



## Competitive Strategies, Inc. helps Rice Management save time - and money

Companies continually search for ways to become more efficient. Competitive Strategies, Inc. (CSI) has helped Rice Management to do so in a variety of ways.

CSI provides support services for MAS 90 accounting software and has worked with Rice Management for the past two years – helping the company implement ideas that save its employees valuable time. “I just can’t say enough good things about Steve (Engmann of CSI),” said Donna Birnschein. “When I think about all the time CSI has saved us, it’s amazing.”

Birnschein is a human resources team leader at Rice Management – a company that owns and manages a total of 17 long-term care facilities, as well as two assisted-living facilities and one independent living apartment complex for senior citizens. In all, it employs approximately 1,700 people.

Competitive Strategies, Inc. helped Rice Management automate the payroll tasks it was performing manually. “Each nursing home is its separate LLC,” explained Birnschein. “I used to have to take the deduction register from each location and then make one large spreadsheet for all the individual deductions.” That meant there was a lot of shuffling of paper to get the work done. “What CSI did was they created a payroll deduction database,” she said. “With the touch of a button, all of the information magically appears in the database.”

Birnschein estimates that the payroll deduction database probably saves Rice Management about eight hours per month and roughly \$2,600 a year. “We are able to do it more efficiently. It improves accuracy. We don’t have to flip through all the pages. We can focus on higher HR problems,” she said.

Yet another way in which CSI helped Rice Management was with its 401(k) year-end reporting. The annual compliance reporting process took three employees a total of three weeks to complete. “We would take it home to get it done,” Birnschein said. It was a large burden on employees, and she recalled a previous conversation with Engmann in which he told her, “Anything that’s in MAS 90 can be extracted.”

CSI set up a database, and Rice Management switched over to it the first of this year. “We are able to run the reporting and get it all done in one day. That was an exciting project,” Birnschein said.

Heather Amsler is an accountant at Rice Management, and she, too, has seen how the implementation of various processes has saved the company time. For example, the raises for every individual person were hand-keyed until they were shown how to import that data from an Excel file. “It took half a day to do all of them. Normally, it took three to four days and that was usually two people – one person doing the entries and one verifying,” she said.

Competitive Strategies Inc. has helped Rice Management streamline its processes by finding shortcuts and simple tools within MAS 90 that the company can use. Amsler says CSI is easy to work with and willing to adapt to what Rice Management needs. Birnschein agrees that it is great to work with them, saying they look at how processes are presently being done and then brainstorm about how they can do them better. “It’s keeping an open mind. Every company needs to be more efficient,” she said.

*MAS 90 is used for Business Management, Financial Reporting & Payroll.*

*Access Database programs are utilized for Management Reporting and to Automate Processes.*

*MAS 90 imports time from the Kronos system in order to process payroll for 1,700 people.*

*8 hours per month and \$2,600 per year is saved by integrating MAS 90 with a Payroll Deduction Database.*

*It takes half a day to do what took two people 3-4 days to complete.*

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