

Austin R. Cook, CPA

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[LinkedIn URL](#) • Ann Arbor, MI

Chief Financial Officer

Highly strategic executive with expertise in driving financial performance and guiding corporate strategy through strategic planning, budgeting, digital evolution, and execution of M&A initiatives.

Proven leader and trusted member of the C-Suite with a track record of optimizing financial frameworks through transformation, enhancing efficiency, and implementing controls to create cost efficiencies, provide visibility to management, and improve performance. Strategic thinker capable of creating buy-in across company segments towards overall company objectives and supporting strategic alignment of objects to support growth. People focused leader with experience leading teams and creating a positive and high performing culture.

Areas of Expertise

Corporate Financial Strategy | Mergers & Acquisitions | Financial Reporting & Compliance | Budgeting & Forecasting

Team Building & Leadership | Financial Consolidations | Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving | Digital Transformation

Career Experience

Schurz Communications, Inc.

2019 – Present

Chief Financial Officer, 2024 – Present

Chief Financial Officer – Cloud Division, 2024

VP, Finance – Cloud Division, 2022 – 2024

Controller – Cloud Division, 2019 – 2022

Lead corporate strategy, encompassing strategic planning and budgeting. Oversee treasury, capital structure, finance, accounting, compliance, and legal functions as the executive leader to drive operational efficiency and strategic execution. Develop and execute the company's financial strategy to support growth and business objectives.

- Supported creation of a new five year business plan focused on organic business growth supported by a laser focus on our customers and through product innovation to support customer needs.
- Led digital evolution, moving the finance, sales, and customer service functions from a legacy internally developed CRM and billing system to a scalable platform that allowed for faster growth and provided real time insights across the business.
- Created dashboards to provide visibility into the main KPIs of the business on a real time basis for leaders across the company.
- Simplified customer contract vehicles, reducing legal fees supporting customer contract negotiations by 40%.

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ForeSee Results, Inc. (*Acquired by Verint Systems, Inc*)

2014 – 2019

Controller, 2017 – 2019

Accounting Manager, 2015 - 2017

Senior Accountant, 2014 - 2015

Streamlined financial consolidations by managing monthly close processes for multiple subsidiaries, including international, at the parent level. Ensured accurate and timely reporting by leading and coordinating annual audits with external audit firms. Ensured regulatory compliance for international entities by managing foreign statutory audits.

- Involved in successful sale of ForeSee to Verint in December 2018; generated significant value for stakeholders.
- Reduced month-end close timeline from 20 business days to 7 through process optimization and enhanced team coordination.
- Improved operational efficiency by creating and managing processes, procedures, and controls for the department.
- Enhanced departmental efficiency by overseeing full accounting operations, including accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll.

InfraSource Construction, LLC (*subsidiary of Quanta Services*)

2012 – 2014

Staff Accountant, 2012 - 2014

Ensured accurate financial reporting by performing month-end journal entries and overhead allocations. Reconciled all balance sheet accounts by conducting thorough analysis of monthly financial statements. Supported audit accuracy and compliance by assisting in the preparation of internal and external audits.

- Optimized cost tracking through job cost allocation across multiple company divisions.
- Improved intercompany account accuracy by assisting with A/R and A/P functions and reconciliation.

Additional Experience

Adjunct Professor – Haab School of Business, Concordia University - Ann Arbor

Education

Masters of Business Administration (M.B.A.), Cognate in Accounting, May 2014, Liberty University – Lynchburg, Virginia

Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.), Concentration in Accounting, May 2012, Concordia University – Ann Arbor, Michigan

Licenses & Certifications

CPA – Certified Public Accountant, State of Michigan, 2017

CMA – Certified Management Accountant, Institute of Management Accountants, 2015