

Corporate Focus

A Corporate Focus Success Story

Acuity Brands, Inc.



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HOW ACUITY BRANDS TAMED OWNERSHIP TRACKING

Corporate Focus helps the Corporate Secretary's office focus on "real work"

The Corporate Secretary's office is a high-pressure, fast-paced environment. This is where responsibility lies for ensuring critical legal deadlines are met, that resolutions and contracts are binding, and that whatever actions the corporation takes truly reflect the current status of officers, directors, and stockholders. As this Acuity Brands user story shows, the right software helps companies avoid what could be a labor-intensive, error-prone exercise that exposes the company to risk and robs it of expensive legal resources that would otherwise be deployed more productively.

"An unwieldy mountain of spreadsheets"

Ownership record tracking in this multi-billion dollar company might easily have overwhelmed the staff of Acuity Brands. That's why it chose Corporate Focus™, from Two Step Software, says Assistant Secretary, Jill Gilmer.

"We believe Corporate Focus is the best solution for companies that are looking for a way to track ownership information for subsidiaries," Gilmer says, "because unwieldy mountains of paper or spreadsheets are the alternatives."

Corporate Focus consolidates, centralizes, standardizes and provides easy access to Acuity Brands' entity, ownership and minute book information. Altogether, the Corporate Secretary's office tracks 40 foreign and domestic subsidiaries, looks up or makes changes to the lists of officers and directors, locates copies of board minutes, and creates written consents.

"Easier to find the legal document backup"

Not only is all the data readily available to the Corporate Secretary's office, but an unlimited number of finalized minute book documents can be linked to each data



ABOUT ACUITY BRANDS

With net annual sales of over \$2.1 billion, Acuity Brands, Inc. is comprised of two business units, Acuity Brands Lighting and Acuity Specialty Products. Acuity Brands Lighting is one of the world's leading providers of lighting fixtures; Acuity Specialty Products is a leading provider of specialty chemicals. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, Acuity Brands employs approximately 10,000 people and has operations throughout North America and in Europe and Asia.

record as well, organizing Acuity Brands' entity information in a manner that makes it easier to find the legal document backup when it is needed. Subsidiary organization charts can be generated directly in the browser and can also be used to navigate to the related companies and their basic corporate information. "If I need to prepare resignations for someone, I can generate a list of the subsidiaries affected. I don't have to try to remember that information or take out the minute books," says Gilmer.

Streamlined workflows

With Corporate Focus, tasks can be easily assigned to internal and external users and tracked against preset objectives – thus reducing the risk that important milestones might be overlooked. Each task can be assigned a priority, generate overdue and alarm icons, and display within a monthly calendar view. As part of task tracking in Corporate Focus, each task can be linked to a data record and to documents. In addition, email messages can be scheduled to be sent at a future date. Task management can be greatly improved, says Gilmer, and dates for filings, annual meetings, agreements, and other critical events not missed.

"Automatic reminders save time spent looking up dates," says Gilmer. "They also reduce the risk of paying late fees because we missed a filing deadline."

Information is protected

Information security and business continuity are two other ways Acuity Brands benefits from Corporate Focus, Gilmer says. "September 11th and Hurricane Katrina taught us a lot about the importance of keeping data safe. Corporate Focus lets us put all our entity data on one system, rather than spread it out across multiple paper files or desktops. Information access is centrally controlled and all information can be protected by a single backup."

Gilmer adds that IT likes the fact that Corporate Focus is browser-based with data stored on a central server rather than out on the Internet or on a user's PC. "We don't have to worry about licensing individual PCs which makes installing and maintaining Corporate Focus very easy and reduces the cost of ownership."

All of which makes the Corporate Secretary's office very happy with their software purchase decision. "Before we upgraded our system, we looked at competing products," says Gilmer. "We found that Corporate Focus was the best solution for a company our size. It gave us what we needed at the right price."

For more information about Corporate Focus and how to create your own success, call Two Step Software at: 800-223-8900 or email: sales@twostep.com.