THE 2016 VAR 100

- OUR ANNUAL RANKING OF THE TOP RESELLERS
- THEIR CHALLENGES – AND SUCCESS STRATEGIES
- THE GROWING CLIENT DEMAND FOR GREATER ACCESS AND ADVICE

Clients want control

The top value-added resellers in this year's VAR 100 ranking share their issues, their concerns, and their strategies for success

BY DANIELLE LEE

Client needs continue to drive the top VARs and technology consultants composing Accounting Today's 2016 VAR 100, with their business requirements shaping the technology offered and talent hired to serve an increasingly tech-proficient market.

As Raffa (No. 67) reports, "Clients are consistently becoming more sophisticated. New clients are looking for cloud ERP solutions. In addition, they want more integration with other third-party products. Dashboards, less reliance on IT support, and an ability to customize and manage their own reporting are typical needs."

Customizable reporting capabilities, mobile-optimization and more robust business intelligence tools dominated most client wish lists, according to this year's top resellers and consultants. "There continues to be an increased need for on-demand access to the financial data, key metrics, and reports by organizations," according to Finley & Cook, one of our VARs to Watch. "With mobility being a driving factor, ensuring that we can leverage the software to meet these demands in an efficient and reliable manner is critical to our client's needs."

Much like cloud technology has become a necessity for many clients, this kind of anywhere, anytime visibility is becoming a baseline expectation.

"The trend toward a mobile or work-from-home workforce continues," NexTec (No. 24) shared. "This means more of our clients require solutions that are available anywhere, anytime, whereas mobility was a nice-to-have before."

Some clients are even seeking "better self-service reporting," observed Wipfli (No. 14), feeding into a larger trend of greater customization and control over their own data.

These requests are driving current and prospective clients alike. According to Arxis Technology (No. 63), "We are seeing an increased trend in companies seeking QuickBooks alternatives for a number of reasons. Improved reporting, greater dimensional analysis, multi-entity challenges, and improved integration with other best-in-class solutions are a few of the common reasons."

INTEGRATION AND UNIFICATION

Regardless of the solutions used, clients need better integration between them.

"We have seen more custom integration projects because customers have access to more applications to run their business and not all of them connect naturally to QuickBooks," explained Fourlane (No. 97).

Wipfli's "clients need the ability to easily integrate data between the various systems and better reporting capabilities to improve the visibility into the information."

These demands are in the service of more streamlined and modern workflows. As Blytheco (No. 19) observed, "We see a continuing trend towards deeper integration of business applications into the business process and workflow. We are seeing an increase in adoption of mobile technologies and in re-platforming away from Y2k era, on-premise platforms."

There are immense opportunities in advising clients on such large-scale projects, as Armanino (No. 4) has discovered in "productizing" its services: "We've been a first mover in productizing system integration in the cloud technology space. Say a client needs two key systems like Intacct and SalesForce to communicate. We have the IP to do that and we've productized it into a licensed integration pack solution. The productization model of monthly or annual licensing or retainers are what we're seeing more of our customers asking for. There's great opportunity for the firm to offer cloud technology, managed services and outsourced accounting in a productized model, because it's the deep, long-term relationship that clients want."

At SIS Software (No. 38), customers are asking for similar centralization: "We see companies that have been running their business on too many disconnected business applications and point solutions seeking to consolidate and unify them on fewer platforms that are easier to manage and less costly over time."

ENTRENCHING THE TALENT

Most of the 2016 VAR 100 registered revenue growth over last year, which brings its own set of challenges, like finding experienced talent in a competitive market.

Recruiting and retaining qualified people was overwhelmingly listed by resellers and consultants as their biggest hurdle.

"Hiring talented team members with a customer-centric approach that have a high EQ and are a good fit for our culture is a continued area of focus for us," explained Blytheco.

Sunrise Technologies (No. 15) works to attract top talent with Microsoft Dynamics AX experience by offering "a strong compensation package and projects for some of the leading brands, so that once we find talent, we increase our chances of an accepted offer. We also invest heavily in training new employees right out of college, exposing them to the best training and hands-on experience. The exposure and mentorship they gain helps them quickly ramp up to perform at the same level as other senior consultants."

Vision33 (No. 11) relies on a similar recruitment strategy: "We are helping ... overcome this challenge by introducing highly focused internship programs that help us to develop our own talent from the start."

24/7 ACCESS AND ADVICE

Relatedly, Crestwood Associates (No. 40) explained that "scaling our internal processes to meet a larger and more geographically diverse client base is likely the biggest obstacle to moving forward in the upcoming years."

However, as is often the case, Crestwood found this challenge can be flipped into an opportunity: "We are seeing more geographically dispersed clients and we have responded in that arena by expanding our resource base from local to, literally, coast-to-coast and border-to-border. Given the 24-hour nature of ERP systems, it is no longer a luxury to have round-the-clock staffing and we are well-positioned to capitalize on clients' requirements to have dedicated resources."

On-demand service and support, along with a wealth of technology choices, can also lead to fatigue, as SIS Software has witnessed: "The many choices offered by the market give our prospects analysis paralysis and it is often hard to gain a decision."

The onus is on the VAR to help make those critical decisions, as Fourlane does. "It seems a new application is created every few minutes, and clients want our help knowing why this one is better or worse than others out there," the firm reported. "Getting into a new application at entry level may buy you some grandfathered pricing, but you definitely pay the cost with the growing pains of the app."

This year's crop of value-added resellers are uniquely positioned to provide the right, often customized application for their unique clientele. And, much like accounting firms, VARs are finding success in assuming the role of more holistic business advisors.

"Clients are turning to us for many more business challenges than they have in the past," Armanino explained. "Where before a client might come to Armanino to deploy a cloud accounting solution or for outsourced finance and accounting, today we are seeing that clients really want a strategic advisory partner. Firms need to not only solve today's problem, but be prepared and properly equipped to solve tomorrow's challenge, even if it hasn't been identified yet." AT

VARS TO WATCH

1. **Practical Software Solutions** / Concord, N.C. (*Sage 100 ERP, 500, X3*)

2. **Paradigm Technology Consulting** / Allentown, N.J. (*Dynamics GP*)

3. **WJ Technologies** / Herndon, Va. (*Intacct; Deltek*)

4. **Maner Costerisan** / Lansing, Mich. (*Microsoft Dynamics GP; Intacct*)

5. **Integrated Business Systems Inc.** / Totowa, N.J. (*Acumatica*)

6. **Swizznet** / Seattle (*Sage; QuickBooks*)

7. **Alta Vista Technology** / Southfield, Mich. (*Intacct; Microsoft Dynamics GP*)

8. **Capital Business Solutions** / Raleigh, N.C. (*Abila MIP; NetSuite*)

9. **Templeton Solutions** / West Palm Beach, Fla. (*Dynamics GP, SL*)

10. **NP Solutions Inc.** / Riverside, Calif. (*Abila MIP, Elevate, Fundraising 50, Grant Management*)

11. **Front Line Systems** / Minneapolis (*Sage 50 ERP, 300*)

12. **Horizon Associates Group** / Stony Brook, N.Y., and Malvern, Pa. (*NetSuite*)

13. **Finley & Cook** / Shawnee, Okla. (*Dynamics AX; Serenic Navigator*)

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The 2016 VAR 100

	Company / Location	Revenue ($ mns)	Offices	Staff	Top executive(s)	Accounting software
1	**RSM US** / Chicago	229.35	86	900	Brian Becker, Steve Ems	Dynamics GP, SL, AX; NetSuite
2	**Tribridge** / Tampa	140.00	17	750	Tony DiBenedetto	Dynamics GP, SL, NAV, AX; NetSuite
3	**Crowe Horwath** / Chicago	82.10	31	393	Josh Cole	Dynamics GP, AX
4	**Armanino** / San Ramon, Calif.	69.00	9	235	Tom Mescall	Dynamics GP, AX; Intacct
5	**Columbus** / Norwell, Mass.	65.00	25	250	T. Honore, K. Olsen	Dynamics NAV, AX, GP
6	**Professional Advantage**[1] / Fargo, N.D.	50.00	9	259	Derek Rippingale	Dynamics GP, AX; Infor SunSystems
7	**Sikich** / Naperville, Ill.	48.00	12	220	Jim Sikich, Jim Drumm	Dynamics GP, SL, NAV, AX; NetSuite
8	**Edgewater Fullscope**[2] / Athens, Ala.	46.68	4	90	Russell Smith	Dynamics AX
9	**Net@Work** / New York	40.80	19	175	Alex & Edward Solomon	NetSuite; Sage 100 ERP, 300, 500, X3; Abila
10	**SBS Group** / Edison, N.J.	40.43	41	145	James Bowman	Dynamics GP, SL, NAV, AX; Acumatica
11	**Vision33** / Irvine, Calif.	36.17	25	154	A. Rooney, S. Loyd	SAP Business One
12	**InterDyn BMI**[3] / St. Paul, Minn.	36.00	22	156	John Hendrickson	Dynamics GP, NAV, AX; Intacct
13	**Western Computer** / Oxnard, Calif.	35.00	14	160	Tom Bardos	Dynamics NAV, AX
14	**Wipfli** / Milwaukee	33.95	35	267	R. Dreher, J. Greeneway	Dynamics GP, AX, SL; NetSuite; Intacct
15	**Sunrise Technologies** / Winston-Salem, N.C.	33.60	5	150	John Pence	Dynamics AX
16	**ADSS Global** / Exton, Pa., and Miami	29.75	48	148	Robert Campbell	Sage 100 ERP, 300
17	**Socius** / Columbus, Ohio	29.00	10	130	Jeff Geisler	Dynamics GP, SL, NAV, AX; NetSuite; Sage 100 ERP, 500; Syspro
18	**SWK Technologies Inc.** / Livingston, N.J.	27.64	8	155	Mark Meller	Sage 100 ERP, 500, X3; NetSuite; Acumatica
19	**Blytheco** / Laguna Hills, Calif.	27.00	6	110	Stephen Blythe	Sage 100 ERP, 500, X3; NetSuite
20	**BAASS Business Solutions** / Thornhill, Ontario	25.00	21	120	Joseph Arnone	Sage; Deltek; Intacct
21	**Clients First Business Solutions** / Holmdel, N.J.	24.50	7	90	Thomas Falteich	Dynamics AX, NAV; Epicor; SAP Business One; Acumatica
22	**Aktion Associates** / Maumee, Ohio	22.00	7	110	Scott Irwin	Acumatica; Sage Construction/RE; Deltek Vision; Infor; Intacct
23	**I.B.I.S. Inc.**[4] / Peachtree Corners, Ga.	21.00	5	400	R. Puranik, S. Reddy	Dynamics GP, AX
24	**NexTec Group** / Seattle	21.00	9	100	Eric Frank	Sage 500 ERP, X3; Dynamics GP, SL; Acumatica
25	**Rand Group** / Houston	20.00	4	100	Ron Rand	Dynamics GP, NAV, AX
26	**AKA Enterprise Solutions** / New York City	20.00	3	75	Alan Kahn, Jack Ades	Dynamics GP, AX
27	**BKD** / Springfield, Mo.	19.30	12	55	Mike Burlew	Dynamics GP, AX; Sage 100 ERP, 500; Intacct
28	**Eide Bailly** / Fargo, N.D.	17.70	12	125	Scott Kost	Sage 100 ERP, 500; NetSuite
29	**Broadpoint Technologies**[A] / Bethesda, Md.	17.20	2	80	Lee Raesly	Dynamics GP, SL, AX; NetSuite; Oracle eBusiness Suite
30	**Encore Business Solutions** / Winnipeg, Manitoba	16.70	4	79	Brent Twist	Dynamics GP, NAV, AX
31	**CliftonLarsonAllen** / Minneapolis	15.00	5	50	John Wooldridge	Intacct
32	**LBMC Technology Solutions** / Nashville, Tenn.	14.60	3	50	S. Schuettler, J. McCorpin	Dynamics GP, SL; Intacct
33	**SCS Inc.** / Glendale, Calif.	14.00	4	52	Kolbeinn Einarsson	Dynamics NAV
34	**Central Consulting Group** / Minneapolis	14.00	7	40	J. Falkanger, J. Nelson	Deltek Vision; Intacct
35	**Collins Computing Inc.**[A] / Mission Viejo, Calif.	13.44	1	32	S. Collins, R. Forkner	Dynamics GP; Acumatica
36	**Navigator Business Solutions** / Salt Lake City	13.40	22	70	Grant Fraser	SAP Business ByDesign, Business One
37	**Cargas Systems** / Lancaster, Pa.	13.24	1	88	Chip Cargas	Dynamics GP; Intacct
38	**SIS Software** / Duluth, Ga.	12.60	6	53	M. Kershteyn, S. Mulka	Dynamics SL, AX
39	**RKL eSolutions** / Lancaster, Pa.	12.30	9	72	Ed Monborne, Joe Noll	Sage 100 ERP, 500, X3
40	**Crestwood Associates** / Mount Prospect, Ill.	12.20	4	61	B. McGuckin, T. Thompson	Dynamics GP, SL; Acumatica
41	**Stoneridge Software Inc.** / Barnesville, Minn.	11.40	2	62	Eric Newell	Dynamics AX, NAV
42	**FMT Consultants** / Carlsbad, Calif.	11.36	2	61	Eric Casazza	Dynamics GP; SAP ByD; NetSuite
43	**Saratoga Technologies**[A] / Johnson City, Tenn.	11.12	3	80	David Temple	Dynamics GP
44	**Diamond Municipal Solutions**[5] / Edmonton, Alberta	10.50	3	47	Mike D'Arcy	Dynamics GP
45	**Accordant Co.** / Morristown, N.J.	10.20	3	40	Robert Sandelands	Sage 100 Contractor, 300 Construction/RE
46	**Merit Solutions Inc.** / Wheaton, Ill.	10.00	4	65	Bill Burke	Microsoft Dynamics AX
47	**DSD Business Systems** / San Diego	9.93	35	82	Doug Deane	Sage 100 ERP, 300, 500; Acumatica
48	**MicroAccounting / xkzero** / Dallas and Chicago	9.65	3	43	Bill Harris	Sage 100 ERP, 500, X3; Intacct; Acumatica
49	**The TM Group Inc.** / Farmington Hills, Mich.	9.60	2	46	Judy Thomas	Dynamics GP, SL, NAV; NetSuite
50	**Stambaugh Ness Business Solutions** / York, Pa.	9.60	1	25	Steven Hake	Deltek Vision, GCS

Key: *All revenues are FY 2015, in U.S. dollars. In cases of ties in revenue, the firm with the larger staff was given the higher ranking.*   **A** Accounting Today *estimate*
Abila — *Abila MIP Fund Accounting*   ByD — *SAP Business ByDesign*   B1 — *SAP Business One*   Sage 300 Construction/RE — *Sage 300 Construction + Real Estate*
Notes: *1. Global revenue   2. Estimate based on percentage of total Edgewater revenue, as parent company does not break out Fullscope revenue   3. Operates as InterDyn BMI, a Columbus company, after a 2015 acquisition   4. In October 2015, acquired by India-based global IT firm Sonata Software   5. Listed last year as Diamond Software*

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VAR100

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51	Joseph Eve / Kalispell, Mont.	9.50	4	69	Joseph Eve	Intacct; Abila
52	Godlan Inc. / Clinton Township, Mich.	8.68	2	50	Ed Lanko	Infor CloudSuite Industrial (SyteLine) ERP
53	Explore Consulting[A] / Bellevue, Wash.	8.55	1	57	Steve Jones	NetSuite
54	MIBAR.net / New York City	7.90	1	28	Bart Nachimow	Dynamics GP; NetSuite; AccountMate
55	Innovia Consulting Inc. / Onalaska, Ind.	7.87	4	45	M. Christie, D. Lane	Microsoft Dynamics NAV
56	WhiteOwl / Miami	7.70	1	65	Stuart Rosenberg	Dynamics GP; Intacct
57	BCS ProSoft / San Antonio	7.55	4	36	Clark Haley	NetSuite; Sage 100, 500; Deltek Vision
58	Achieve IT Solutions[A] / Port Jefferson, N.Y.	7.30	4	91	Tim Singleton	SAP Business One
59	GURUS Solutions[6] / Montreal	7.29	9	90	Martin McNicoll	NetSuite
60	CompuData / Philadelphia	7.20	1	31	Angela Nadeau	Sage 100, 500; Epicor; Intacct
61	Kerr Consulting / The Woodlands, Texas	7.10	8	35	Dave Kerr	Sage 300 ERP, X3; CYMA; AccountMate
62	e2b Teknologies / Chardon, Ohio	6.84	1	46	Bill and Lynne Henslee	Sage 500 ERP
63	Arxis Technology Inc. / Simi Valley, Calif.	6.75	4	29	David Cieslak, Bob Gaby	Sage 100 ERP, 300, 500; Intacct
64	Third Wave Business Systems[A] / Wayne, N.J.	6.60	6	37	Korey Lind	Dynamics GP; SAP Business One
65	WAC Solution Partners / Northborough, Mass.	6.50	13	50	Robert Distler	Sage 100 ERP, 300, X3, Pro, 50; NetSuite; Acumatica; Abila
66	Jovaco Solutions / Montreal	6.50	1	48	Jean-Claude Coutu	Dynamics GP
67	Raffa / Washington, D.C.	6.50	2	28	Seth Zarny, Tom Raffa	Dynamics GP, SL; Intacct
68	OmniVue[A] / Alpharetta, Ga.	6.42	1	20	Jeff Pyden	Dynamics AX, GP, NAV
69	Technology Mgmt. Concepts / El Segundo, Calif.	6.30	1	26	Jennifer Harris	Dynamics GP, NAV, SL
70	Accountnet Inc. / New York City	6.30	4	22	J. Peace, A-C McAllister	Dynamics GP, SL; Infor
71	Intellitec Solutions / Willmington, Del.	6.10	1	28	Rick Sommer	Dynamics GP, SL; Intacct
72	SSi Consulting / Vienna, Va., and Columbia, Md.	6.10	2	22	Bill Aiton	Dynamics GP, SL; Intacct
73	PA Group / Chattanooga, Tenn.	6.00	2	35	Jon Buchan	Dynamics AX
74	Trajectory / Toronto	6.00	2	32	Kurtis Meloche	NetSuite
75	Synergy Business Solutions / Portland, Ore.	6.00	5	31	Steven Toth	Dynamics SL; Intacct
76	The Resource Group / Renton, Wash.	5.94	1	26	Marty & Denise Schillaci	Dynamics GP; Intacct
77	Business Solution Partners / New York City	5.67	4	21	David Smooha	NetSuite; Dynamics GP; Adaptive Insights; Blackline
78	VistaVu Solutions / Calgary, Alberta, and Houston	5.58	2	20	Jory Lamb	SAP Business One
79	AcctTwo / Houston	5.57	3	41	Marcus Wagner	Intacct; Adaptive Insights
80	InterDyn Artis / Charlotte, N.C.	5.50	3	22	Kurt Voorhies	Dynamics GP, NAV; Intacct
81	Delphia Consulting / Columbus, Ohio	5.40	14	39	Brian Delphia	Sage HRMS
82	CAL Business Solutions / Harwinton, Conn.	5.40	1	29	George Mackiewicz	Dynamics GP
83	Southeast Computer Solutions / Miami	5.40	2	26	Sonia Ferrera	Sage 100 ERP, 500, X3; Acumatica
84	JMT Consulting Group / Patterson, N.Y.	5.30	2	28	Jacqueline Tiso	Intacct; Abila
85	Boyer & Associates / Minneapolis	5.25	1	22	Jack Boyer	Dynamics GP, SL, NAV
86	Full Sail Partners / Steamboat Springs, Colo.	5.22	4	30	Kevin O'Connor	Deltek Vision
87	Queue Associates / New York City	5.20	4	50	Jeff Goldstein	Dynamics GP, SL, AX
88	ISM / Portland, Ore.	5.20	5	28	BJ O'Reilly	Sage 100 ERP, X3; Acumatica
89	DWD Technology Group / Fort Wayne, Ind.	5.10	3	25	Bob Kohlmeyer	Sage 100 ERP, 50, BusinessWorks; Abila
90	goVirtualOffice / Madison, Wis.	5.04	3	26	Dirk Shimpach	NetSuite
91	Warren Averett Technology Group / Montgomery, Ala.	5.00	4	58	Jason Asbury	Dynamics GP
92	Sererra Information Systems / Newport Beach, Calif.	5.00	4	25	Vijay Saha	NetSuite
93	eSoftware Professionals / Portland, Ore.	5.00	1	14	Jody Leoni	Dynamics NAV
94	T3 Information Systems / Washington, D.C.	4.98	1	20	M. Adamowicz, C. McCarthy	Dynamics GP, SL; Intacct
95	Aronson / Rockville, Md.	4.91	1	250	Jeff Capron	Sage 300 Construction/RE, 100 Contractor; Deltek; QuickBooks
96	Faye Business Systems Group / Woodland Hills, Calif.	4.90	1	23	David Faye	Sage; NetSuite
97	Fourlane / Austin, Texas	4.50	4	25	Marjorie Adams	QuickBooks, QB Online, Enterprise Solutions
98	Martin and Associates / Cincinnati	4.50	1	22	Kevin Martin	Dynamics GP; Sage 100 ERP, 500; Acumatica
99	NexVue Consulting Group / Stamford, Conn.	4.50	1	15	Daniel Schwartz	Acumatica; Dynamics SL
100	Cornerstone Consulting / Tampa, Fla.	4.00	3	30	David Boos	SAP Business One ERP; Sage Pro ERP

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Notes: *6. Changed name from ERP Guru in November 2015*