

Case Study

HardHat Workforce Solutions Converted their Excel-based Rate Calculator into a Web Application with No Code

The Challenge

HardHat Workforce Solutions is a construction staffing company based in North Carolina, founded in 2002. They serve clients across the country by providing skilled labor for the construction industry.

HardHat Workforce Solutions built their rate calculators in Microsoft Excel since it provides them the ability to build complex calculators in an easy and straightforward manner. Originally, Excel was able to meet their business requirements:

“For our particular calculator, we had some needs that were fairly complicated, including several VLOOKUP, IF/THEN, and CHOOSE formulas. I think the combination of meeting some of those requirements led us to Excel. For a short period of time, Excel was the perfect tool for us,” says Kyle Hartman, the Director of Strategic Accounts.

Although Excel proved to be successful in creating complex calculators, it also introduced challenges, such as ensuring that everyone is using the most up-to-date spreadsheet, questions about data security, and limited mobile access:

“One of the challenges that we found with Excel was making sure that our Sales Representatives were using the most updated version. Even if we were to send out an updated version every month, a rep could have saved an old version on their desktop and still be using the old version. From a security perspective, it was hard to restrict someone from downloading the document and taking it with them if they were ever leave the company. Also, given a lot of our work is done on the road, we wanted to give our sales reps a mobile friendly option. Therefore, we wanted

to build something that felt more professional than Excel, but still maintained similar capabilities. We decided to look into platforms that would allow us to solve those issues and take us to the next level.”

At this point, HardHat started to look for alternative solutions that would allow them to easily distribute updates to the entire team, assuage their security concerns, and provide them the ability to use the calculator easily from mobile devices.

The Solution

Before SpreadsheetWeb, they evaluated different options to help them solve their needs, but those products were not able to meet their needs for a few reasons. Regarding the products that they evaluated prior to SpreadsheetWeb, Kyle said:

“We looked at 3 different products before SpreadsheetWeb. From a cost-perspective, they were all a little bit higher than SpreadsheetWeb. For the first product, the application looked a lot like Excel, and it wasn't exactly clear to me how you can build forms within it to make it look more professional, like a quoting software. For the second product, we had a similar issue but also the use case of that platform was much bigger than what we were trying to do. We were just looking to solve one particular need at the moment. With the third product, we were planning to go in that direction, but the cost and the time to build were just not worth it. Prior to making that investment, we first wanted to measure utilization from our sales reps.”

HardHat started looking for a different No-Code solution to easily move their rate calculator to the web platform. They came across SpreadsheetWeb through online research

Case Study

while trying to find a platform that specialized in web-based Excel calculations.

Kyle explains the main reasons that drove HardHat to choose SpreadsheetWeb:

"The main thing was preserving the ability to use a low code platform while using Excel as your supporting resource. We wanted to be able to easily make changes to the underlying excel on a frequent basis and have them easily populate into the calculator on our web-based version. SpreadsheetWeb allows us to do that. The other platforms would have been a little bit more intensive. I wanted something that was easy where I could just plug and play."

The Results

Kyle was able to build their rate calculator over just a few hours. The SpreadsheetWeb team extended their help to make some formatting changes for the application and help out with some finishing touches:

"We created a quick application without any formatting just so that I could show the capabilities to our management team. Once we decided to go with SpreadsheetWeb, the SpreadsheetWeb team walked me through changes on the fly. I asked for additional changes via e-mail and they were able to make those within a day or so."

With SpreadsheetWeb, HardHat Workforce Solutions converted their calculator into a secure online rate calculator without any programming, while keeping their Excel spreadsheet as the underlying support for their SpreadsheetWeb application.

Kyle describes the outcome of their project:

"It took a little bit longer to understand exactly how the features work on the SpreadsheetWeb Hub in terms of making changes to the user interface, adding users, etc., but once I was able to figure out how to do that either using the SpreadsheetWeb knowledge base and or just shooting an e-mail to support staff, which always was incredibly responsive, I was able to figure it out very quickly. I think my team has been very impressed with the platform too. It's still early, but we've really enjoyed it so far. There were a variety of different reasons why we wanted a web-based version and SpreadsheetWeb turned out to be the exact solution we were looking for."

Kyle explains the financial advantages of using SpreadsheetWeb:

"The cost of doing something through another platform most likely would have cost us anywhere from \$2,000 to \$4,000 a year. If we designed our own website, it could have cost more. So, we feel like the cost of SpreadsheetWeb is very approachable and very affordable for us. It allows us an opportunity to measure utilization at a relatively low cost."

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