

CUSTOMER PROFILE

More than 1,600 animals from around the world, 42 acres of picturesque Victorian gardens, stunning artwork, and historical architecture set the scene for America's first zoo.

BUSINESS SITUATION

With annual operating revenue of \$36 million, the Zoo had been using accounting software that lacked key NFP functionality, including fund accounting and a logical table-driven chart of accounts.

SOLUTION

The Philadelphia Zoo went "live" with Serenic Navigator in March 2003.

BENEFITS

- Reduce monthly closing process by days
- Monitor budget availability in real time
- Automatic balancing of fund transactions
- Manage your entire procurement cycle
- Allocate and track expenses proactively
- Extract data with ease

Serenic[®] Navigator Streamlines Financial Reporting and Analysis For Philadelphia Zoo



"We have cut two working days off the monthly closing process. The ability to interface subsidiary ledgers, the ease of posting/closing accounts payable activity, and the simplicity of generating financial statements has made this (Accelerated Closing) possible."

— **TOM WALKER, CONTROLLER**

Throughout its 129-year history, the Philadelphia Zoo has played a monumental role in educating the public about exotic animals, promoting and participating in worldwide conservation efforts for endangered wildlife, and providing exceptional recreational opportunities for families.

Today, the Zoo is a leading voice for wildlife advocacy, reaching new heights in all areas of its mission as a conservation, education and recreation organization. Its state-of-the-art animal exhibits and health-care facilities, award-winning education and conservation programs, recreational opportunities, guest services, scientific accomplishments, and historically significant venue make the Philadelphia Zoo one of the world's most renowned zoological societies and gardens. The Zoo is also the Philadelphia region's leading family tourist attraction, welcoming more than one million visitors a year.

Scenario

The ongoing challenge for the Philadelphia Zoo, as with all non-profit organizations, is the need to do more with less — to maximize every dollar of revenue it collects on behalf of the animals. To that end, the Zoo initiated a search in 2002 for a fund accounting software solution that would increase operational efficiencies and better manage expenditures.

“In the past, satisfying diverse requests for data was cumbersome, or virtually impossible with our old system. Serenic Navigator provides the flexibility to extract this data easily and quickly.”

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to Walker, “Our primary goal for purchasing a new system was to streamline our current operations and to get a better, more up-to-date picture of our financial position. We believe Serenic Navigator will help us achieve that goal.”

Founded in 1999, Serenic Corporation, is a Microsoft Business Solutions (MBS) industry solutions vendor and was recently named to the MBS Inner Circle, an accomplishment earned by firms whose sales achievement ranks them at the top echelon of the MBS global network of value-added resellers.

Serenic Corporation’s flagship fund accounting product, Serenic Navigator, is certified for Microsoft Dynamics®.

The implementation of Serenic Navigator at the Philadelphia Zoo was handled by AVF Consulting, the Baltimore-based value-added reseller of Serenic Navigator. According to AVF Consulting sales chief Jeremy Fass, who said the three-month implementation went off without a hitch, Walker and his team eventually settled on Serenic Navigator because, “they wanted a system that could address most of their key requirements out-of-the-box, with little or no customization. Furthermore, they were enamored with Serenic Navigator’s simple and intuitive user interface and the ability to easily extract information.”

- **Proactive Reviews of Activity.** “The multi-user environment gives managers the tools and ability to access department activity throughout the month, without relying on outdated hardcopies,” Walker explained. “This saves both paper and time.”
- **Ease of Extracting Data.** “In the past, satisfying diverse requests for data was cumbersome, or virtually impossible with our old system. Serenic Navigator provides the flexibility to extract this data easily and quickly.”
- **Elimination of Down Time.** “We are no longer experiencing system down time or the frustration of waiting for reports to compile,” Walker said.

Some Exceptional Features Of The Philadelphia Zoo Include:

“The multi-user environment gives managers the tools and ability to access department activity throughout the month, without relying on outdated hardcopies.”

— TOM WALKER, CONTROLLER

With annual operating revenue of \$36 million, the Zoo had been using accounting software that was not specifically designed for not-for-profit (NFP) organizations. This earlier software lacked key NFP functionality, including fund accounting and a logical table-driven chart of accounts. In addition, technical support for the product was very poor and getting data out of the software was cumbersome.

Zoo administrators wanted a fully integrated accounting system that would address all of the above, as well as one that offered procurement and inventory control functionality.

After evaluating several fund accounting solutions that claim to have NFP-specific functionality, the Zoo’s search committee, which was headed by Controller Tom Walker, selected Serenic Navigator from Lakewood, Colo.-based Serenic Corporation. According

- **Rare Animal Conservation Center.** Interactive graphics and up-close views of some of the world’s most endangered animals showcase the Philadelphia Zoo’s role in many species survival programs. Giant Rodrigues fruit bats, naked mole rats, blue-eyed lemurs and tree kangaroos are just a few of the animals to see.
- **The Reptile and Amphibian House.** Featuring the Zoo’s newest interactive adventure path to see giant tortoises up-close and personal, this state-of-the-art facility exhibits 87 species of amphibians including the venomous king cobra. Each day an electrifying thunderstorm is the backdrop to the story and status of American crocodiles and alligators.
- **Carnivore Kingdom.** The first giant otters exhibited in the U.S. are featured at Carnivore Kingdom. Carnivore Kingdom also houses snow leopards, red pandas and clouded leopards in unique naturalistic environments.

- **Treehouse.** An activity-oriented discovery center, which features larger-than-life replicas of animal habitats for children to explore and learn about life from the animal's point of view.
- **The world's first Children's Zoo,** featuring a petting yard and daily live animal shows.
- **The 15,000 square-foot Animal Health Center.** Behind the scenes at the Philadelphia Zoo stands one of the nation's busiest and most comprehensive animal hospital and health-care facilities.

Benefits

The Philadelphia Zoo went "live" with Serenic Navigator in March 2003. "Even though we are still in the infancy stage," Controller Walker said, "we are already enjoying some real benefits from this financial system."

Walker cites six specific areas where Serenic Navigator has increased the efficiency and productivity of his staff:

- **Accelerated Closing.** "We have cut two working days off of the monthly closing process," he said. "The ability to interface subsidiary ledgers, the ease of posting/closing accounts payable activity, and the simplicity of generating financial statements has made this possible."
- **Issuance of Financial Statements.** "This activity is no longer a burdensome process," Walker said. "Statements can be accessed throughout the month at various levels of the organization. Now our staff can devote more time to analytical review, improving the accuracy of financial reports."
- **Drill Down Capabilities.** "Zoo staff can now drill down and analyze most variances without having to leave their desks, eliminating phone calls to accounting, and trips to the files to pull a hardcopy of documents."

About Our Partner AVF Consulting

As one of the Mid-Atlantic's leading information technology firms, AVF Consulting has been a reseller of Serenic Navigator for more than three years. The firm offers a unique blend of products and services, including fully integrated ERP solutions and technology consultation. Proving there's a system to success, AVF's hands-on approach ensures that every engagement receives the highest level of customer service and that each customer receives the individual attention they deserve.

The firm's professional staff provides a complete range of software and services to clientele located throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Whether clients need a comprehensive, enterprise wide business management solution, or assistance with the design, implementation, and maintenance of their information technology infrastructure, AVF Consulting has the products and the professionals to handle the most challenging demands.

AVF Consulting has been recognized as an industry leader due to the unique skill set of its team. AVF consultants offer an in-depth knowledge of business processes across a number of industry segments, as well as an extensive array of technical skills, including programming. By combining the disciplines of a business analyst with a programmer, AVF consultants are able to quickly understand and efficiently create solutions for their clients.

About Serenic Software

Serenic Software develops and delivers mission-critical ERP software solutions for public service organizations including: K-12 school districts/boards, public sector, nonprofits (NPOs), and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Serenic is a Gold ERP and ISV vendor and a development partner for Microsoft. Serenic public service solutions are trusted by over 1,000 organizations around the globe. You can learn more about Serenic Software at www.serenic.com.



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