



In the Food Franchise industry, the volume of transactions that need to flow through an accounting system is monumental. For one location alone, the business must handle issues that arise from massive amounts of data entry and the need for the quick turn around of financial statements to make important business decisions. Multiply this already extensive amount of processing by several locations and the mountain of data can quickly become unmanageable. As a result, numerous hours are spent each month manually creating reports, tracking invoices, and handling payroll to provide companies with their month end financial reports and gain a clear picture of their business. The time investment means that financial reports are often several days or even weeks late, lending little value to the company's ability for analysis.

Outside accounting firms offer some relief – but with a hefty price tag attached. The work may get completed a bit more quickly than attempting to handle it on their own without a solid financial system, however, food franchise companies find themselves spending thousands of dollars each month to get these reports and may still end up spending hours completing in house data entry.

IDT Consulting's goal is to help these companies get real value out of their financial information by implementing Microsoft Business Solutions Great Plains systems, which provide access to decision-driving information with powerful financial and process applications that are easy to use and personalize. These solutions increase efficiency, getting the financial information you need to your fingertips quickly, meaning companies are able to respond and adjust for the next monthly accounting cycle. Enabling a proactive environment leads to reduced costs and increased revenue.

Solutions from IDT Consulting and Microsoft Business Solutions also:

- Provide a more complete picture of a company's financials and a timely, accurate representation of what is going on at each store
- Feature quality analytic tools to enable understanding of truly controllable costs
- Include integration tools to enable migration of DOS-based info into Windows version
- Allow for a high data volume with increased accuracy
- Automates processes to increase efficiency and speed up data entry
- Give managers access to financial information at the store level rather than having to request it from the corporate office
- Offer integration from Point of Sale systems to pull information from the registers into the ERP system
- Grant the ability to focus valuable time on increasing revenue rather than completing administrative tasks

IDT Consulting tailors solutions to specific client needs, and caters to a host of industries, including food franchises. Companies trust IDT Consulting to do more than supply a product. They know that with a wealth of experience in solving real-world business problems, IDT Consulting has the technical expertise to deliver a comprehensive solution that will fit their unique business needs.

Highlighted here is a review of some of IDT Consulting's work with food franchise industry clients. Read on to find out more.



## Gill Management Saint Charles, IL

Winner of the 2003 prestigious Burger King® Award of Excellence, St. Charles, Illinois franchise group, Gill Management has excelled in restaurant operations. It is their commitment to quality and innovation that, in 2000, prompted them to seek a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to improve the company's financial operations. In addition to increasing efficiency and streamlining their payroll processes for their more than 250 employees, Gill Management also sought to reduce their reliance on an outside accounting firm.

However, with a low budget and a lack of support from their outsourced accounting firm – who knew they would lose revenue as Gill was able to do more in-house – Gill thought they had a tough road ahead. Looking to other industry contacts for advice, another franchise company recommended IDT Consulting and in January of 2001 Gill went live with the first phase of their newly implemented system.

The Great Plains system that IDT Consulting implemented was instrumental in reducing costs for Gill. With the ability to quickly and easily run their own customized reports and track profitability, they were no longer dependent upon the outsourced functions of their accounting firm. Gill was able to do so much more in house with the same resources as before the implementation that they saved over \$80,000 in the first nine months of the new system's use.

Payroll processing at Gill also changed drastically. What was once an involved and tedious process, which consumed 2 days of labor, has now become straightforward and trouble-free. The level of automation within the Payroll process that Great Plains enabled has shaved hours off the time it used to take to complete. The now cut and dry process can be finished in just 2-3 hours.

**Great Plains Solution Modular Components:** Payroll, Accounts Payable, FRx (Financial Reporting), General Ledger, Magnetic Media for Payroll

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## Shamrock Company Hinsdale, IL

With approximately 50 Taco Bell and KFC restaurants, Shamrock Company is still growing. Thanks to IDT Consulting and Microsoft Business Solutions Great Plains, this growth no longer creates problems or increased costs with respect to their financial systems.

In 2000, Shamrock was struggling with significant delays in getting their financial reporting completed. Their financial packets were taking nearly three months to complete. As a result, Shamrock was getting no value from their financials. By the time they received the information they needed, they were already three-quarters of the way into the next quarter. Any problems or opportunities for improvement were not identified until it was too late to make any adjustments. Shamrock realized they needed to speed up the process so they could use their financials to make proactive decisions and be able to react quickly to problems such as rising costs or areas of low profitability. In addition to the delays in getting their financial information, Shamrock was weighed down with hours of tedious administrative task work each week.

Shamrock selected IDT Consulting to help them get back on track with a system that allowed much quicker access to their financial data and a much clearer picture of their business. The first phase of their time-saving new system went live in October of 2000.

Since the implementation of their system, Shamrock Company has saved 30+ hours per week previously wasted on administrative task work. They've saved time in data-entry by eliminating re-keying of data. Not only are they

able to complete their month close much more quickly, store managers can now access their financial information at the store level, rather than having to request it from the corporate office.

Other benefits that Shamrock Company has realized include:

- Creation of “real-time” cash flow analysis
- Ability to easily track costs among different vendors to assist in negotiating pricing
- Gaining a handle on current Controllable Cost Margins
- Capability to conduct cash-basis and accrual basis reporting
- Project costing functionality to help the company grow without dwindling resources

**Great Plains Solution Modular Components:** Accounts Payable, General Ledger, FRx, Integration Manager

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**TR Foods**  
**Merrillville, IN**

With more than 1,100 employees across 2 states and 54 stores, T. R. Foods was constantly struggling to get payroll completed on time for employees of its YUM! Brands Restaurants (KFC, Taco Bell, A & W, Long John Silver's). In fact, the process was so difficult that restaurants in Indiana and restaurants in Ohio had to be paid on different weeks because the labor-intensive process was just too involved to get all completed at the same time. Like most food franchises, due to the nature of the industry, T. R. Foods also struggled with a high turnover rate, which meant that sorting thousands of W-2s was an issue as well.

In addition to needing more automation in their payroll process, T. R. Foods, Inc., wanted a financial solution that would help track store performance, turn financial statements around quickly, keep track of detailed invoices for daily food deliveries, and be cost effective and scalable. In 2002, they turned to Microsoft who recommended IDT Consulting as the right team for the job.

In January of 2003, T. R. Foods went live with the payroll phase of their newly implemented system. By going live on the first of the year, they were able to have the entire year on the same system, eliminating any future W-2 reporting issues.

With their new solution, T. R. Foods has realized significant benefits to their business, including:

- Improved communication regarding employee information for payroll processing
- Weeks worth of data entry and double-data entry eliminated
- Faster, more accurate reporting for local taxes
- Quicker turn around of financial statements from 2-3 weeks to 4 business days
- Improved reporting compliance with government agencies

While the system has provided benefits across the organization, the greatest advantage for T. R. Foods has been the quick and straightforward manner in which payroll is now handled. Payroll data is now directly integrated into the Great Plains system, eliminating the need for manual entries and greatly reducing the margin for error. The entire process has been streamlined and automated, saving hundreds of hours in labor per year – not to mention several headaches. One of the principal reasons that the process is now so much easier is that withholdings related to 401k programs, garnishments, child support, and other deductions are all handled automatically in the new system.

**Great Plains Solution Modular Components: Solution Components:** Payroll, General Ledger, FRx (Financial Reporting), Accounts Payable, Integration Manager, Magnetic Media for Payroll