



CASE STUDY

How Placer County Streamlined ACFR and Lease Reporting with Gravity

THE CHALLENGE

Placer County, California, known for its expansive geography and dynamic community growth, faced mounting complexity in financial reporting. Like many local governments, the County's Auditor Controller's Office relied heavily on disconnected Word and Excel files to prepare the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). MD&A, financial statements, footnotes, and statistical sections were managed in separate documents, each updated manually. Adjustments meant combing through multiple files to ensure completeness and accuracy of the ACFR, and every internal review cycle required generating a new merged PDF. The process was arduous and error prone.

"It wasn't just time consuming," said Debbie Chan, Financial Reporting Manager. "It was stressful. One small change could impact multiple documents. Version control and formatting took up to 30% of our time."

The Lease Accounting process was equally painful. Departments had to manually configure lease schedules in Workday's contract module, creating a decentralized, continuous burden on staff. Compliance with GASB 87 and 96 was a moving target. The decentralized nature of the process increased audit risk.



THE SOLUTION

In 2022, Placer County selected Gravity to overhaul its ACFR and lease reporting workflows. Already using Gravity for its 500+ page Budget Book, the County prioritized an integrated approach. Gravity's ability to consolidate financial content, automate linking, and centralize lease management immediately stood out.

"We've received so many compliments internally," said Chan. "It finally looks like the professional report it's supposed to be."

WHY PLACER COUNTY CHOSE GRAVITY

- **Unified ACFR Platform.**
Consolidated all Word and Excel files into one system with built-in linking.
- **Audit-Ready Outputs**
Validation checks and consistent formatting reduced risk and manual effort.
- **Centralized Lease Management**
Transformed decentralized processes into a centralized year-end workflow.
- **Seamless Integration**
Leveraged existing Workday data pipelines and past Gravity implementation work.
- **Cost-Effective Choice**
Competitive pricing compared to other vendors like Workiva, with strong existing vendor familiarity.

IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

The County’s implementation team, including Debbie Chan and Emily McLean, praised Gravity’s support throughout onboarding. “They weren’t just setting up our files. They were helping us improve our entire process,” said McLean. Features like automatic journal entry generation, maturity schedules, and real-time updates reduced stress and saved time.



Time Savings.
Estimated 25 to 35 percent reduction in manual prep time



Stress Reduction. 50 percent lower stress due to version control, audit prep, and formatting cleanup



Lease Management. Replaced Workday’s decentralized model with a centralized and efficient process



Report Quality.
Output praised internally for professionalism and visual polish



Support and Implementation.
“One of the best teams we’ve worked with,” said Chan

LESSONS LEARNED AND OPPORTUNITIES

While the initial rollout under the Eclipse model had some usability limitations, Placer County has since upgraded to Gravity’s **MDFM (Multi-Dimensional Financial Model)** platform.

“This new version is much more intuitive,” McLean noted. Both she and Chan acknowledged a desire for improved documentation and more proactive communication about product updates.

LOOKING AHEAD

The County is currently undergoing its first full ACFR cycle using the MDFM platform and plans to expand usage across more reporting tasks. The team is enthusiastic about the possibilities. “It was absolutely the right decision,” said Chan. “The time, accuracy, and sanity we’ve regained is more than worth the investment.”

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