association (ORRA) is one of the largest local trade associations in the state of Florida, with approximately 12,000 members in Orange, Seminole, and the surrounding counties. ORRA is composed of REALTORS® who are involved in residential and commercial real estate, including: brokers, salespeople, property managers, appraisers, and counselors.

ORRA's mission is to create, maintain, and enhance a business environment that contributes significantly to the success of its members and the prosperity of Central Florida. Members receive services and benefits through education, events, committees, governmental affairs programs, and advertising.

Hector Sanchez, CPA is Vice President of Finance at ORRA. With over 40 years of professional experience, Hector has led accounting departments in both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. For the past nine years, he has overseen all the financial affairs of ORRA and Subsidiaries with total assets of approximately \$16 million.

#### The Problem

As a trade association, ORRA has unique financial considerations. With member dues representing 40 percent of total revenues, member retention is of utmost importance. This past year, ORRA leadership decided to place an even greater emphasis on member satisfaction, which has created a shift in budgeting philosophy.

Historically, ORRA has aimed to achieve an annual target profit margin of at least 5 percent of total revenue; the company has always met or exceeded this goal. However,

ORRA's member satisfaction initiative called for a budget deficit in the coming year.

*"We've had to weigh the balance between making a profit and paying for enhanced member benefits," says Hector. "We want to give more back to our members with increased services, so that they receive more value for the money they're giving us. Our temporary strategy is to explore and test new initiatives and programs that would make member's lives easier, such as new technology. This may create a net loss in the short-term – but if the outcomes are positive, we plan to budget for longer-term strategies."*

In order to create a budgetary roadmap for these new initiatives – and to ensure a short-lived deficit – Hector knew he needed a better way to predict and account for revenue and expenses. His homegrown Excel spreadsheets weren't up to the task: *"When I started to work here we were using Excel, and I created templates to make budget preparation easier. But some of the managers still had a lot of trouble using Excel, and we were often experiencing formula errors. It took a lot of time for the managers, myself, and my personal assistant. So the budget and finance committee talked about it, and we decided to purchase budget software."*

#### The Evaluation and Implementation

Before investing in budgeting software, Hector took the time to determine which features were most important for his organization. He decided on the following: easy navigation, easy data entry, easy for his users to understand...and also cloud-based – for the flexibility to work on the budget at the office or at home. In terms of functionality, Hector desired software that would facilitate easy uploading of past budget data, including seamless



integration with ORRA's accounting software, SAGE 100 ERP General Ledger.

To begin his search, Hector did what a lot of us do: he asked Google. Hector recounts, *"I typed in, 'cloud-based budget software,' and XLerant and BudgetPak came up in the top results. I started to do some more online research and went through the demos. I liked what I saw in BudgetPak."*

Hector did explore solutions from other vendors, but none compared: *"We were looking for something cloud-based, and the only budgeting software that met our expectations and our requirements was BudgetPak."*

According to Hector, the implementation and training went smoothly. *"When our managers attended the training they were able to turn on their computers and go to BudgetPak and view their department, their unit, and were able to see, 'Oh my god, this is really simple to navigate, so easy!' They could see that it would make their lives easier, and that got them excited about the new system."*

### The Solution

ORRA managers who used to be frustrated with time-consuming, confusing, error-prone Excel templates, now have an easier way to build their budgets. *"With BudgetPak, users don't have to worry about the formulas, and they don't have to worry about calculations. Instead of fussing with the system, they have extra time to think about what they are actually budgeting, their reasoning and assumptions."*

Hector likes that his users feel comfortable with the system because it is so easy to navigate and enter data. He is also happy with the increased transparency and accountability that the system provides by giving users a convenient way to document the rationale behind their numbers in line-item detail. *"With Excel, we were forced to lump sum the amounts, and we couldn't add in any details – that was really difficult for the managers and for myself too. Now when we start to work on a comparison of budget versus actual, we can do a true analysis about why we're over budget or under budget. It's truly eye opening."*

Another benefit for ORRA is BudgetPak's ability to archive historical data in one convenient location and run real-time reports. Because Budget and Finance Committee members change annually, it has traditionally been difficult to bring the new chairman and treasurer up to speed. BudgetPak

gives Hector a convenient way to prepare quarterly forecasts and help new committee members understand the big picture.

*"BudgetPak is a really neat way of going through the budget process," says Hector. "I can easily consolidate information for a quick bottom-line response, and that's something that I was looking for in budget software. No more formula errors, no more headaches."*

Hector says that ORRA is already seeing a huge benefit in time savings. *"With BudgetPak, we've saved approximately 20 percent in efficiency. We can consolidate faster, so we can get to the bottom line faster."*

When asked if he would recommend BudgetPak to colleagues, Hector says, *"Yes, definitely. I feel confident recommending a solution that provides great benefit. Depending on the size and complexity of a company's operations, BudgetPak's ease of navigation and data-entry would translate into a hefty saving in hours and increased efficiency."*

And perhaps the most important question for ORRA's new strategic objectives: has BudgetPak helped ORRA in its mission to budget for member-satisfaction initiatives? *"Yes, it has," says Hector. "BudgetPak has been very helpful for us as we plan for our new initiatives. It's tremendously useful to get a quick response, a quick bottom line."*

*"With BudgetPak, we've saved approximately 20 percent in efficiency. We can consolidate faster, so we can get to the bottom line faster."*



XLerant, Inc. | 203.883.4380  
info@xlerant.com | www.xlerant.com