



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

**CUSTOMER**

Gulf Coast Regional  
Blood Center

**INDUSTRY**

Non-profit blood center

**LOCATION**

Houston, Texas

**Number of Locations**

12

**Number of Employees**

625

**SYSTEM**

Sage MAS 500

**Modules in Operation**

- Customizer
- eExecutive
- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Cash Management
- Inventory Management
- Purchase Order
- Inventory Replenishment
- Warehouse Management

## Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center Gives Gift of Life

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center is one of the largest non-profit community blood centers in the United States. Serving more than 200 healthcare institutions in a 24-county region in Texas, the organization conducts about 5,000 mobile blood drives every year. To meet blood supply needs, it must collect a minimum of 800 donations a day.

The Blood Center performs eleven different tests on every unit of blood collected, including nucleic acid testing (NAT) in order to detect infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis C. It also operates the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), an accredited program in blood banking technology.

**Anemic Information Systems**

As early as 1997, Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center began searching for a new business system. The existing system was anemic and underpowered, offering only bookkeeping basics rather than the full-fledged accounting and management functions required by a \$60 million organization.



Darrell Groves, director of business operations, created a software selection committee with staff members from the Accounting, Materials Management, and Information Systems sections of The Blood Center. The goal was to find a modular package with customizable screens for segregation of duties within the center's diverse groups. Automated inventory management was a must, as was open architecture for future integration with other systems. Furthermore, the new system had to interface with specialized software that tracks and allocates the costs of blood collection. "We wanted to be able to look under the hood of our organization," explains Groves, "to fine-tune it for even better efficiencies."

**CHALLENGE**

Acquire an advanced financial management system with the integrated inventory, accounting, and analysis capabilities to effectively manage a \$60 million organization.

**SOLUTION**

Sage MAS 500 ERP financial and distribution modules.

**RESULTS**

Automation and integration of all business functions; 50 percent increase in supply management efficiency; substantial reduction in accounts Payable staffing; greater cost control with separate supply stores.

*"Sage MAS 500 has become  
the lifeblood of our organization.  
It's a perfect solution for  
our company."*

—Darrell Groves  
Director of Business Operations  
Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center

## ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software has been responding to the needs, challenges, and dreams of small and mid-sized businesses for over 25 years. With a complete range of business management solutions and services, Sage Software helps companies improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and automate and integrate a variety of operational activities. Its solutions support the specialty needs of a broad scope of industry segments, including manufacturing, distribution, construction, real estate, nonprofit, and professional services.



## The Lifeblood of Success

The Blood Center found a match in Sage MAS 500, which Groves says is "light years ahead of what we had before." In addition to the advanced capabilities he saw in Sage MAS 500, it was terrific customer service from Sage Software and his reseller that clinched the sale.

Sage MAS 500 has now automated all business functions at The Blood Center, including 4,500 different accounts in the general ledger and 40 cost centers. It permits detailed management reports for comparing expenses against budgets by department. Bank reconciliation can finally be done electronically through the Cash Management module.

Aging reports in both Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable have speeded transaction turnaround. And customer contact notes maintained within the system have improved account maintenance.

Unlike a company that manufactures finished goods, The Blood Center does not record sales orders or provide a return for investors. Instead, it aims for a positive margin of just two to four percent. Any funds left over go toward a reserve fund for emergencies, and then to long-term capital expenses to avoid incurring debt. "Sage MAS 500 lets us scrutinize every nook and cranny of our organization, to achieve the tight margins demanded by our non-profit status," Groves says.

Implementing Sage MAS 500 has allowed The Blood Center to organize on-site supply stores rather than maintaining a single centralized warehouse. "The benefit here is that we have greater control over how expenses are allocated," explains Groves. "We must assign exact costs for collecting blood, in order to recoup those amounts from client hospitals. With separate supply centers, we can do this much better. In fact, I'd say that our supply management efficiency has improved by at least 50 percent with Sage MAS 500."

Other benefits have come from overall streamlining in Accounts Payable, allowing The Blood Center to divert the equivalent of half a full-time employee to other tasks. Groves was surprised at how quickly his staff got up to speed on Sage MAS 500. "Our accounts payable specialist didn't even have to take a class. And when we brought a new financial analyst on board a few weeks ago, I was able to train him on the system myself."

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center plans to take advantage of the open architecture and inventory replenishment capabilities of Sage MAS 500 as needs arise.

"Sage MAS 500 has become the lifeblood of our organization," says Groves. "We're barely scratching the surface of what it can do for us. Put simply, it's a perfect solution for our company."