



# NEXTSTEP Earns A Five Star Rating

## A Sage MAS 90 Solution

**"It's obvious NextStep really cares about its clients. Rather than just doing things for me, they teach me the skills to be self sufficient. Yet whenever I need them —they're there."**

Whether you're hungry for a casual meal with family, an elegant dinner with your date, or an evening of cocktails and comedy with friends, Keares Restaurant Group offers the experience you're looking for. Keares operates eight restaurants and a hotel in central Pennsylvania. In a market where franchises are common, Keares remains family owned and employs over 400 staff in its establishments and corporate offices.

### Setting The Table For Success

When Keares Restaurant Group needed to replace their underpowered DOS-based accounting system, they searched for a powerful payroll solution and a reliable way to produce financial statements.

After comparing several accounting software packages, Sage MAS 90 stood out as an easy-to-use, powerful solution capable of meeting the company's current needs, and growing with it into the future.

Controller Sherrie Eckman recalls the factors that led to their decision to buy Sage MAS 90, "MAS 90 had by far the most intuitive interface, and its payroll and financial modules are very well regarded."

NextStep Technology Advisors of Lancaster was hired to install and implement Sage MAS 90. Eckman was concerned about retaining balances and historic data from the old system, but NextStep was able to transfer all of Keares' vital data, ensuring the staff could be productive right from the start.

NextStep provided personalized, on-site training in each module. Eckman was impressed by the advance preparation NextStep did to ensure they understood Keares' business operations, allowing them to tailor the training to each staff member's specific job role.

### À La Carte Reports

Each of Keares' establishments is a separate corporate entity, and Sage MAS 90 easily accommodates this structure through its ability to track multiple companies. Each company's revenues and expenses are entered and tracked individually. With its multi-company feature, Sage MAS 90 capably met the requirement for individual company financial statements.

Eckman set up a series of Excel spreadsheets to provide a consolidated set of financial statements showing the financial results across all the restaurants. But as the company grew from three restaurants to its current eight, the time she spent preparing these consolidated statements also grew. "It just became unmanageable," recalls Eckman.

NextStep introduced Eckman to a financial reporting tool available for Sage MAS 90 — FRx Financial Reporter. FRx is a powerful reporting solution capable of producing consolidated statements quickly and easily. Eckman was invited to attend a full-day training session at NextStep's

offices where the trainer walked her through the process step by step, showing her how to copy reports, add columns, roll up totals, and much more. She went back to the office with the tools she needed to produce presentation quality financial statements showing the financial position of the entire organization.



With its multi-company capability, Sage MAS 90 is able to produce financial statements for each restaurant.

Client Profile

With FRx, Eckman can produce statements with various levels of detail for different audiences. For example, the bank wants to see total advertising expenses, but does not need the detail of how much was spent on radio versus newspaper advertising.

Eckman is able to quickly create customized statements for the owners to share with each restaurant's general manager showing summary data for Keares, and detail for each restaurant. She creates one report, then after tailoring the report to suit a particular audience, saves it under a unique filename.

"FRx is a wonderful asset," explains Eckman, "The training NextStep gave me allows me to be largely self sufficient, creating new reports myself as new needs arise."

### Superior Service

Eckman values the regular communication she shares with NextStep, often times receiving a call from a NextStep consultant just to check in and offer assistance.

"NextStep is both proactive and reactive," says Eckman, "They're proactive with ideas we can use to make Sage MAS 90 work even better for us, and they're conscientiously and immediately reactive when we have a problem."

Eckman makes a point of attending the quarterly Sage MAS 90 user group meetings NextStep hosts. She enjoys both the valuable product information and networking among other users. "I love those user meetings. The topics are always relevant and interesting, and NextStep covers them well."

### Serving Up Efficiencies

Employees at each of the restaurants record their time and tip amounts in an industry-specific point-of-sale system. Prior to Sage MAS 90, Eckman and her staff had to re-enter hundreds of timesheets into the accounting and payroll system. NextStep's consultants created a sophisticated import utility that processes the timesheet data from a file emailed by each restaurant and imports

it into Sage MAS 90's Payroll Data Entry. The import is intelligent enough to handle the intricacies of tip processing flawlessly. The import saves Eckman more than 30 hours every month — 360 hours each year.

Eckman praises the efficient workflow and user-friendly interface of Sage MAS 90. Tasks such as locating an employee record are simplified by her ability to search by employee name, employee number, or social security number.

While each restaurant is a separate company, payroll is processed using the Common Paymaster method, under the Keares



NextStep provided solutions to handle all of the companies under the Keares Restaurant Group umbrella.

Restaurant Group entity. This type of accounting only applies to federal filing, so state reporting such as unemployment compensation has to be tracked at the individual company level. NextStep designed a creative solution for handling the complicated situation. A separate Sage MAS 90 company was set up for payroll processing, and departments were used within the company to represent each individual restaurant. State unemployment reports can be run for a specific department, isolating each restaurant's

data, yet federal reports are selected to include all departments.

"It's obvious NextStep really cares about its clients," says Eckman. "Rather than just doing things for me, they teach me the skills to be self sufficient. Yet, whenever I need them, they're there."

"Managing multiple business units in a labor-intensive industry known for low margins can be quite challenging. Having the expertise of the NextStep team on our side has helped us streamline our financial reporting operations and enabled us to focus on strategic issues. Knowing that our financial information system is very well implemented and supported and is also highly scalable allows us to seek growth opportunities without concern of needing additional back-office resources", adds Peter Keares, President.

**H**eadquartered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, our firm has specialized in Sage MAS 90 and Sage MAS 200 by Sage Software since 1989.

Our extensive experience, exceptional service, and broad expertise assure you of our ability to harness information technology to help your business.

If you would like to streamline your operation, we would like to talk to you. Maybe you will be our next success story!



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