



Chemung County Government, New York

Located in the Southern Tier of Central New York State, Chemung County has a long and rich history. Named in 1779 for a Native American village, "Chemung" in the Delaware dialect of the Algonquin language means "Place of the big horn". This harkens back to a [time](#) when Native Americans discovered large mammoth tusks along what is now the Chemung River.

Chemung County—covering 411 square miles—beats with the vitality of a modern business center, yet remains peaceful in nature. It's home to nearly 90,000 residents and is the gateway to the Finger Lakes region—a popular tourist destination famous for its history, geography and culture.

For the government of Chemung County, providing essential [services](#) to its population and growing number of tourists is a top priority. Department heads must carefully manage their budgets to ensure tax revenues are used effectively and efficiently. The County's employee base of 1,000 covers as many as 60 programs, services, and department, making the accurate tracking of time and labor even more complex.

In fact, managing employees' time and labor information had been a challenge for the County for years. "We had an antiquated time and attendance system, but

employees were keeping time in a lot of different ways— mostly on paper—and we couldn't get the consistency with how rules and policies were being enforced," says Tom Drum, Information Technologies Specialist for Chemung County. "We needed a system to fully automate what were mostly manual systems and systems that were outdated."

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CENTRALIZED, AUTOMATED [WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT](#) SOLUTION THAT
IS PROVIDING CONSISTENCY, MINIMIZING COMPLIANCE RISKS, AND
CONTROLLING LABOR COSTS THROUGH IMPROVED EFFICIENCIES.*

The County turned to Acumen Data Systems—ClockVIEW, WebCLOCK, ShiftVIEW and ClockVIEW Mobile—to implement a centralized, automated workforce management solution that is providing consistency, minimizing compliance risks, and controlling labor costs through improved efficiencies.



Challenges

"In our old time and attendance system, employees all across the county—from our Sheriff's Office to our Department of Social Services used to fill out paper time-off requests," Drum says. "It was time consuming as supervisors had to collect, review, and approve them. Not only that, but at the end of a pay cycle, the clerks would end up having to find the employees who had incorrect or missing punches."

There were other challenges. "We have several 24-hour departments, including our Sheriff's Office and Nursing Home. Administering policies such as shift differential and on-call pay was consistently hard to manage."

Solutions

Chemung County government uses Acumen Data Systems hardware and software to manage time and labor across 60 different departments and offices. All employees, from the administrator's staff to road crews

to recreation department coordinators, use Acumen software that interfaces with New World Systems for processing payroll. Acumen's simple solution for Chemung can be found on its homepage (<http://www.chemungcounty.com>): at the bottom are icons for employees to click to login or out using WebCLOCK or to login to ClockVIEW to review their timecards.

Creating a centralized, automated system has made it easier for Chemung County to have confidence in information and react to the changing makeup of its workforce.

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TECHNOLOGIES SPECIALIST. "AND THEY DELIVERED."

"We needed the data in one place, along with a set of consistent processes," says Drum. "Acumen lets us address various legislative, union, and policy-based challenges. We can do a change in one place using Acumen and not have to worry about how managers across the county are going to interpret the rule. Acumen does it all." Compliance is less a concern than ever before.

The Story

Chemung County had been using a platform-specific time and attendance system for more than twelve years. As the complexities of bargaining agreements between the administration and unions became increasingly complicated, it became obvious that the system they were using was no longer



capable of handling these changes. The majority of the County's thousand employees now belong to a labor union.

"Acumen works well because when union contracts are revised, we only have to make the changes once. And we aren't relying on each clerk understanding and possibly misinterpreting the contract changes. All of the information is centralized in one place," says Drum. "We get detailed information easily and when we need it."

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Acumen was able to customize a solution for many individual departments in Chemung County government. Take the Sheriff's Office and Jail, for instance—home to about 150 employees from supervisors to police officers to corrections officers. Most are required to arrive for work at least fifteen minutes before the start of their shift in order to be briefed on the work expected of them for the shift. As long as they punch in on time, they are awarded extra compensation for the extra fifteen minutes. Yet if they punch in even one minute "late" (fourteen minutes before their shift), they are not compensated. The auditing of this extra time had been handled haphazardly in the past with many discrepancies in who earned the extra pay and who did not.

One of the ways Acumen customized its solution for Chemung's Sheriff's Office and Jail was to optimize a Briefing Pay and Show Pay feature in the software. This allowed easy, online add-ins for scheduling so that the time could be captured appropriately and sent to payroll.

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Another customization had to do with shift swapping. This is when one employee (let's call her employee A) clocks in and works for another employee (employee B). Employee B actually gets paid for the shift that A worked so A must swap a shift with B so that A can get compensated. Acumen built in "Swap Pay" so that the situation could be captured electronically and properly sent to payroll.

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"We have biometric finger readers in our law enforcement offices," Drum says. "The great feature here is that if, for whatever reason, the reader doesn't recognize an employee's fingerprint, the time clock actually takes a picture of the employee, time stamps it and puts it into the Acumen System. A supervisor can check it later, find the picture for the employee who couldn't punch and approve it the punch directly to the time card."

"Before Acumen, employees never had the option to view their own time card," Drum says. "Because of this, many employees simply didn't care if they punched in or out because they knew the clerk would call or physically find them at the end of the pay cycle to correct the employee's hours. It was a very inefficient and time consuming process."

"The bottom line is that the Acumen solution got rid of a lot of paper," Drum says. "It gave employees access to their own time card and forced them to take responsibility for their time in the system—that was really one of the largest changes—employees making sure it was correct. Now all the clerks do is review payroll which frees up a lot of their time."

Drum says at least 25 percent of each of the 22 clerks' time was devoted to tracking employees. "The clerks are free to do other tasks, and productivity increases," he says. "Employees out in the field now use the application WebClock Mobile on their cell phones to punch in and out themselves instead of just turning in a sheet of paper at the end of the pay cycle."

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Another concern was that the system be designed to handle a variety of pay rules from the seven different unions represented in Chemung County. For instance, a civil service union has rules for a 16-hour day with two different lunch breaks and overtime to kick in at 40 hours. Another union has a rule that if an employee works more than eight hours in one 24-hour period, the extra time is considered overtime. An employee is scheduled to work on a shift from 8 am to 4 pm. The following day, she is scheduled for 7 am-3 pm. The employee would be paid overtime for 1 hour worked before 8 am. "Crazy," Drum said. "That's the only way to describe some of the bargaining agreements we have to deal with."

Just as important was Acumen's customer service for employees and system users throughout Chemung County. "We're never put on hold," Drum says. "And



the Acumen [support](#) staff knows the product completely—even our custom programs.

Even the intuitive, custom-designed functionality of the Acumen system came as a surprise. “If you require any code customization from most other time and attendance vendors, good luck with that,” warns Drum. “Believe me, we went down that road before finding Acumen.” One punch is designed for administrators, which the system clocks in and out automatically. All they have to do is punch in once per day at any time during their shift.

The Acumen solution came through again, and Tom Drum sums it up: “The bottom line is that we have a lot of unique requirements that, without a doubt, we couldn’t have gotten out of any other time and attendance package.