

Transforming the Business of Tax with Greater Automation and Increased Motivation

When SSAB selected Corptax® as its new tax technology provider, the company was eager to take advantage of the automation that a single system offers throughout the tax lifecycle. Compared to competitive products and SSAB's own point solutions, Corptax compared favorably in terms of features, cost, customer service and training.

Bringing Compliance In-House

To transform the business of tax at SSAB, the first order of business was rolling out Corptax® Compliance. SSAB's Manager of Tax Planning & Analysis Patricia Snyder performed a cost-benefit analysis to bring the compliance function in-house, anchored by Corptax. With the cost to outsource exceeding \$150,000 annually, the case was clear.

With the new system, the tax team shaved a week's time from return preparation. Snyder indicated, "We used to spend an inordinate amount of time modifying state depreciation and income taxes. Now, we simplify data entry through workpapers and push the relevant calculations into the system using Corptax® Office." As a result, the team now has more time for analysis.

In addition to taking complete control of Federal and State compliance, the team also assumed all of the work for the parent company's original U.S. subsidiary. Snyder estimates, "If we still had our old system, I would need four additional people to do the work my group does now."

The ability to use technology already in place of four additional staff members has a direct impact on SSAB's bottom line.

The Business Case for Better Provision

Once SSAB's new compliance system was operating at full capacity, the company turned its attention to reengineering provision. Tax was saddled with outdated calculation and adjustment spreadsheets, as well as an obsolete report writer. As a result, the team was forced to cut and paste massive amounts of data, leading to extensive manual work and a high risk of errors.

Complex Complications

Several scenarios exacerbated the pain associated with provision, causing delays with book-to-tax adjustments and making true-ups a "nightmare," according to Snyder. With data entry taking up so much of the tax team's time, the fixed asset and foreign parent interest calculations threw a wrench into proceedings. Specific issues included:

- Forced use of inflexible and "bizarre" blended apportionment rates
- Difficult-to-use computational spreadsheets
- Cumbersome reporting process that could stretch over many days

In short, it was extremely challenging and time consuming to react to inevitable changes or "what if" planning.

Client Profile

SSAB is a global leader in high strength steel. The company develops products to create a stronger, lighter and more sustainable world. SSAB has employees in over 45 countries and operates production facilities in Sweden and the U.S.

Business Situation

Reliant on outdated systems and cumbersome spreadsheets, SSAB found itself challenged to manage its tax processes in a timely and accurate manner. The company sought a single source solution to overcome complexities in its compliance and provision processes while reducing the burden on its tax department.

Solution

Corptax delivered technology and business process expertise to enhance SSAB's performance across the entire corporate tax lifecycle. SSAB completed a full deployment of Corptax Solutions—Compliance, Provision, Calendar and Office, taking full advantage of automation features for greater efficiency and risk management. As the head of finance put it, "Tax is no longer an emergency."

Results

SSAB streamlined its tax workflows, reducing manual entry and turn-around times. Able to do more work with fewer people by bringing the compliance function in-house, the company estimates hard savings of at least \$150,000 annually.


 The logo for SSAB, featuring the letters "SSAB" in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a dark blue rectangular background.

Getting up to Speed with Corptax Office

SSAB quickly took advantage of the single system's automation in Corptax® Provision and Corptax Office, which provides a two-way link between Excel and Corptax to eliminate manual effort and the associated risks.

Patricia Snyder turned to the business process experts within Corptax Professional Services to help convert SSAB's spreadsheet-based calculations to the new environment. Now, instead of going back to hard copies of workpapers, tax can easily pull data from Corptax into workbooks that perform the complex calculations and push adjustments back to provision. Entries for multiple entities can be imported all at once, rather than the old "one at a time" way.

"Corptax Office enabled us to save the most time," said Snyder. "Once we figured out how to best use those features, we were able to apply efficiencies to many different processes and calculations."

Value-added Benefits

In addition to better automation and risk management, SSAB's tax team realized intangible benefits. "Our staff feels more challenged and motivated because they are doing senior-level work. They are empowered to find ways to make their jobs easier, which gives them more control, allows them to focus on critical areas and increases job satisfaction," said Snyder.

With an unlimited online training subscription, the team takes full advantage of on-demand and in-person coursework for refresher and new hire situations. "There is always room to improve our tax process and Corptax helps us get there. It's what I love about Corptax," she added. Snyder also credits Corptax's partnership approach: "When I've had suggestions for improvements, they have been willing to take on hot button items and give us a voice into how it functions."

Measurable and Powerful Results

At the outset, SSAB sought more "tax sensitized" processes that were more closely aligned with the financial close. With a single system for Corptax Compliance, Provision and Office in place, the company has realized significant efficiencies across the enterprise, as well as:

- Complete visibility across the financial and tax landscape
- Eliminated manual cutting, pasting and workarounds
- Enhanced data accuracy and quality
- Faster data import/export and on-demand reporting

As a result, the company was able to significantly reduce its turnaround time for both compliance and provision, freeing up the tax team for more substantial analytical work. The company estimates hard cost savings of at least \$150,000 annually, resulting from bringing the full-suite of compliance work in-house and reduced auditor hours. SSAB's parent company wanted to shave a day off the close process for the companies managed. This was largely accomplished through the shortened tax provisioning process.

SSAB and Corptax have become mutual advocates and collaborators: "We consider Corptax to be team members; they are very much vested in our success," said Snyder.

Results At-A-Glance

- Assumed more work and coverage with same amount of people
- Saved more than \$150,000 in compliance outsourcing
- Eliminated manual "cut and paste" processes with automated import/export
- Reduced return review and preparations by at least a week
- Reduced provision calculations from multiple days to four hours
- Streamlined tax examination and audit processes with real-time data and insight

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