



**For Meredith
Corporation,**
Success Starts
with Service

wdesk

When Edwin Thomas Meredith launched Successful Farming magazine back in 1902, business deals were sealed with handshakes and companies expected good old-fashioned customer service from their business partners.

Times have changed, and Des Moines, Iowa-based Meredith Corporation has grown into a \$1.4 billion media and marketing giant. But some things have remained the same, including the company's expectation of excellent service from its trading partners. Luckily for Meredith, they've partnered with Workiva.

A Solution Right Next Door

Like many publicly traded companies, Meredith was in search of an easier, more effective way of creating its SEC reports. As luck would have it, the answer was just 35 miles away. Workiva, an Ames, Iowa-based company, was launching a comprehensive cloud-based platform that could streamline external report development and filing.

Alleviating Stresses

Wdesk is now integral to Meredith's SEC reporting. "Our process is completely seamless and creating the reports is easy," says Johnson. Between the one active document feature that allows multiple people to use the same file simultaneously, and integrated EDGARization and XBRL tagging, Meredith has eliminated a full day from its reporting timeline—not to mention a lot of headaches.

And now thanks to the one active document feature, "I don't have that stress at all. I don't have to make sure

"With Wdesk the quality of our documents has improved."

—**KAREN** Johnson, Director of Financial Reporting



I'm available at a certain time, or stay late to do my piece of it so that the guy who arrives in the morning can hit the ground running. That's the big deal for us," says Alderman.

And with multiple years' worth of history in the system, it's easier to check something already filed, Alderman adds. "The first time or two, you feel like you have to check every number. But now we have the comfort level to just check the new things, rather than every piece of history."

Alderman estimates that she's freed up about 50 percent of her time, which she can devote to higher-level activities. "We all have more time to do quality control," she says.

Reliable Documents

Even level 1 XBRL tagging wasn't difficult for Johnson, Alderman and the Meredith team. "The solution is easy to understand and use, and it requires minimal training," says Johnson. "Wdesk helped me get the XBRL nuances right. That was a large benefit."

A Higher Level of Service

When it came time for Meredith to proceed with detailed XBRL tagging on the company's 10-K, Johnson turned to Workiva for support on the massive project.

The Meredith team opted to use the Workiva Professional Services for support. The service augments the Workiva regular customer success program, giving customers the additional support they need—whether it's with XBRL tagging or handling unique reporting needs.

Professional Services customizes its assistance to match each customer's needs and budget. Every member of the

"We all have more time to do quality control."

—**SARALYN ALDERMAN**, Assistant Financial Analyst



U.S.-based Professional Services team has an accounting or finance degree and many have CPA designations and extensive knowledge of SEC reporting.

Johnson and her team worked closely with their Professional Services expert during the detailed XBRL tagging process. "They are extremely knowledgeable and good to work with," says Johnson. "Had we tried to do this level of XBRL tagging ourselves without Workiva, we would have failed."

A Continuing Partnership

By using Wdesk, not only do Johnson and her team have more time to work on other projects, they don't have to worry about mysterious updates to the platform either.

"The customer service from Workiva is excellent and I always enjoy working with them."

—KAREN JOHNSON, *Director of Financial Reporting*

Johnson has even earned continuing professional education (CPE) credits for attending certain complimentary educational webinars from Workiva right at her desk. "I like that I can attend a webinar and can get credit for it too," comments Johnson. "It's a bonus and it really shows WebFiling's customer service because offering credit isn't something that they had to do."



Company:

Meredith Corporation
Des Moines, Iowa

Solution:

Replace the company's spreadsheet-based manual system with Wdesk External Reporting Solution and utilize XBRL tagging functions and professional expertise.

Business Profile:

Meredith Corporation is a \$1.4 billion media and marketing giant, with businesses ranging from magazine publishing to television broadcasting, integrated marketing, brand licensing and interactive media. The company's best-known magazines include Better Homes and Gardens, Ladies' Home Journal and Family Circle.

Situation:

Meredith's manual SEC reporting process was clumsy, complicated, and often required employees to work long hours to prepare documents for filing. The company needed a solution to streamline report development, simplify the review process, and accomplish XBRL tagging

Results:

- Successful use of Wdesk since 2011
- Flawless XBRL tagging
- A better work-life balance for employees

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