

The municipality of Smedjebacken modernizes its financial management with Unit4

Smart automation and greater visibility for Local Governments

When the municipality of Smedjebacken began procuring a new financial system in 2022, its goal was to modernize and streamline financial management with automation. Of the three suppliers evaluated, Unit4 was the clear choice. Three years down the line, a large part of the municipality's financial processes have been automated and the managers have real-time access to financial data.

"We had been using our old system for a long time and we knew it inside out. But we saw the potential for taking the next step in our digitization process by installing a new system," says Helena Karlsson, Accounts Manager at the municipality of Smedjebacken.

A decisive factor in their choice was the so-called 'municipal template'. It has an organizational structure designed for municipalities, as well as ready-made processes for financial management - such as accounting, budgeting, forecasting, purchasing, procurement, asset registers, and more. The accounts structure makes reporting to Statistics Sweden, among others, much easier.

"We received an offer and a vision from Unit4 which described how we should work and how the system should be set up. It was the start of a journey towards a more modern way of working," says Jonas Källman, Finance Manager at Smedjebacken municipality.

Automation in focus

The newly installed system has made it possible to automate manual processes. One specific example is the management of the municipality's 900 phone subscriptions, where matching and posting is now done automatically within predefined price ranges. OCR in-payments, out-payments and accounts payable are also automated.

"We can focus more on financial follow-up instead of manually posting every single invoice. This frees up time for work that adds value, both for the finance department and for the rest of the organization," says Helena Karlsson.

Key findings



SAVING YOUR PEOPLE TIME

Manual processes, such as managing 900 mobile subscriptions and OCR payments, are now automated – freeing up time for employees to focus on strategic initiatives.



REAL-TIME DECISION-MAKING

Managers have timely access to financial data and can create budgets and follow-up reports, which allows them to make well-informed business decisions.



FASTER REPORTING

The work producing annual accounts for Statistics Sweden is much smoother. Previously the accounts could take several months to compile.



SMEDJEBACKEN
Smedjebackens kommun

Sector

Swedish municipality in Dalarna County

Population

About 11,000

Size

1 058 km²

Product

Unit4 ERP

Real-time data for better decision-making support

Another benefit is improved reporting and access to near-real-time data. Managers in different areas of the organization can benefit from up-to-date financial data, follow reports in real-time, and produce budgets and forecasts in response. Now well-informed, financial leaders can make confident decisions regarding the municipality's finances.

“We have accurate decision-making data that creates confidence all the way up to the political level. It lays the foundations for the municipality to make well-informed decisions,” says Jonas Källman.

More efficient management of annual accounts

One noticeable improvement concerns the work on the annual accounts for Statistics Sweden, which previously could take several months to compile. The municipality can now break down the accounts on a detailed level, which provides a better basis for decision-making as well as a quick turn around.

E-commerce and future-proofing

The municipality has also introduced an e-commerce system, with around 20 suppliers connected, another process that has been automated and standardized.

“We can now make sure that we purchase from the right suppliers at the right price. The entire process from order to payment is digitized,” says Jonas Källman.

The municipality of Smedjebacken remains open to modern solutions they haven't yet implemented, including AI.

“We have not closed the door on any new technological opportunities in Smedjebacken. We are looking at how we can expand our digital workflows and we take a positive approach to implementing AI solutions where this can bring about improvements and increase automation,” says Helena Karlsson.

Tips for other municipalities

The three most important pieces of advice from Helena Karlsson and Jonas Källman for other municipalities facing similar projects are:

- Put together a team that can share tasks effectively and invest in training.
- Focus on the automation of workflows and integrated systems that involve the IT department early.
- Comply with standards and be prepared to adapt your ways of working rather than the system.

“We are very pleased with the cooperation with Unit4. We feel that we are seen and we can get help quickly when we need it. It makes us feel confident about our daily work and our ongoing development,” says Jonas Källman.

