

# Records Central

## Another O'Neil Success Story

In an issue of the Strategic Partner dedicated to answering the question "What is an O'Neil Strategic Partner?" we have yet another example. Records Central out of Cleveland, Ohio exemplifies the relationship O'Neil strives for with all of its partners. That is a relationship instead of a one time sale. Below is a conversation that took place between me and Michael Rich, President of Records Central. As you can see, our 'interview' was more like a conversation between two friends. That is ultimately what happens over time with our users. Here is the story he told.

Anne Edmondson - Director of Marketing

**Anne:** Let's start from the beginning. How did it all begin?

**Mike Rich:** My father owned a national sales organization called Sport Productions, Inc. and started to generate files. He didn't know what to do with them so he rented warehouse space and put the files in it. Soon his colleagues asked him, "What are you doing with your records?" At this time the national players didn't exist so my father began to store his friend's records and thus Records Central was born.

While the sports business was successful, it existed as the core business. Records Central simply existed but no one was managing it. We stored boxes on the floor and ran it like a warehouse, not as a record center. Records Central was never pursued as an aggressively operated record center. We made it up as we went. We didn't know about ARMA or ACRC (now PRISM) we just had boxes in a room and collected money on them. When someone wanted a box we sent someone from the office to the warehouse, which was literally across the city.

**Anne:** What did you do for software?

**Mike Rich:** For what?

**Anne:** For Software?

**Mike Rich:** For what?

**Anne:** Oh, I get it...

**Mike Rich:** Anne, at the time we didn't even have a computer. This was the 70s. The only computer that existed was an old fashioned Burrows posting machine that was the size of an executive desk. It simply did payroll. The next computer was an L5000, it had an amazingly large 10 megabyte hard drive,

bathed in oil and belt driven! Again it was the size of a desk and it would take 10 minutes to power up. Again the L5000 only did payroll in fact, these machines did not even belong to Records Central.

The Records Central system was a filing cabinet with an indexed system similar to the local library. When a box was received, the box number, account, location and date the box was received were logged. The cards were kept in numerical order. Then, when someone requested a box we would write that it was delivered on the card. If a file was delivered, we would pull the card and write the file name, the account, the box it came out of, and the date it was delivered on the card. In some sort of an ironic way it is RS-SQL in just a manual way.

**Anne:** I'm sure our programming team will love that analogy...

**Mike Rich:** We had to move forward in the 80's when they came out with the personal computer. At this time I went to work for my Dad in Records Central doing the billing. I got interested in computers and I thought Records Central could be automated. I had no way of tracking activity other than what a person wrote on a piece of paper. A lot of

money slipped through the cracks because we just didn't know what activity was happening. We did all of our billing on spreadsheets. As I looked at this, it prompted me to pursue some type of turn key solution for the record center. I began to construct my own version of what I was calling



*"Not having O'Neil support, is like having a car without gas. As a matter of fact, just today I called twice. The response I got was immediate and effective and had an immediate resolution. When I call, they treat me like I am their only client. I think the O'Neil support team is...well...the best in the business."*

**Mike Rich - President, Records Central**

Record Storage Tracking. We called it RST. I was on my way. Tim should get a kick out of that. But soon I discovered: I'm not a programmer. It was only a matter of time before I discovered O'Neil.

**Anne:** How did you discover O'Neil?

**Mike Rich:** I figured there has got to be someone somewhere who does this. I contacted several companies but not O'Neil. I told them what I needed to do and got demos. I began to model my product after them and my product worked. I had historical data but I hadn't figured out how to automate it.

At some point Jim Teske called me and we spent a long time talking. He explained what the software did and I thought this was exactly what I was looking for. I thought, "I need to see this work." As I watched the demo, I was humming along. I am such a geek that I took this demo home and set up a mini record center. I thought, "This is exactly what I want! This is everything I'm trying to do and someone did it for me!" It even did things I didn't know I wanted it to do. The most important thing that struck a cord was that it had fool-proof tracking. It eliminated the human element for error. I was very adamant about that. Humans make mistakes. I thought to



BUSINESS PARTNER



*"I bought a PDT3100 and printer. I began to barcode my warehouse in record time.*

*From the point I got the PDT 3100, my world changed.*

*Now I have such an incredible tool that it was inconceivable, to me, the capabilities it gave me. I was blown away with what I could now do, that I could not do before."*

**Mike Rich - President, Records Central**

**"Records Central" Continued From Pg. 1**

myself, "Self, what if a person checks a box and says it is 'in' and it's not?" RSWin automated that.

As I said, the minute I began to play with my 200 box demo I saw the benefits that scanning did for my business. The problem was I did not have the budget or resources. Although it was equal in price to your competitors' for a superior product, I could still not afford the price tag. Jim Teske went to bat for me, and I bought the mini system. He got me in there with a price that I could afford with at least enough to get me started.

I started with the Datawand. At the same time, one of my largest accounts had a problem, they wanted an inventory listing or they were leaving our facility. I told them "I understand what you are asking for, bear with me, I just took this company over." They didn't want to hear that. I made a bold move. I told them "I guarantee I can produce the most accurate list of your containers yet. I can effectively service your account in record time. I

can provide excellent service or you are free to take your boxes and go elsewhere." They agreed to do it. I built my database starting with this account. They wanted progress reports. I gave them to them and they were blown away. The reports showed dates, descriptions and statuses. Now with RSWin I could do electronic workorders and everything fell into place overnight. My response time to them was instantaneous.

As I continued to barcode I outgrew the 3000 container system and again I called Jim. We went to a 20,000 container system and again O'Neil worked with me. I bought a PDT3100 and printer. I began to barcode my warehouse in record time — from the point when I got the PDT3100, my world changed. Now I had such an incredible tool, it was inconceivable the tremendous capabilities it gave me. I was blown away with what I was now able to do that I couldn't do before.

Pre-RSWin we also had a huge billing problem. I had no way of billing the monthly storage or accurately capturing transactions. It would take me two, sometimes three days to bill. I despised it! I would have to

manually do every delivery. Worse, my warehouse was out of order and I was having difficulty finding things. It was losing its accuracy and we could not keep up with the daily updates and location changes.

On January 1, 1997 I said, "We are rolling out RSWin for the entire record center!" I was foaming at the mouth. RSWin floated in on a silver cloud. We did our first workorder and I framed it. It totally changed the way I did business. I found that I could work within RSWin's business rules to create my in-house business rules that are built on the O'Neil foundation. That is why I said it changes the way we did business. I used the computer to take orders rather

than paper. Even more impressive, I cut my workforce in half!

When we installed RSWin, billing became a breeze. It took me an hour. I pulled up the accounts and hit Print and invoices that were accurate shot out of the printer. We did business a certain way, and I found

*"I'm not going to lie, I get calls from your competitors, but who in their right mind, would ever change from a company who is constantly writing for you? The success stories are far too great to change. O'Neil is the winner. There is no comparison."*

RSWin was flexible enough to incorporate the way in which I priced as well as the way in which I did business with very little change. As I went along, I found there were better ways to do what I was doing. Yet, that was my decision. I did not have to change the way I did business and that was critical to me. I customized RSWin to work for me. That was a big change from all O'Neil's competitors. Their products were simply not as flexible. I also found the competitors' cumbersome while RSWin was very slick

During my roll out period I relied very heavily on tech support. That is when I was sold on the concept of technical support. Even though I had read the manuals cover to cover, support was instrumental in setting up my record center and teaching me features I didn't understand. They gave me the foundation, but they told me, and I agree, you have to build your own business practices for how you use RSWin. Not having O'Neil support is like having a car without gas. As I matter of fact just today I called twice. The response I got was immediate and effective and I had an immediate resolution. When I call they treat me like I am their only client. I think



the O'Neil support team is, well, the best in the business. They are the heartbeat of O'Neil. And, they listen. One time I came up with an idea. They took my idea and made it into a feature! Of course, they probably roll their eyes after I hang up most times! Ha ha.

One thing that happened before RSWin was we lost the ability to deliver file folders. I had no way to deliver or refile and maintain complete accuracy. We could not pull files and put them back in the right boxes. RSWin saved my \*&\$\$#! I had the ability to barcode all my filefolders, enter descriptions and refile them. It cleaned up my mess and best of all I could bill for the service. RSWin gave us the ability to deliver filefolders with 100% accuracy. Everyone in my facility used the PDT3100 to track and validate filefolders. One of your O'Neil customers called and asked me about filefolders. They weren't pulling them. I told them if they are not taking advantage of filefolder tracking, they are losing money. It shouldn't be your customer's responsibility to tell you where the files go. It is your responsibility as a record center. If you can't do it, you're not truly a record center and you're losing revenue. I can tell my customers "I can find your file faster than you can." AND I CAN!

Now they can find them too with the advent of RS-Web.

**Anne:** Have you been selling RS-Web?

**Mike Rich:** You better believe it. It is a damn

good product. I had a great endorsement today.

**Anne:** What did they say?

**Mike Rich:** They said, "We think RS-Web is terrific. We can search for files from our desktop, 24 hours a day. I can come in over the weekend. Search for a file. Place the order and have it on my desk Monday morning."

**Anne:** Wow. If you use RS-Web you have obviously moved to RS-SQL. What made you make the move?

**Mike Rich:** When I saw it in real life at the PRISM conference at Bal Harbour, I was so excited with all the new features such as RS-Web that I couldn't wait to convert! Besides, the conversion process was so easy. I ran several test conversions, had support look at them and then, when I was ready, just did it. Pure delight! It was also full of nice surprises. For example, I use monitors extensively to make sure things don't slip through the cracks. The fact that they are now automated in RS-SQL is HUGE.

With RS-SQL we run circles around the national players. I can say this for a fact. I decided to go out on deliveries in the field. I wanted to see where we needed work and where we worked well. On one delivery we arrived at the same time as the national player. We had about 12 boxes they had about 6. We went up and "wham bam" we delivered, picked up, validated all with one piece of paper and we were on our way. We did all this before our competitor even got back

to the truck. Made me smirk!

**Anne:** You truly are a Strategic Partner, Mike, it is so good to hear.

**Mike Rich:** Anne, I'm not going to lie, I get calls from your competitors, but who in their right mind would ever change from a company who is constantly writing for them? O'Neil's commitment to on-going software development is what I believe makes them the best in the business. The success stories are far too great to change. O'Neil is the winner. There is no comparison. No one can hold a candle to what O'Neil can do. One time technical support is not the answer. RS-SQL is the greatest thing since sliced bread. It is the features and the people that make it better than the mountainous software others are using.

At O'Neil we have a relationship with everyone. O'Neil is like a marriage and you come out a winner. We are always joking and having a good laugh when we talk to people at O'Neil, they are friends. People like Dale Anesi, Tim O'Neil, Ian Thomas, Lariza Stringfellow, Cathy Wreyford, you – even Danielle Pearson in accounting who helped me when we struggled financially. She put her faith in me. You couldn't pay me enough money to change.

**Anne:** Thanks for mentioning me Mike, I'll be sure to keep that in the article...

**Mike Rich:** I thought you would. As for my next story, well...that will have to be the SQL!