

Innovation and inspiration

Wipfli Annual Report, 2019-2020

WIPFLI

Table of contents

Letter from managing partner	3
From curiosity to clarity to results	4
Wipfli 2025	5
Delivering during disruption	6
COVID-19 response	7
Success stories	8
\$30 million saved	8
Strategy to reopen	9
Helping hospital treat patients	10
Our bold new brand	11
Digital transformation	14
Wipfli Digital	15
Digital success stories	16
Technology to scale for the future	16
Fueling growth with data	17
Tech to manage 6,000 volunteers	18
Financial overview	19
Wipfli stats	20
Performing while we transform	21
Aggressive growth	22
Extending our influence	24
At Wipfli, people count	25
Client satisfaction	26
Success stories	27
Improving retention to 90%	27
Changing future with technology	28
Revolutionizing construction	29
Coaching in a virtual world	30
Saving four days of work	31
SOC audit unlocks remote access	32
Creating lasting, positive impact	33
Supporting our communities	34
Giving back	35
Supporting our associates	36
Supporting our industry	37
Supporting our clients	38
Wipfli Foundation	39
How we live and work the Wipfli Way	40
The Wipfli Way	41
Thank you	42

Letter from managing partner

Our core values of integrity, caring, excellence, teamwork and perseverance have defined Wipfli throughout our 90-year history. They remain the cornerstones of how we interact with each other and with our clients. Today we are also guided by our Wipfli 2025 vision – to ensure we are a future-focused firm. Core to that vision is a commitment to our people, and ensuring our talent is well positioned to serve our clients.

During the second half of our fiscal year that ended in May 2020, the global pandemic challenged us all to embrace change and adapt at a rapid pace. I'm proud to say the team at Wipfli rose to that challenge and met unprecedented global disruption with the confidence and integrity of a firm well prepared for the future.

We continue to prioritize taking care of our team and providing them with the tools they need to take care of our clients. Flexibility is crucial to managing a diverse workforce, and it's been embedded in the Wipfli culture since well before the pandemic. In March, we quickly moved to a virtual work environment and continued to provide exceptional service for clients who were, themselves, going through an unusual amount of disruption and turmoil.

As we transitioned to remote work, we amped up our internal and external communication to ensure transparency, and we listened through a series of pulse surveys and focus groups. We took steps to ensure our team had the flexibility and resources to overcome any challenges created by the new virtual work environment. We built trust by retaining the bulk of our workforce and maintaining salaries, providing information to ensure team members feel safe working from home or in our CDC-compliant workspaces, and listening to their feedback to improve our communications and response to the crisis.

Our relationship with clients is also built on trust, and that trust starts with curiosity. We strive to practice curiosity with our clients by listening intently, gaining deep understanding of their needs and providing solutions that make sense and fit their financial circumstances. We were able to help clients respond to the challenges presented by the pandemic in wide-ranging ways, such as assistance with navigating the federal stimulus programs provided through PPP loans, tax law changes and other elements of the CARES Act. We launched a COVID-19 resource center to provide clients with clear guidance and immediate knowledge about changing rules, which included analysis on the relevance and impact by Wipfli industry experts. And we helped clients adjust their financial plans to reflect the new realities of the business environment. But we didn't just help clients react to the constant disruption: We helped them act.



We rolled out a series of services to directly address the COVID-19 impact and help clients plan for a more stable and successful future, including cash flow management, digital readiness and cybersecurity (vital with the move to remote work), supply chain and workforce management, business stability planning and estate planning techniques for business owners. Some of these services were already in place, and we adapted them to the current environment; others have become part of our permanent crisis-management offerings.

As I write, we're still in the midst of the pandemic. Our clients face new challenges every day and – while I don't relish the circumstances that brought us here – I'm proud to say that we have been and continue to be a reliable business partner to help them transform, adapt and prepare for the uncertainty ahead, while also taking advantage of the opportunities it presents. I want to thank our team and clients for trusting us, and I am confident that we will all emerge from this challenging environment stronger and better able to create lasting, positive impact for our clients, associates and communities.

Kurt Gresens, Managing Partner

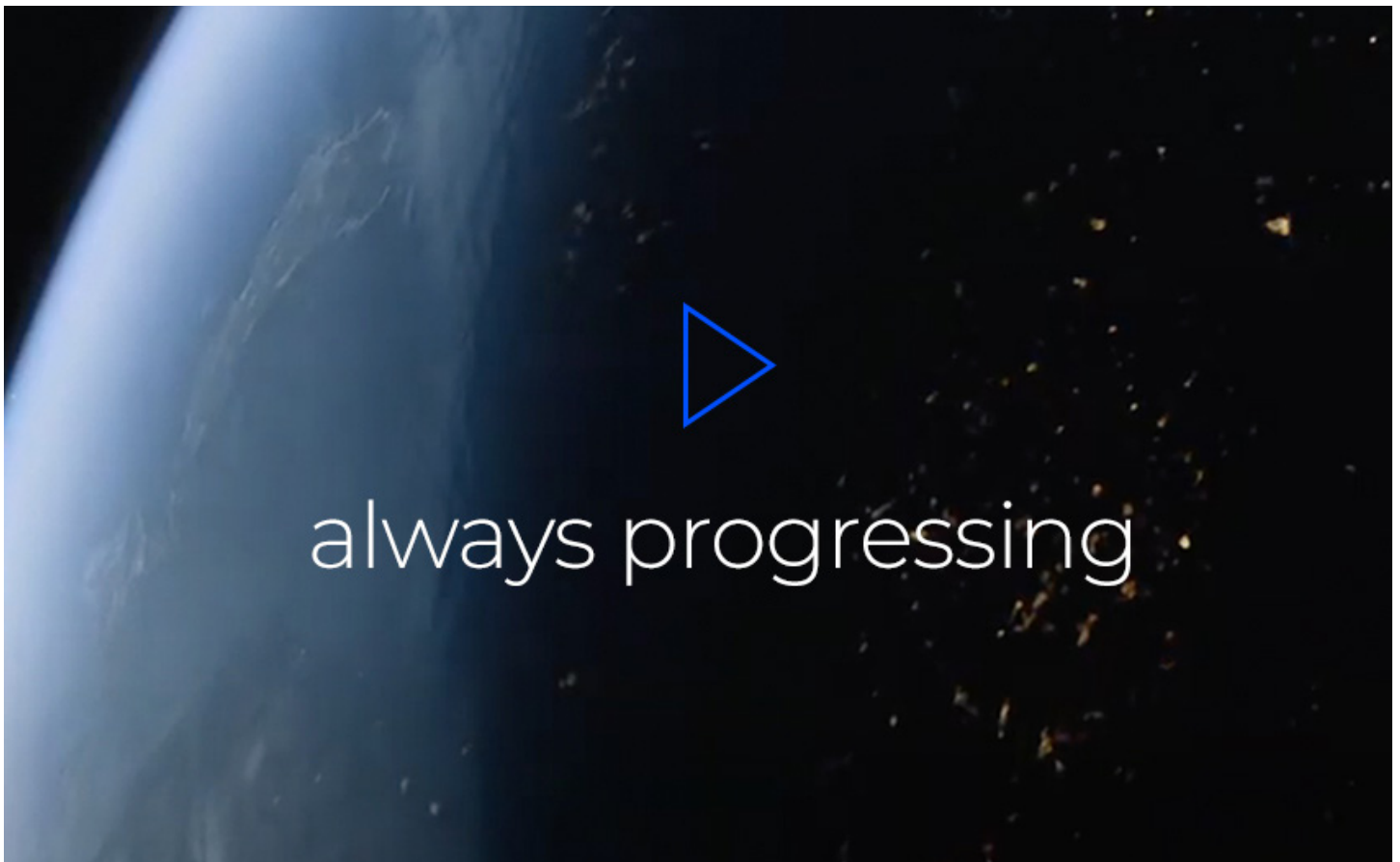
WIPFLI

From curiosity to clarity to results

For more than 90 years, we have evolved and grown to help our clients take on whatever comes next. Yet as much as we change, at our core we remain committed to curiosity and our clients.

In FY20, curiosity drove our teams to innovation and inspiration for our clients and ourselves.

[Watch video](#)



Wipfli 2025

Through Wipfli 2025, our multiyear strategy, we are making major strides toward achieving our goal of exceeding client needs now and in the future, while continuing to innovate, address challenges and seize opportunities.



Clients

Our technology and talent positioned us to provide uninterrupted, exceptional service.



Industries

We expanded the industries we serve to include technology companies and private clients – delivering specialized services while increasing our focus.



Associates

We expanded training opportunities and invested in leadership development while expanding benefits for our associates.



Our firm

We launched Wipfli Digital to turn technology into opportunities, customer experiences into connections, business intelligence into growth and digital strategies into results.



Our world

We believe in a world where everyone feels included and diversity is embraced. We increased our commitment to a diverse workplace by expanding our recruiting efforts, educating our associates and donating money and time to organizations that support DEI and social justice.

Delivering during disruption



During the second half of FY20, COVID-19 swept through our lives, causing disruption in our offices, industries and homes. In the midst of the chaos, we pivoted to help our clients continue to serve theirs.

With our services, we replaced volatility with vision, uncertainty with understanding and complexity with clarity for our clients.

Respond

Our COVID-19 resource center helped our clients cut through the clutter and hype to get the critical information they needed to react to evolving legislation, health alerts and business trends.

Recover

We were able to help more than 5,200 clients with COVID-19-related issues, helping many businesses keep their doors open and staff employed.

Revitalize

We counseled clients on how to secure their tomorrow by creating agile strategies, business continuity plans and financial stability.

COVID-19 response

- We provided more than 175 online training sessions for our clients, which is nearly three times as many as last year.
- Wipfli.com doubled its website traffic from March-May 2020 compared to 2019 – driven by our COVID-19 resource center, which offered guidance and information.
- Because time was of the essence in getting our clients access to PPP funds, Wipfli offices buckled down and assisted clients with preparing applications. Our Naperville, Illinois office alone prepared more than 120 PPP applications over a three-day period.



Together, we were able to help our clients weather COVID-19. See our success stories on the next page.

SUCCESS STORY

\$30 million saved

Hoping to experience a higher level of service, a family-owned industrial corporation made the decision to switch its tax and audit provider to Wipfli. Because Wipfli strives to be proactive in the solutions offered to clients, this decision led to \$30 million in savings that kept the client operational during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the pandemic's impact on businesses, Congress and the IRS made substantial tax-related changes. Wipfli saw a big opportunity for the client with two of those changes. First, the CARES Act enacted a five-year net operating loss (NOL) carryback opportunity for losses incurred in tax years beginning in 2018-2020. Prior to the CARES Act, these NOLs were only allowed to be carried forward.

The second change involved a new IRS regulation that allowed companies to revisit depreciation elections made in prior years. The client had made a significant acquisition in the 2018 tax year, but they had elected out of bonus depreciation because they already had a significant NOL for the year that could only be carried forward.

Wipfli presented the opportunity to the client that by amending their 2018 return to take bonus depreciation, they could increase their NOL by approximately \$66 million. Then, due to the CARES Act NOL carryback provisions, that loss could be carried back to prior tax years, which were very profitable, to generate a \$30 million federal tax refund. The client was extremely happy to learn of this opportunity and had Wipfli amend the 2018 return and file the NOL carryback claim. The refund claim was filed in early June, and the client received their refund by the end of July, providing significant cash flow to ease liquidity concerns during the pandemic.



Strategy to reopen

When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted its operations, the Montgomery Community Action Agency (MCAA) was challenged to navigate the pandemic through both the short- and long-term. As a nonprofit used to frequent in-person interactions with its clients, MCAA needed to determine what reopening would look like, how to reframe operations to support a new normal based around virtual service delivery, and how to set itself up for success when navigating future unanticipated change.

In response to client needs, Wipfli had recently launched a new service focused on managing unanticipated change. The nonprofit involved in the pilot of this service recommended it to MCAA.

Over the course of four weeks, Wipfli worked with a core MCAA team via a series of workshops to manage current change and plan for future impacts. This involved first setting a solid foundation of understanding team dynamics and change management principles, as well as who in MCAA was impacted by what changes and to what level. Then Wipfli built off this foundation by creating a communication support plan, bolstering MCAA's current change efforts with best practices. Finally, Wipfli helped MCAA assess its critical areas; create a tactical vision that outlined best, worst and most likely scenarios; and develop a 90-day action plan.

As a result, MCAA could put their ideas on paper and break them down into bite-sized and actionable pieces. They could identify what actions to take tomorrow, a month from then, and 6-12 months in the future. And they could make decisions based on best practices and a 90-day plan based on strategic thinking.



When first bringing Wipfli on board, MCAA's CEO, Dr. Benjamin Jones, said, "I have legal pads full of strategies to deal with things, and no way to put them in order of importance or execution." After partnering with Wipfli, he said, "I feel like we have a plan to move forward and a way to communicate around the changes that have to be made."

Helping hospital treat patients

Rural areas have faced their own challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mountains Community Hospital in southern California has fewer than 40 beds to serve roughly 26,000 people who live in the town of Lake Arrowhead and the surrounding rural area. The hospital was uncomfortable with the risk of COVID-19 patients spreading the virus to medical staff or the hospital's vulnerable long-term-care patients, so they turned to Wipfli for a solution.

Wipfli worked with hospital management to deploy mobile trailers in its parking lot. The first would be used for intaking patients who displayed COVID-19 symptoms, two others would be equipped with beds and oxygen for patient care, and the fourth would serve as sleeping quarters for overworked doctors and nurses.

The Wipfli Technology Management team then set up network extenders to expand the hospital's Wi-Fi signal to the trailers and connect medical staffers' phones, computers and tablets from the trailers to the hospital's secure network. Video monitors were placed to support virtual conferencing and patient visits, with Microsoft Teams providing a platform for communications and collaboration. Everything was running within an hour of setup.

As a result of Wipfli's work, nurses can test patients for COVID-19 and create electronic health records without bringing potentially contagious patients into the main hospital building. Daily staff meetings are held virtually using Teams instead of in-person in one conference room. Even after social distancing rules are relaxed, the hospital plans to use Teams for employees who can't physically make it to the daily huddles.



Our bold new brand

When it comes to our vision for the future, we think big. We've made big plans for our reputation, visibility and growth. It's ambitious — and doable. In FY20 we launched an update to our brand that is as bold and memorable as that vision.

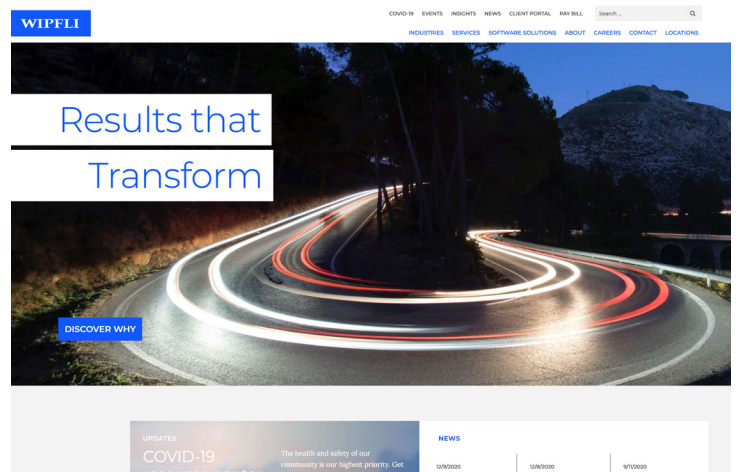
We've reimagined the Wipfli brand to unify and elevate how we present our business and go to market. Our brand helps position Wipfli as the firm of choice to create lasting, positive impact.

One vision. One brand. One Wipfli.

The new Wipfli brand was created through an inclusive, collaborative process with associates and leaders from across the firm. Together, we focused on how to make our brand more unified and recognizable in the marketplace.

We refined the Wipfli logo to better reflect how our name is pronounced. We chose a bright blue to convey our vibrancy and ingenuity and to unify our palette. And we expanded our photography approach to include lifestyle images that highlight the importance of impact of our work on our clients' clients.

Our new brand is more reflective of the curious, dynamic and growing firm we are and will continue to be.





Welcome to Wipfli

We the curious WIPFLI

We the curious

Curious is our approach to the world. It makes us better. It makes us Wipfli.

Welcome to WIPFLI

Welcome to Wipfli

We the curious WIPFLI

Always advancing.
Always progressing.

From curiosity to clarity to results. That's Wipfli.

We're Wipfli, a top 20 consulting firm serving more than 84,000 clients across today's most complex industries.

Our clients rely on us because we see their success the same way they do: as a continual process. We know that business is fluid and results aren't an endpoint; they're waypoints on a trajectory toward success.

Whether you're looking to streamline your back office, embrace digital transformation or manage disruption, we deliver effective, personalized services that create a lasting, positive impact.

Then we do it again. And again. Always with the understanding that the journey may be nonlinear, but it's always moving forward.



Relentlessly focused on your opportunities.

We approach everything we do with genuine curiosity. We're driven to understand your business as deeply as you do through a unique combination of entrepreneurial passion, industry knowledge and functional skills. Our teams fluidly integrate our services to address your needs from a holistic, enterprise perspective.

Our services focus on improving the key components of every successful organization:

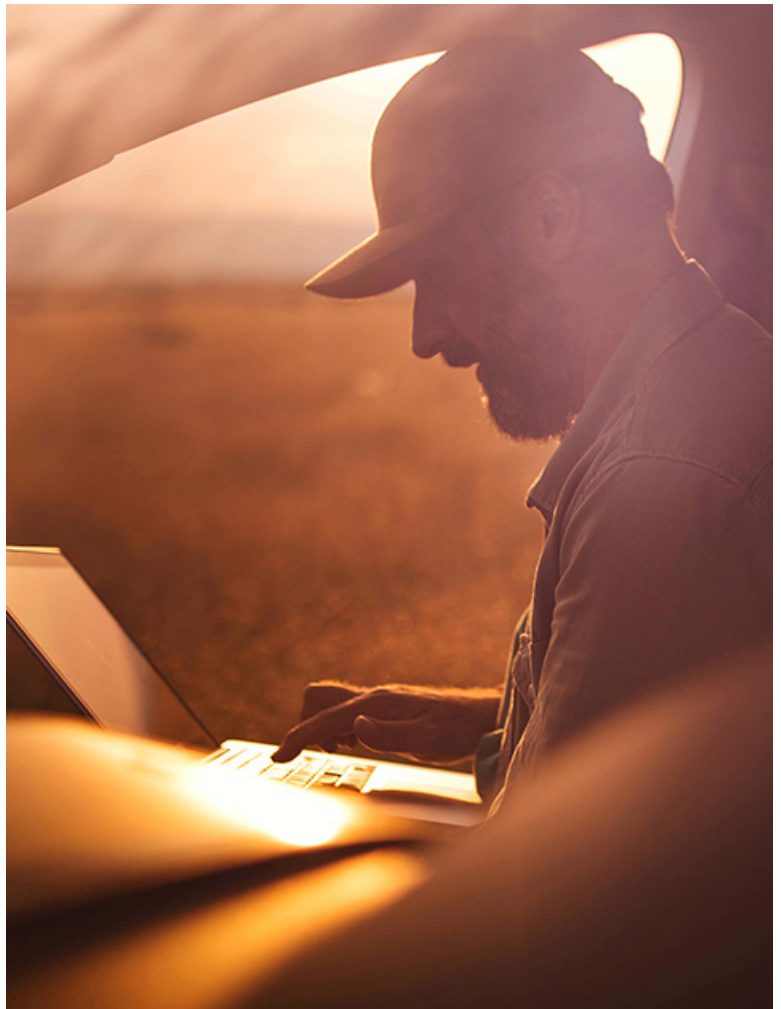
- Process and performance management
- Digital strategy, e-commerce and user experience
- Information technology, systems and cybersecurity
- Managing disruption
- Sales and customer service
- Capital and financial strength
- Human resources

Digital transformation

Our endless curiosity means we're constantly exploring new ways to take our clients where they want to go.

Wipfli Digital is a brand that Wipfli unveiled in 2020. As a part of our go-to-market strategy, it serves to help us tell the story of our long-standing and growing suite of services dedicated to digital transformation.

In today's "what's next economy," we know that technology has and will be critical to survival for our mid-market clients. In response to that and in concert with our own digital transformation, we have strategically grown our capabilities to deliver everything from custom back-end solutions to best-in-class customer experiences.



“For a small nonprofit, [working with Wipfli has been invaluable](#). To have their level of expertise and experience working with nonprofits, to have them look at your needs and recognize your pain points — it's led to their team not just solving problems but also equipping us to take things to the next level and learn from the ways they've built out the infrastructure.”

— Peter Kim, Director of Technology, Data & Evaluation at The Contingent

Wipfli Digital

With Wipfli Digital, we offer our clients the best of business and tech combined.

Services offered

- Business intelligence
- User experience
- Custom software development
- Ecommerce
- Cybersecurity
- Cloud transformation

Strategic growth

We have enhanced our digital capability, creativity and technology capabilities through the following mergers and acquisitions:

- Punchkick Interactive: Custom software, mobile applications – March 2020
- Tidestone Solutions: Microsoft Dynamics – April 2020
- TopLine Strategies: CRM and BI solutions – June 2019

Industry involvement

Sponsored Microsoft's Women in Tech luncheon

Member of:

- Illinois Technology Association
- Wisconsin Technology Council
- Association for Financial Technology
- Technology Association of Georgia
- NH Tech Alliance
- Hyde Park Angels
- Digital Chamber of Commerce

Technology awards and partnerships

- Microsoft Preferred Power Apps Partner
- NetHope partner
- Salesforce consulting partner
- SAP Concur Growth Award
- Microsoft 2019 MSUS Partner Award – Partner for Social Impact
- HITRUST CSF Assessor Council

Wipfli Digital turns technology into business opportunities and digital strategies that drive results. See our success stories on the next page.

Technology to scale for the future

The Contingent knew they needed to move to a cloud database tool to manage their relationships. For their Every Child Oregon program, they were collecting information from interested people via web forms that pushed the information into a SQL database. However, their team had to export everything to Excel and then sift through thousands of datapoints – and keeping the latest version of the Excel document between employees was almost impossible.

With limited resources to spend on technology, The Contingent needed to start small and add more functionality later. The modulization offered by Microsoft Dynamics 365 CRM was ideal. And Wipfli proved to be the ideal implementation and training partner – a critical part of setting a solid foundation for The Contingent to build off of.

“The Wipfli team recognized that we wanted to develop skills to continue to expand our capabilities,” said Peter Kim, Director of Technology, Data & Evaluation at The Contingent. “So along the way, there’s been moments to be trained on how to follow best practices in developing and architecting Dynamics to extend our own capabilities.”

After implementing Dynamics 365 CRM, Wipfli helped The Contingent do just that. The organization now has the technology they need to connect their programs together, effectively use their data and increase their overall impact. And by owning their implementation and learning how to scale it, The Contingent has increased their return on investment significantly.



They’ve since taken the existing infrastructure Wipfli built and modified it to assist with their Emerging Leaders program and even to launch a new program called Know Me Now. They’ve taken the Every Child Oregon program to the next level to grow their volunteer and event management capabilities. And they’ve launched the My NeighbOR initiative to help distribute supplies to foster families during the COVID-19 pandemic. Everything is fully connected to the centralized Dynamics 365 platform, helping ensure The Contingent is making full use of their data, making the right decisions and increasing engagement and overall impact.

Fueling growth with data

SKS Consulting Group had outgrown its processes. Its operations team had difficulty determining which consultants to assign to projects, as well as which consultants made up a given client team. Information was being entered in multiple places. And because reporting was nearly impossible, billing clients was a labor-intensive and time-consuming process. SKS came to Wipfli looking for a technology solution to help its team members spend more time doing what they do best – interacting with clients and building relationships.

First, a two-day workshop mapped out SKS's current process, identified their pain points and pinpointed where there was waste. The workshop enabled SKS to see where they could adjust to eliminate bottlenecks and steps that didn't add value, as well as make the process more consistent from client to client.

Then Wipfli implemented Microsoft Dynamics 365. With its centralized dashboard, Dynamics 365 helps SKS's partners track consultant productivity and overall company performance. They can slice and dice their newly centralized data to provide robust reporting. They can also easily see what upcoming appointments they have, monitor the upcoming assessment pipeline and access live candidate statuses within the assessment process. Plus, viewing client requests for information and replying quickly has never been easier.

Crucially, eliminating paper processes and putting Dynamics 365 into place also made the sudden transition to remote work so much easier, helping to lessen the impact of COVID-19 and keep SKS operations running. Melissa Robinson, Business Operations Leader, said, "We are very grateful to have Dynamics in place; otherwise it would have been absolutely crazy to manage through all our project work without the information readily available in the system."



With Dynamics 365, SKS is well-positioned to manage its continued business growth and move into the next stage of its digital evolution. SKS describes Dynamics 365 as a launching pad for the future of the firm. And it will be working with Wipfli to further build out the features and functionality that will help it continue to manage its growth and success.

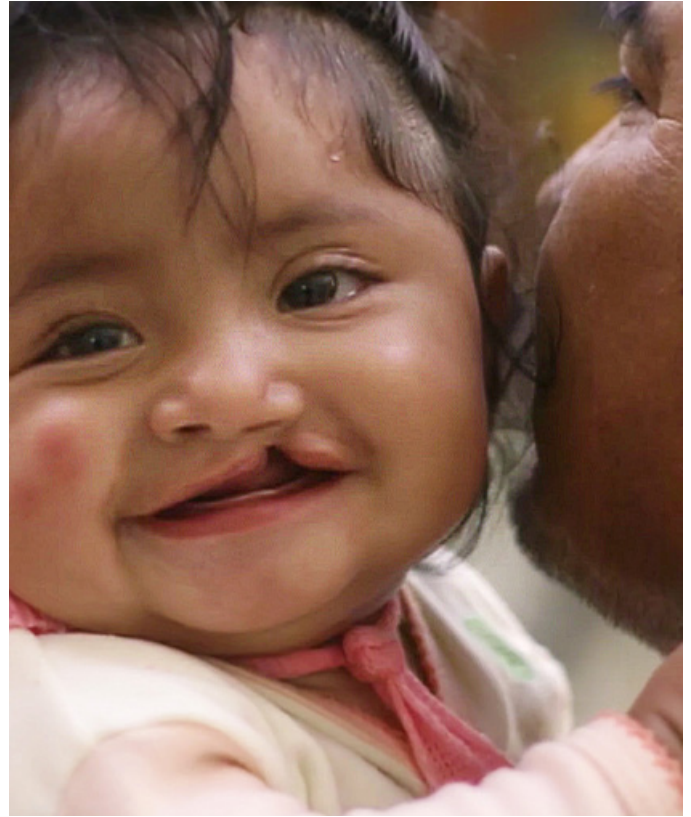
Tech to manage 6,000 volunteers

There comes a point when Excel spreadsheets just can't cut it any longer. Having grown from a family organization to a global nonprofit, Operation Smile was in a need of a better way to track their 6,000+ volunteers. For an organization that provides cleft surgery to children in resource-limited areas, using their volunteers effectively is critical to achieving their mission.

But a volunteer management system (VMS) wasn't something Operation Smile could just buy off the shelf. So they partnered with Wipfli to develop the technology using Microsoft's Common Data Model.

Wipfli built the VMS to be a full lifecycle system that allows Operation Smile to recruit, engage, train, deploy and coordinate with their volunteer base. The platform is agile and extensible to integrate with their existing systems, such as learning management, background verification, and financial and donor management.

Operation Smile now has a detailed picture of each one of its volunteers and can easily access information such as specific skills, language spoken, training status and previous missions. Volunteers can now submit, review and see the status of applications; set preferences for missions; share availability; update their own profile; access volunteer resources and more.



Operation Smile has a VMS built just for their needs, connecting their teams across the globe and delivering a consistent way to view, manage and utilize thousands of volunteers. And there's room to scale.

Financial overview

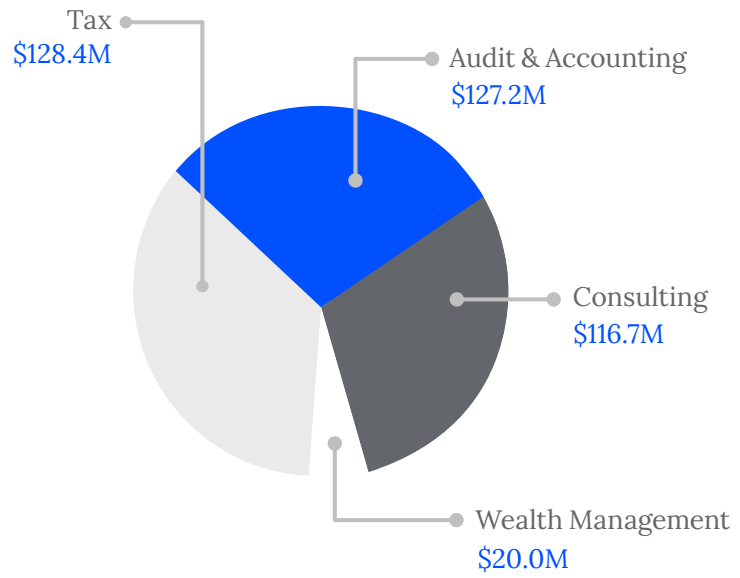
\$392.3 million

FY20 net revenue

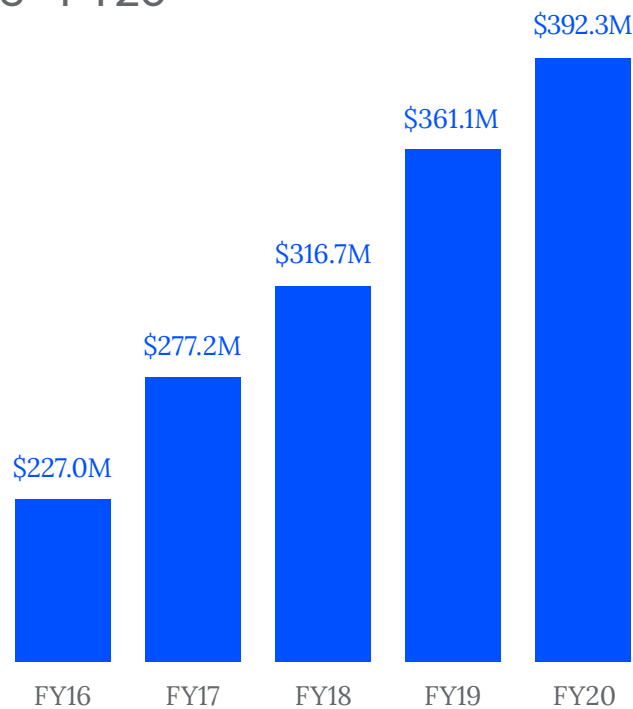
8.64%

Increase from FY19

Net revenue by service



Net revenue FY16 - FY20



Wipfli stats

2,412

associates

298

partners and principals

32

new partners and principals



Performing while we transform

In FY20, Wipfli and Wipfli Financial Advisors received several awards and honors, validating our aggressive growth strategy and our chosen path of

transformation through Wipfli 2025. Our awards are a testament to our commitment to exceeding client needs and dedication to being their trusted advisors.

[#19 - Accounting Today's Top 100 Firms](#)

[#19 on INSIDE Public Accounting's rankings of the nation's largest 400 accounting firms](#)

[#11- Accounting Today's Wealth Magnet's List \(Wipfli Financial\)](#)

[Microsoft names Wipfli a Preferred Power Apps Partner](#)

[Wipfli named one of Madison's 2020 Top Workplaces by Wisconsin State Journal](#)

[Wipfli honored with 2019 SAP Concur Growth Award](#)

[Wipfli named to 2019 Bob Scott's Insights VAR Stars](#)

[Wipfli named one of Madison's Best Places to Work by Madison Magazine](#)

[Wipfli named one of Milwaukee's Best Places to Work by Milwaukee Business Journal](#)

[Wipfli named #5 on Construction Executive's list of The Top 50 Construction Accounting Firms™](#)

[Wipfli named one of Philadelphia's Best Places to Work by Philadelphia Business Journal](#)

[MarCom awards by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals](#)

Aggressive growth

In FY20, we welcomed seven firms to Wipfli. Our growth is not only aggressive, it is strategic. Our new firms bring a new level of knowledge to our team and extend our geographic reach.

TopLine Strategies

Scottsdale, Arizona, 2019

Patke & Associates

Lincolnshire, Illinois, August 2019

Porter Keadle Moore

Atlanta, Georgia, October 2019

Klein Hall

Naperville, Illinois, November 2019

Strategem

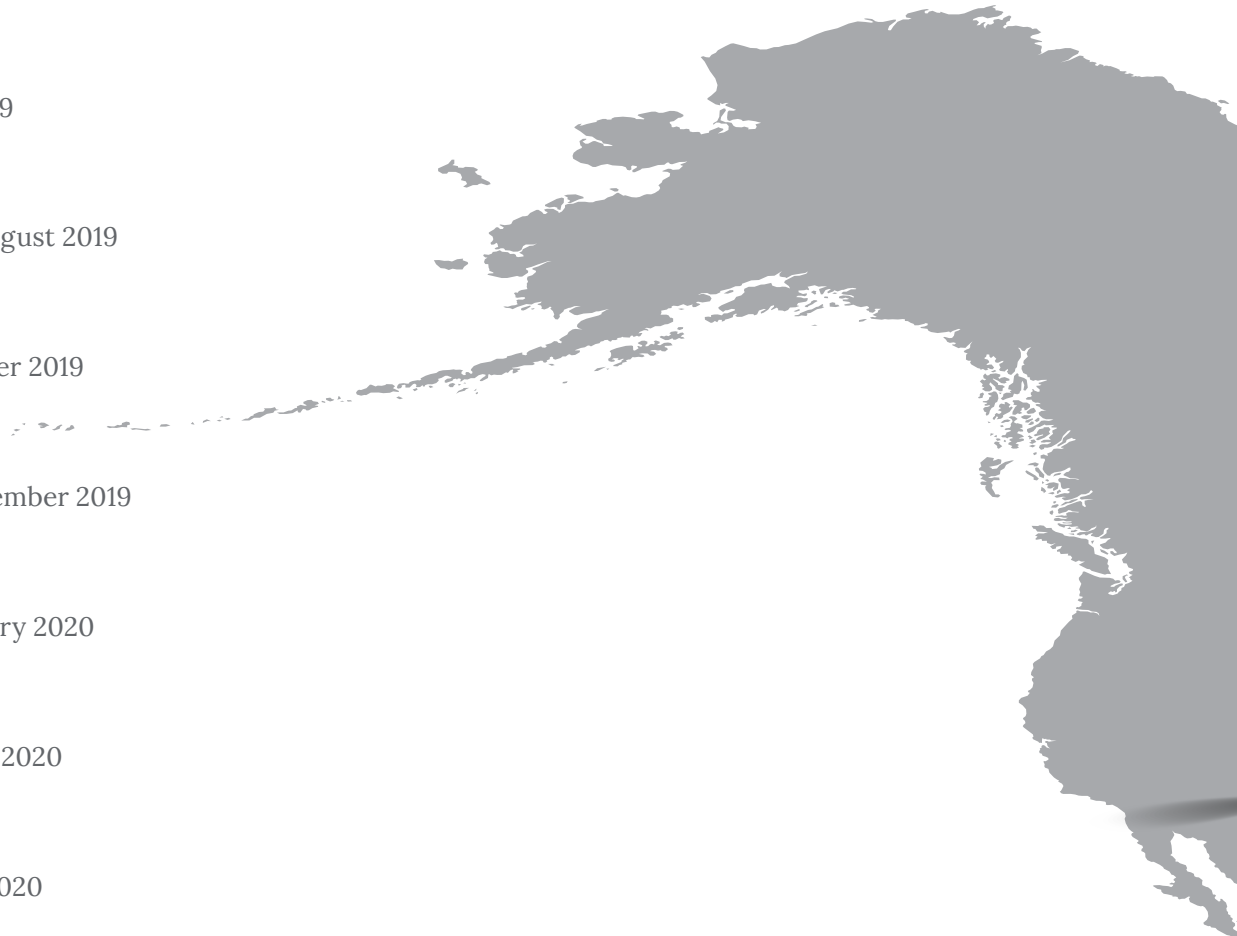
Denver, Colorado, January 2020

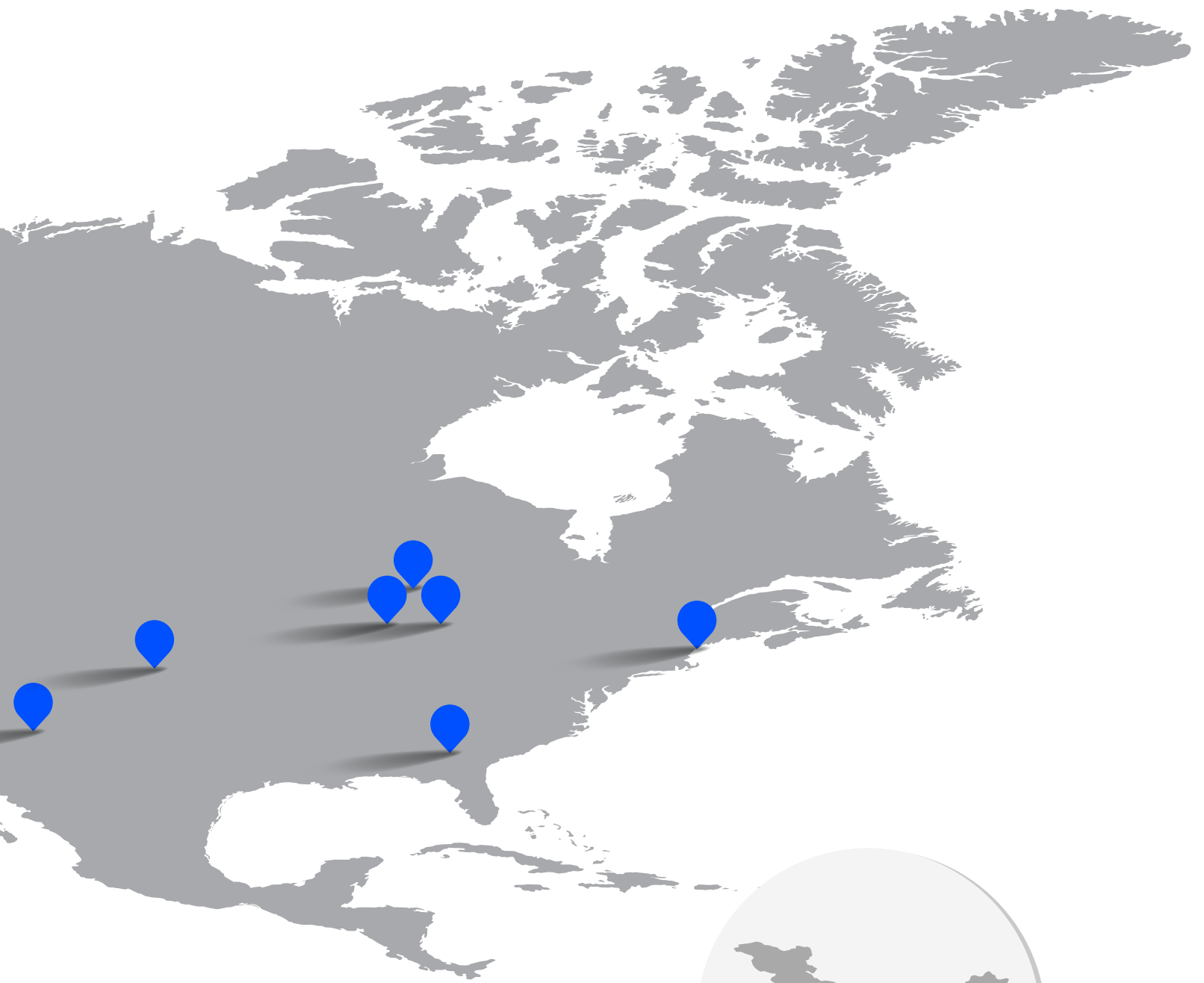
Punchkick Interactive

Chicago, Illinois, March 2020

Tidestone Solutions

Portland, Maine, April 2020





Extending our influence

Our partnerships deepen our profound knowledge, allow us to leverage the latest technology and ideas, and ultimately place us at the forefront of client service.

[Microsoft](#)

[Microsoft Preferred Power Apps Partner](#)

[Salesforce](#)

[Sage Intacct Premier Partner](#)

[SAP Concur - App Center Partner](#)

[Chamber of Digital Commerce](#)

[NetSuite](#)

[iSolved](#)

[Paladion](#)

[Cybersecurity Tech Accord](#)

[NormShield](#)

[KnowBe4](#)

[NetHope](#)

[National Head Start Association Corporate Leadership Council](#)

[Predictive Index® Certified Partner](#)

[Human Synergistics International](#)

[HITRUST CSF Assessor Council](#)

At Wipfli, people count

Recruitment

250

Interns

145

Campus hires

576

New hires

86%

Increase of new hires over FY19

113

New hires via associate referrals

Learning & Development

79,167

Hours of associate-attended trainings (internal & external)

828

CPA licenses

59

New CPA certifications

Client satisfaction

84,856

Total clients in FY20

9,657

New clients in FY20

Client Satisfaction Index Ranking

Our annual Client Satisfaction Index measures how well our performance meets or exceeds client expectations. Our 2020 score came in at 90%, demonstrating that Wipfli 2025 has set us on the path of continued success, and that our commitment to executing with the client is our key differentiator.

Net Promoter Score

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is an index ranging from -100 to 100 and measures the willingness of customers to recommend a company's products or services to others. Wipfli's NPS came in at 65, well above the industry average of 24.

Helping clients improve employee engagement and retention, saving clients time and effort, setting clients up for future success – in FY20, we identified opportunities and implemented creative solutions to meet our clients' needs across industries and markets. We're proud to share a selection of these success stories. See next page.

Improving retention to 90%

Leaders of Community Action Partnership of Central Illinois (CAPCIL) were committed to improving organizational culture and employee retention, but they were struggling with how to do so – including figuring out why their initial efforts weren't bearing fruit. Seeking an organizational performance methodology that had been tested and proven in the nonprofit industry, CAPCIL reached out to Wipfli.

First, Wipfli recommended performing a culture survey to help CAPCIL measure, understand and shape its culture. The Wipfli team also held focus groups and employee interviews to further provide insight into CAPCIL's culture. Once they had the information they needed, Wipfli walked CAPCIL leadership through the results. Leaders learned that the ideal culture they wanted and the culture they had were actually the same, but only at the leadership level. Understanding what employees below the leadership level needed to find their roles fulfilling allowed CAPCIL to then work with Wipfli on developing a roadmap for change.

Once they executed on this roadmap, CAPCIL began to see incredible results. Before bringing Wipfli on board, CAPCIL had been retaining around 73% of its employees. After completing the organizational performance project and implementing the action-planning roadmap, CAPCIL's retention rate shot up to 90%.



CAPCIL was also able to streamline its hiring process. Before, CAPCIL took between 30 and 90 days to find candidates, place them and fulfill compliance requirements. Now that the organization is starting out with strategic knowledge of who would best fit a position and why, the average time has fallen to just nine days.

Changing future with technology

Hometown Trolley was facing two distinct challenges. First, years of working with small, local IT providers had led to an inconsistent technology experience and chronic network problems. Second, the organization's shop floor was working off of manual, paper-based processes that were time-consuming and required duplicate entry between systems. Hometown Trolley came to Wipfli to create a more robust and consistent technology experience.

Wipfli's first step was to outline Hometown Trolley's challenges and build out a three-year technology roadmap focused on stabilizing and then improving the organization's technology systems and network. Under this roadmap, Wipfli redid the physical cabling, replaced outdated network equipment, implemented wireless internet for the shop floor, replaced employee PCs and implemented a consistent setup for those PCs.

Wipfli also migrated production data to Microsoft Office 365, Teams and SharePoint and implemented the use of tablet devices. This new system allows shop floor personnel to enter and access information on their tablet. A large monitor on the shop floor now displays the production schedule, further giving employees easy access to critical information that makes their day-to-day jobs easier and faster.

With Microsoft cloud technology, Hometown Trolley has been able to eliminate duplicate data entry and give employees access to the information they need, when they need it. Now that production staff can pull up drawings, instructions, inspection sheets and other information they need right from their tablets, a full two days of processing has been eliminated for the registration office per trolley built.



Notably, this transformation happened in only a year's time. Although the roadmap laid out a three-year plan, Hometown Trolley was committed to investing in the technology it needed to keep pace with its growth and improve efficiency and productivity. Because of this, Wipfli was able to complete the majority of the roadmap's three phases in just one year.

Revolutionizing construction

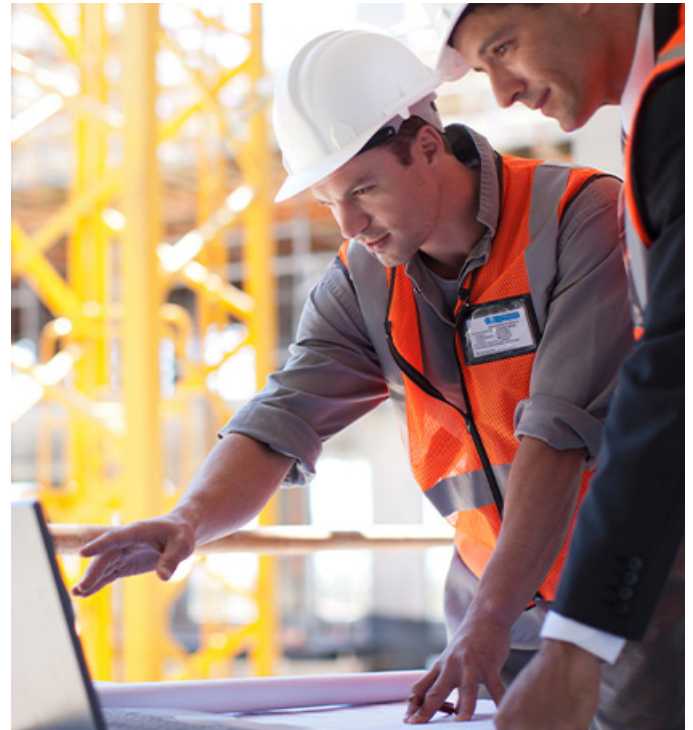
The story of Wipfli Connect for Contractors is a story of people, resilience and dedication.

Over the past 30 years, technology has been fairly stagnant in the construction industry when it comes to business operations. But Wipfli has been able to work with contractors to get past traditional tech barriers. We created Wipfli Connect for Contractors, a technology platform powered by Microsoft that is revolutionizing how contractors do business.

We started with people. We invested thousands of hours talking to hundreds of contractors. We explored every roadblock to success. Every core reason for not succeeding. We talked to all types of workers.

We then dug into the guts of all the programs contractors use: Microsoft Dynamics 365, Procore, Concur, Viewpoint, etc. We stared at stacks of Excel spreadsheets. Once we knew the people, the platforms and the business needs, we went to work.

And that's where resilience comes in. We didn't settle with our first idea. We worked solutions for contractors for 10 years, refining repeatedly until we had something that would be a game-changer for them. And then we launched Wipfli Connect for Contractors.



We saw immediate success with clients. We had turned imagination into innovation, overcoming all those barriers. Yet we didn't stop. Our dedication and passion for our project has us continually innovating it. We learn from each new client. We incorporate their ideas and deploy upgrades.

Every client who tells us they've increased profits, cut hours out of filing paperwork, improved their credit rating or won a big bid drives us to work better and harder for them — to continue to turn innovation into execution.

Coaching in a virtual world

To continue growing their company and ensure future success, Allstar Holdings' leadership team wanted to take their business strategy to the next level. They liked the robust resources Wipfli provided, so they engaged with Wipfli to do so.

After reviewing strategy documents and conducting executive interviews, it was time to move into the core strategy-planning workshops with the leadership team. Typically, these consist of Wipfli facilitating full-day, in-person strategy sessions. However, everything was set to kick off just as COVID-19 started to trigger stay-at-home orders across the country. Conducting strategy sessions in person was no longer an option.

With all the technology available in today's working world, the decision was made for Wipfli to facilitate a series of half-day core strategy workshops over a video conferencing tool, which would still allow for collaboration and encourage the team participation necessary to have everyone's voice heard in building out the plan.

Allstar's CEO, Grady Stephens, was somewhat skeptical about conducting two full-day strategy sessions remotely, but he trusted Wipfli enough to move forward with the virtual facilitation. After the first session, Wipfli asked Allstar executives to rate the effectiveness. Feedback was surprisingly positive given this new territory they'd entered. Stephens said, "It went better than I could have imagined." The executives were optimistic about the next session and even eager to get back to it. There were far fewer side conversations than typical of in-person sessions, so the video conferencing helped allow everyone to further contribute, share their individual ideas and collaborate to make significant progress in each session.



As a result of the workshops, and in a relatively short period of time, Allstar's executives have updated the company's mission, vision and values; identified their strategic pillars and priorities; and begun building out action plans.

Significantly, they were so pleased with how the virtual half-day sessions were going and the progress they were making that Stephens made the decision to add two more half-day sessions. Leaders felt Wipfli brought not only expertise in strategic planning to help guide them but also kept the team on track through a professionally facilitated, collaborative approach. Having Wipfli available to lead extra sessions so they could continue building out their action plans gave them further confidence that they were making the right decisions and setting their business up for success.

Saving four days of work

As a certifying body for agronomists, the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) maintains a report on its website that provides critical information to individuals working toward certification credits. However, during peak season, the report was taking several minutes just to open, which led to frustrated phone calls to the ASA asking for help. At the same time, ASA's master compliance report – which contained a massive amount of data – struggled with its own performance challenges to the point that it was unusable.

ASA approached Wipfli for help, and the Wipfli team determined that Microsoft's powerful, cloud-based Power BI solution would solve its reporting challenges by allowing the ability to flex to peak-season query needs.

Wipfli also saw user-experience challenges with ASA's report. The team worked to make it user-friendly and easier to read. This included restructuring content and using color codes, icons and easy thumbs up or down to indicate reporting compliance.

With the new reports up and running – and able to open instantly – ASA has received fantastic feedback from its certified individuals. Because the reports are much easier to read, ASA now gets fewer phone calls from users seeking clarification. Fewer phone calls means ASA employees have more time in their day-to-day to focus on strategic priorities. Plus, the redesigned reporting is mobile-friendly, enabling agronomists on the road to log in from their phone.



Beyond operational reports, Wipfli has helped ASA replace mundane manual tasks with automation. Through integrations between Power BI and Dynamics CRM, email lists are now ready in just minutes. This has saved over four days of work every month for the employee tasked with emailing certified individuals their statuses and notes.

SOC audit unlocks remote access

As a service organization handling sensitive data, Cross Insurance TPA has an annual SOC audit performed in order to provide its customers with assurance that its processes and controls are sound and effective. The organization has engaged Wipfli to perform the audit for many years.

Part of Wipfli's value-add is going above and beyond just performing the audit. Wipfli also provides organizations with recommendations outside the SOC report for how they can improve in a range of different areas. In Cross's case, Wipfli's recommendations helped the organization transition to paperless workflows, implement more system controls and reduce manual controls, and implement technology that allows remote access, making it much easier for employees to work from anywhere.

With the strong relationship that Cross and Wipfli have built, Cross trusts that the Wipfli team's recommendations will improve its processes and increase efficiency. Because it has implemented key recommendations and best practices, it has not only put itself ahead of the curve but also made itself much more resilient as a business and organization.



That couldn't be more evident than in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The organization transitioned seamlessly to remote work, helping to reduce stress on employees and ensure business continuity.

Creating lasting, positive impact

Living our mission

Our mission is to deliver lasting, positive impact on our clients, associates, profession and the communities where we live and work. At Wipfli, we believe in a workplace – and world – where everyone feels included and diversity is embraced. To foster that, we have launched several initiatives to help our firm, our communities and our industry embrace diversity, equity and inclusion.

1

Give back to our
communities

2

Elevate associates'
voices

3

Support diversity
in our industry

4

Celebrate
our clients

Supporting our communities

Since 2005, Wipfli has participated in Community Day — a day dedicated to giving back to those in our backyards. This firm-wide event is hosted with nonprofit service organizations around the country. Our associates spend the day volunteering in the communities where they live and work, touching the lives of others in an important, impactful way.

As part of Wipfli's service-oriented culture, we encourage our associates to pursue their own passions and provide them with the flexibility to take an active role in their communities. Many of them are proud members of nonprofit boards, regularly volunteer at organizations and donate to those in need. Together, [#WipfliGivesBack](#) all year long to deepen our roots in and uplift all our communities.



Giving back

5,760

Hours volunteered

24

Communities benefited

82

Organizations benefited

48,500

Total hours volunteered since
starting Community Day in
2005

Supporting our associates

This year, we supported the launch of business resource groups that provide a space for associates to come together and address key elements of their associate experience through a specific cultural lens

Women of Wipfli seeks to cultivate an environment where women have an equitable opportunity to achieve their goals and find their version of success

Wipfli Pride is comprised of LGBTQ+ associates and allies who are dedicated to supporting an inclusive community at Wipfli and beyond.



“We are relentlessly ensuring that people see others like themselves at Wipfli and, also, that they know they have allies who wish to support them. [The future of our firm depends on building a more diverse workforce](#) where our work culture and our clients benefit from the diversity of ideas our associates bring.”

— *Kurt Gresens, Managing Partner*

Supporting our industry

We are proud to support diversity in accounting and consulting services by supporting a wide range of conferences and scholarships, including:

- AICPA Women's Global Leadership Summit to support and encourage women in accounting and finance
- Microsoft Inspire: IAMCP Women in Tech Luncheon to promote inclusion of women in tech
- Elizabeth Peters Scholarship to honor our first female partner
- Mary T. Washington Wylie Opportunity Fund to provide diverse college students in the accounting profession with access to training, resources and mentors
- \$40,000 from the Wipfli Foundation to support college and university DEI programs



Supporting our clients

Wipfli is proud to recognize achievement in the nonprofit space with the Evelyn Wright Moore Award. Evelyn was President and CEO of Brazoria County Head Start Early Learning School, Inc. in Angleton, Texas, and attended every [Wipfli National Conference](#). She was a champion of innovation who exemplified lifelong learning and always empowered her organization to better serve the community. Wipfli continues Evelyn's legacy by recognizing other impactful nonprofit leaders with a donation to the organization.

In 2019, the honor was given to [Belva Dorsey](#), CEO of Enrichment Services Program (ESP), a community action agency based in Columbus, Georgia. ESP received a \$2,000 donation to honor Evelyn's memory and carry on her spirit of innovation.



“Over the past year, [we have moved from creating readiness to activating solutions and new approaches](#), including a focused approach to inclusive recruiting, launching our first two BRGs and providing robust unconscious bias education for over 1,400 associates.”

— *Maureen Pistone, Principal & Chief HR Officer*

Wipfli Foundation

With education being such an important pillar of our communities, the Wipfli Foundation charity and donation-matching program supports the universities and colleges our associates attended — representing our commitment to lifelong learning.

\$187,000

Awarded to 34 universities and four state CPA societies

\$32,700

Awarded to students for leadership conferences

\$40,000

Supported initiatives on campuses focused on DEI

How we live and work the Wipfli Way

No matter where we sit or what our specialties are, we have a common bond: living and working the Wipfli Way.



“It’s important to focus on all five values — integrity, caring, excellence, teamwork and perseverance — in equal amounts, with integrity as its central pillar. These values work together to create a safe environment for associates to voice opinions and give feedback as well as impacting how we serve clients.”

Sumanth Padival

India Operations Director
Bengaluru, India



“Approaching clients with curiosity is about showing genuine interest in them ... asking questions to learn and understand their current organizational challenges, but also what’s happening in their life. The combination of caring, integrity and excellence keeps our clients engaged and coming back to work with us.”

Angela Robinson

Audit & Accounting Senior Manager
Oakland, CA



“At Wipfli, we strive to develop life-long relationships with clients. Whether I’m meeting a new client or talking with an established client, I uncover how Wipfli can serve them by being curious and asking questions. Then, as a team, we find ways to leverage tech solutions that enhance their business.”

Madeline Watchmaker

Technology Consultant
Chicago, IL

The Wipfli Way

We have a new look, but the same core values have been the foundation of our success for almost 90 years.



Integrity

To do the right thing every time.



Caring

To always interact toward others with empathy and compassion.



Excellence

To consistently be the best in all we do.



Teamwork

To act as one through collaboration, cooperation and communication.



Perseverance

To tenaciously execute our objective.

Thank

you

The innovation and inspiration of our clients and associates drive us to continue to seize opportunities and deliver success.

See also: [Wipfli Annual Report 2018-2019](#)

WIPFLI