How St. Paul Fish Company Uses Swizznet to Manage Its Thriving Seafood Business

Award-winning seafood chain uses cloud hosting to manage its accounting processes.

Customer: St. Paul Fish Company
Service: Restaurant

Milwaukee is hardly a place you'd associate with fresh seafood. Situated 800 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, it's more commonly associated with old-recipe beer or Wisconsin cheese curds. St. Paul Fish Company is changing that.

Since opening at the Milwaukee Public Market in 2005, St. Paul has been voted the Best Seafood restaurant in Milwaukee too many times to count. One look at their store layout or menu online and you quickly understand why! St. Paul's flies in fresh seafood products daily, and is so popular it opened a second location in the northern suburbs in 2019. But as it grew, managing accounting processes became an increasingly painful headache.

The company had been using QuickBooks since its early days, and the desktop software worked well. But when St. Paul's expanded to its second location, the management staff was now either in one place or another, making it difficult to accomplish anything QuickBooks related.

"Since our management staff was in either one location or the other, it was impossible to quickly reference sales figures or do any accounting if we were at the other restaurant," said Devan Ray, Accounting Manager.

> "
> ## We realized we needed a better solution if we wanted to stay productive and up to date.
>
> — Devan Ray, Accounting Manager

New Location, New Challenges

As an expanding fresh seafood restaurant and direct distributor, St. Paul's needs to efficiently manage inventory, sales, and payroll so it can focus on its mission of bringing more fish, cheaper fish, and better fish to its customers. But when it opened its second restaurant in 2019, the files at one location weren't accessible from the other location.

The company needed to use QuickBooks throughout the day, every day, and from either storefront — or even from home — to get work done. The owner, accounting manager, and their outside accountant had to be able to work simultaneously in QuickBooks and have access to the same, up-to-date figures.

It was time for a change to allow remote access so St. Paul's could scale while still being able to work in the same files, no matter where a team member was located.

St. Paul's tried using a remote desktop login that allowed anyone off site to get in and use QuickBooks, but that still limited it to one person at a time and hampered collaboration. If an employee needed to access QuickBooks remotely, they effectively stopped someone in front of the computer from being able to get anything done.

"We were losing a lot of time and productivity with that setup. Our employees and I were spending at least an hour each day going back and forth when one of us wanted to access the desktop, so we knew remote login wasn't going to work for us anymore," Ray said. "We tried QuickBooks Online and hated it. We definitely wanted to stick with the desktop version, so we decided cloud hosted accounting was the best solution."

More Efficient, Less Costly Accounting with Cloud Hosting

When St. Paul began the search for a cloud-hosting provider, they looked at several options. They wanted a way to launch and use the same version of QuickBooks without changing their processes. They needed to get going with the programs without having to be technical wizards. Finally, they needed a provider with exceptional customer service to help answer their questions and get them started.

Swizznet stood out from the pack. "Swizznet was incredibly helpful and responsive in terms of answering all of our questions and helping us to get started," Ray said. "The process to launch and use our QuickBooks didn't really change. We still have a desktop icon that we use to launch the program, and to be honest, unless you knew better, you would never know that the files are hosted in the cloud."

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SWIZZNET
HOSTED ACCOUNTING SOLUTIONS

With Swizznet, each St. Paul's location has its own company file. Switching between them is simple, and access is only one desktop click away. The team can have more than one user at a time accessing the same company file, something they weren't able to do before, while viewing and discussing the data from two different locations. And the fact that Swizznet automatically applies any updates from Intuit with no intervention from the end user is especially helpful.

"I probably save an hour of my day by not having to use remote login. Multiply that by three users, and it all starts to add up," Ray said. "We've saved $1,200.00 in the last year by letting Swizznet handle our QuickBooks licenses. The performance is amazing. It's hard to quantify how much time and money we save with Swizznet because it's literally day and night. And you can't put a value on the LACK OF ISSUES! Having a service and product that Swizznet offers that 'just works' is completely invaluable."

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Challenges:

- Managing accounting for two locations
- Having multiple users who need to log in to QuickBooks simultaneously
- QuickBooks Online was insufficient for their business needs
- They wanted to stick with QuickBooks desktop, but remote login wasn't working

Solution:

St. Paul Fish Company is using Swizznet cloud hosting solutions to host its desktop QuickBooks software and to support its expanding restaurant chain (that's won more awards than it can count!)

Business Outcomes:

- Makes managing accounting easy and reliable across simultaneous users from anywhere
- Saved $1,200 in the last year on QuickBooks licenses and hosting costs
- Each employee saves about an hour a day not having to use remote login
- Increased transparency and visibility to mission-critical data with the ability to collaborate unimpeded

Take Your Business to New Heights with QuickBooks Hosting

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