



CASE STUDY: **SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND**

MANAGING GLOBAL REQUIREMENTS WITH DATABASICS TIME AND EXPENSE



Search for Common Ground (Search), an international nonprofit organization that works to end violent conflict in more than 30 countries, was looking for a way to modernize its time and expense tracking with the goal of replacing a custom timesheet application used by its team members in its Washington, D.C. and Belgium headquarters, and pen and paper-based time tracking for its field offices. In addition, the organization was looking for a way to replace its Excel-based expense tracking.

THE CHALLENGE

A key challenge for Search is timely billing of labor and expenses. The majority of Search's time and expenses is billed to donors, so delays in timesheet and expense reporting submissions and approvals result in delays in billing. The organization is also subject to audits, so detailed records of entry, adjustments and approvals are critical for compliance. In addition, more than 80 percent of its 1,000 employees are local to the countries they work in. Because each country has unique labor laws, tracking Paid Time Off (PTO) was cumbersome.

Search wanted to simplify time tracking with software that would streamline PTO and other types of leave, easy online submission and approval, and provide easy-to-access documentation to support audits.

To modernize and simplify its time and expense processes, Search turned to DATABASICS Time and DATABASICS Expense in 2018.

HIGHLIGHTS

1,000

Employees worldwide

30

countries

CHALLENGES

Homegrown app difficult to use and maintain. Impossible to scale

Complex PTO policies

Manual processes



THE SOLUTION: REDUCING COMPLEXITY WITH DATABASICS TIME & EXPENSE

Search began implementing DATABASICS Time and Expense in 2018 in batches, a few countries at a time. Today, DATABASICS is fully operational for the 26 countries where it has long-term obligations. Lisa Shochat, senior manager, policy and internal compliance for Search, says Search was able to configure DATABASICS to not only support their timesheet requirements but also handle PTO complexity, including annual leave and sick leave for each country, and "casual leave" for countries like Pakistan and Sri Lanka. She says, "DATABASICS is flexible enough that we were able to configure as many accruals as necessary for the many types of leave we need to account for."

DATABASICS helps Search account for holidays such as Ramadan. For example, the Ramadan policy in Yemen is six hours of work per day instead of eight. So Search created a rule in DATABASICS to accommodate timesheets with less than eight hours per day, but only during Ramadan.

In addition to DATABASICS Time for international timekeeping, the organization also deployed DATABASICS Expense for its U.S. headquarters and European headquarters in Brussels. The primary focus of the expense solution is to facilitate employee business expense reporting. The cardholder uploads receipts and budget codes, and DATABASICS Expense creates an expense report that checks for policy compliance and then is exported to its accounting software to produce payables or settle outstanding liabilities. DATABASICS Expense allowed Search's unique per diem policy. Corporate credit card holders see their transactions appear in DATABASICS from a feed from the credit card provider.



INTEGRATIONS WITH KEY SOFTWARE

The ability to integrate time and expense information with existing software was a must for Search, which uses Sage Intacct for accounting and has a different Human Resource Information System (HRIS) system for employee data.

Using DATABASICS pre-built connector with Sage Intacct, Search is able to easily extract timesheet and expense reports from DATABASICS and have them moved to Sage Intacct. The organization also maintains its grant information and budget codes in Sage Intacct which updates the DATABASICS solution so users only see those codes that they are able to track time and expenses against. Shochat says, "It's really quite nice that when a grant is no longer active, it's automatically not available for expense reports or timesheets in DATABASICS."

THE RESULTS

Shochat says that automating time, expenses, and leave management in DATABASICS has made life easier for Search. "It's hard for me to imagine now how we did any of this manually, especially as the organization continues to grow," she says. Search HR managers have moved beyond spreadsheets, saving time preparing expense reports. She says, "When people indicate leave on their timesheet, their leave balances are automatically deducted. It's one of the greatest time savers for our HR staff."

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TO SIMPLIFY ITS TIME AND EXPENSE SYSTEMS, SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND WAS LOOKING FOR:

A comprehensive time, expense, and leave management solution that integrates with Sage Intacct

A simpler method for tracking grants

An automated solution to replace spreadsheets

Simplicity for the user



WORKING WITH DATABASICS

Working with DATABASICS has been great for Shochat and her colleagues. She says, "DATABASICS support is fantastic. They're very helpful and responsive."

She says her absolute favorite thing about DATABASICS is how they go the extra mile. "We tend to have a lot of questions and we submit a lot of help tickets," she says. "Other IT service providers would charge a lot extra for that, but not DATABASICS. That really makes me feel more comfortable to ask questions and experiment with the system."

Search is just getting started with DATABASICS and is expecting to get more value from the time and expense applications moving forward. "I think there's still a lot of untapped opportunity with DATABASICS," she says.

“DATABASICS is flexible enough that we were able to configure as many accruals as necessary for the many types of leave we need to account for.”

LISA SHOCHAT | SENIOR MANAGER, POLICY AND INTERNAL COMPLIANCE AT SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND



ABOUT SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND is the largest dedicated peacebuilding organization. Since 1982, we have worked to end violent conflict and to build healthy, safe, and just societies all over the world. Currently, we work in 31 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America.

[SFCG.ORG](https://www.sfcg.org)

ABOUT DATABASICS

DATABASICS is driven to meet the most demanding time and expense management challenges for organizations throughout the world with a combination of deep expertise, next-gen technology, and a focus on the unique needs of each customer. Powered by decades of experience, DATABASICS is in the business of solving time and expense problems with solutions that are the right choice for today and easily adapt to the uncertainties of tomorrow. Time and expense are better together, which is why DATABASICS addresses these two critical business processes with absolute ease in one solution.

[DATA-BASICS.COM](https://www.data-basics.com)