



Construction

Tomlinson

The Tomlinson Group of Companies is Eastern Canada's leader in environmental, construction and transportation infrastructure services. The third-generation family-owned business is headquartered in Ottawa, Ontario. Through six decades of growth and innovation, Tomlinson has become a fully-integrated corporation providing a large array of turnkey services to its municipal, provincial, residential and industrial customers. Tomlinson boasts a staff of over 2000 skilled professionals and tradespeople. Tomlinson's size and streamlined, consolidated structure allows the company to retain specialized technical expertise and centralized administrative resources to implement functional quality, safety, and environmental management systems. Visit tomlinsongroup.com.



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– Nir Orbach, Founder of Illumiti

Syntax Successfully Implements for Tomlinson Group While 100% Remote

TORONTO, ON (June 24, 2020)—As COVID-19 continues to spread, forcing many companies to adjust the way they function, the argument for remote work to be considered an essential requirement for business continuity is gathering steam. With Syntax, a leading SAP enterprise systems integration (ERP) company, the “experiment” of working entirely remote during the pandemic has culminated in a recent implementation for [Tomlinson Group](#), Eastern Canada's leader in environmental, construction, and transportation infrastructure services.

In partnership with Tomlinson since 2017, Syntax recently completed a substantial portion of a series of phases of its SAP® S/4HANA® software. But as the global economy began to reel from the rapid spread of COVID-19 in March and the drastic measures taken to curb it, Syntax was forced to reconsider priorities and transitioned to 100% remote work. With this recent go-live, Syntax successfully delivered all necessary functions: financials, project management, billing, procurement and inventory management, production, human resources, payroll, plant maintenance, equipment and tools management, and product sales. This process included the execution of all user acceptance testing and the cutover to production systems for 200-plus users.

Together, Syntax and Tomlinson chose to embrace remote work for this particular project phase. It has proven that effective remote collaboration produces quality work that used to be most commonly achieved by working in close physical proximity. The SAP solution implemented by Syntax allowed Tomlinson to manage various facets of their business, including their construction, sewer and water, and quarries and aggregates business units. Throughout the entire process, a significant effort was placed on ensuring key business functions were mobile-enabled and simplified to ensure ease of use for employees working at actual construction sites.

“As a very forward-leaning company, adapting with the times and evolving to suit the needs of our clients, the current crisis has challenged our way of thinking,” said [Nir Orbach](#), CEO, and founder of Illumiti (now Syntax). “We’ve responded effectively in a way that’s responsible. Remote work is not a new concept for Syntax, as we’ve been providing a professional-services remote model for several years by deploying implementations for our mining clients for the simple reason that there are no other options—mines, in some cases, can be dangerous, isolated locations. We’ve been promoting remote project work to reduce the extent that our consultants need to travel. In our ERP practice areas, however, a completely remote project delivery model was uncommon for us and our clients until the pandemic began.”

With the success of this remote work initiative, there is an increased sense of confidence that this type of delivery model can uncover substantial cost savings for the client. And as Syntax shifts away from having consultants travel to client sites, using an array of productivity and collaboration tools to enhance their functions, the company can effectively manage and communicate with clients and internal teams as effectively as they would on-site.

“Remote work is not business as usual for Tomlinson and represents an entirely new way of thinking and operating for our company,” said Ron Tomlinson, CEO of the Tomlinson Group.

“But our recent experience with Syntax has definitely changed our perspective. Although it can be a difficult adjustment for our teams, we realize and respect that business must go on, even in times of crisis. You can have the best technology in the world, but without the right resources to guide employees, engagement and productivity will suffer. By working with Syntax, we’ve been able to leverage video conferencing and other tools to drive a richer experience and meet project milestones.”

For Syntax, remote work has always been considered an advantage. And although challenges may arise, the company has found great success over the years with this type of delivery model.

“It’s completely natural for a client to prefer having our resources onsite,” says Orbach. “But we have found that remote work can still enable the right decisions with the right personnel. When you consider that travel expenses alone can make up 15% to 20% of a project’s budget and a certain amount of productivity can be lost because of travel, it only makes sense to consider remote options—those savings can be put to more value-added initiatives. And the overall benefits are immense: more efficient use-of-time, less travel and more project-time availability, and easier access to valuable customer support.”

“We’re leveraging more modern collaboration tools, increasing visibility and transparency, building trust, and watching everything happen in real time—this gives everyone on the project a clear view of all milestones,” Orbach says. “While traditionally performed by an in-person consultant, our specific type of professional offerings is perfect for remotely-delivered services.”

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated [4.7 million Canadians](#) who didn’t normally work remotely found themselves forced to telecommute to work on the week of March 22, according to figures

from Statistics Canada. Additionally, in a recent [Gartner, Inc. survey](#) of 317 CFOs and finance leaders, it was revealed that 74% will move at least 5% of their previously on-site workforce to permanently remote positions post-COVID-19.

The SAP software implementation leader has more than 250 employees currently working from home during the COVID-19 lockdown and will continue to do so for the remainder of 2020.

Its offices in Canada, the United States, and Switzerland will be closed until further notice, with the vast majority of the company expected to continue functioning with a digital-first mindset once the lockdown has been lifted.

“In such a very short time, our world has quickly and drastically changed. And remote work may become the new normal,” Orbach says. “As a result of the recent lockdown, we are finding that there are many advantages to working in this fashion and that the future of the office as we know it is transforming to a more digital workplace. Businesses need to embrace change and embrace a culture around it so that their employees can be empowered. With the right tools, confidence and trust will increase as businesses adapt during tough times.”

About Syntax

Syntax provides comprehensive technology solutions as a trusted global advisor and application management services to power businesses’ mission critical applications in the cloud.

With 50 years of experience, 700+ customers, and nearly 2,000 employees around the world, Syntax has deep expertise in implementing and managing ERP and other applications deployments in secure private, public, and hybrid environments. Syntax partners with SAP, Oracle, JD Edwards, AWS, Microsoft, and other global technology leaders to ensure customers’ applications are seamless, secure, and at the forefront of enterprise technology innovation.

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REPRINT (How Tomlinson Group Conducted Part of Its SAP S/4HANA Implementation Remotely: Part 1, 1/21/2021)



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