



A Consentia Success Story: Bruce Farms

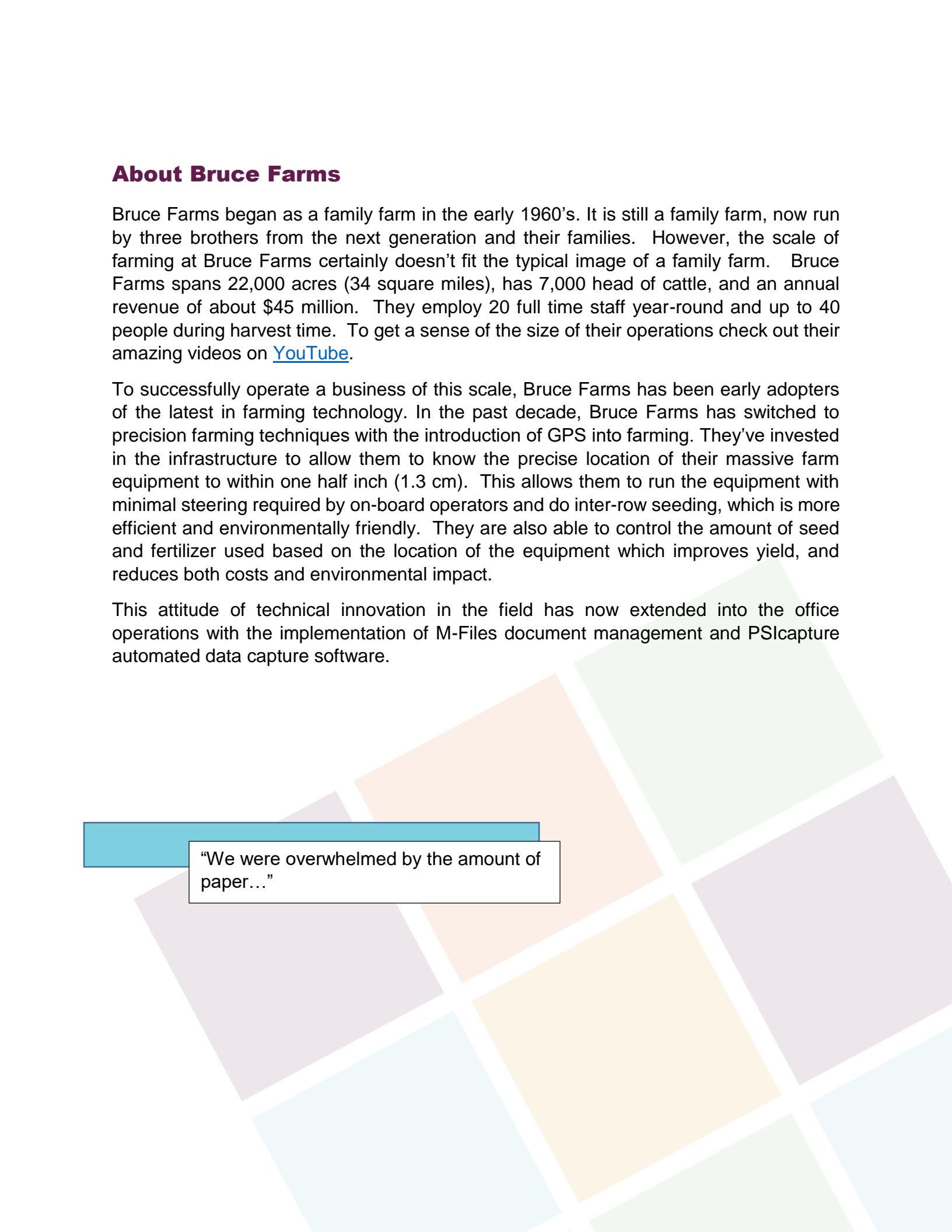


About Bruce Farms

Bruce Farms began as a family farm in the early 1960's. It is still a family farm, now run by three brothers from the next generation and their families. However, the scale of farming at Bruce Farms certainly doesn't fit the typical image of a family farm. Bruce Farms spans 22,000 acres (34 square miles), has 7,000 head of cattle, and an annual revenue of about \$45 million. They employ 20 full time staff year-round and up to 40 people during harvest time. To get a sense of the size of their operations check out their amazing videos on [YouTube](#).

To successfully operate a business of this scale, Bruce Farms has been early adopters of the latest in farming technology. In the past decade, Bruce Farms has switched to precision farming techniques with the introduction of GPS into farming. They've invested in the infrastructure to allow them to know the precise location of their massive farm equipment to within one half inch (1.3 cm). This allows them to run the equipment with minimal steering required by on-board operators and do inter-row seeding, which is more efficient and environmentally friendly. They are also able to control the amount of seed and fertilizer used based on the location of the equipment which improves yield, and reduces both costs and environmental impact.

This attitude of technical innovation in the field has now extended into the office operations with the implementation of M-Files document management and PSIsapture automated data capture software.



"We were overwhelmed by the amount of paper..."

Problem

Bruce Farms often handles up to 400 vendor invoices in a single month from a variety of vendors. Processing these invoices was taking a lot of time – to get data entered into the Sage accounting system, create the cheques, and ensure the paper was all filed correctly so it could be recovered later. Mike Barrett, who manages the accounting and administration for Bruce Farms, said “trying to find a specific invoice a year later could take hours.” Mike was frustrated by the difficulty in dealing with all the paper involved in the Accounts Payable process and began searching for a good mechanism to automate their accounts payable process and improve their document management.

Solution

After researching possible solutions, Bruce Farms found Consentia as the Alberta representative for PSIGEN PSIsapture software. Mike Barrett explained his business problem to Consentia who quickly made him feel like they understood the problem and would help him with a solution. They showed him how PSIsapture software could automatically capture data from his vendor invoices for input into his Sage accounting system. Consentia also showed him how an M-Files document management system would make it possible to eliminate the paper from his business process and create workflows to ensure processes are followed consistently. The powerful combination of automated data capture and document management could radically improve business efficiencies.

Bruce Farms purchased both PSIsapture and M-Files software. Mike Barrett was able to install the software and connect PSIsapture, Sage, and M-Files systems together to create a well-integrated system. Consentia was available to provide technical support if needed, but Mike soon had the system up and running with very little assistance.

The farm began with scanning the accounts payable invoices and scale tickets which are created during grain deliveries. This quickly brought value to Bruce Farms. Mike says “PSIsapture was fantastic” with regards to getting data into Sage. After that integration was established, Mike used PSIsapture to create metadata associated with the documents to put them into M-Files. This also was a relatively simple task. He did find some challenges with the integration between Sage and M-Files. This was overcome by using the APIs for Sage and M-Files to build a .net application. The application queries M-Files to create a list of invoices in a specific stage in the workflow. Similarly, the application queries Sage to get the GL codes associated with the invoices. The information is pulled together to create an invoice batch in Sage and update the workflow in M-Files.

Now all of the AP processing happens with very little manual data entry as everything is automated.

"PSIcapture was fantastic!" – Mike Barret, Owner.

Result

Bruce Farms achieved their goal of streamlining their AP process. However, once they started using M-Files, they quickly realized that using it for handling other documents and business processes would increase the value received from the investment made.

They took advantage of the built in functionality in M-Files to create templates for many document types, such as leases, purchase requests, and purchase orders. All of those documents are now created and stored using M-Files.

Bruce Farms operates a fleet of over 40 street vehicles, and they use M-Files to handle all the vehicle registration, insurance, and other documents associated with the vehicles. Maintenance records for vehicles and farm equipment are kept in M-Files for easy access. Bruce Farms has many different land titles that make up their 24000 acres, and all of that information is now kept in M-Files.

With the changes in the past few years in the farming industry, Bruce Farms has to comply with occupational health and safety rules and be able to quickly access WHMIS certificates and other safety documentation. M-Files has made that easy. Additionally, Mike says "The audit trail of approvals and document changes has helped Bruce Farms immensely. It has been a great addition to the business."

Because M-Files search capabilities are so good, Mike says "Even if I put documents into M-Files as unclassified documents it's better than dealing with the paper because the content is searchable. I can find what I need much faster than before."

Bruce Farms undergoes an annual audit by a major accounting firm. After the switch to M-Files the auditors were excited about the change. With M-Files' full audit trail and easy access to digital representations of the documents their jobs were made much easier.

Future Plans

Mike knows there is still more value that can be realized by taking advantage of the features in M-Files. He plans to automate more approval processes to move those processes from being paper based to being automated workflows using digital images.

To make approvals even easier to handle, he plans to take advantage of the native M-Files applications for mobile devices to allow the farm managers to access documents and handle approvals without having to come to the office. The efficiency gains and time saved will be significant.


Mike is also having some of Bruce Farms' older financial documents scanned by Consentia so they can be imported directly into M-Files. This will make more of the company history easily accessible.

About Consentia

Consentia has been helping Alberta businesses and government departments go paperless since 1971. Owned and operated by Albertans, we take great pride in the quality of our work and in our ability to provide turnkey solutions for document management, scanning, data entry, and transcription.

We have provided our products and services to:

- Municipal and Provincial Governments
- Universities and Research Companies
- Energy Utility Companies
- Oilfield Supply Companies
- Oil and Gas Producers
- Pipeline Companies
- Medical Professionals
- Professional Associations

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After explaining the issue at hand, Consentia quickly demonstrated that they understood the problem and would provide a solution.