

BQE CORE CUSTOMER CASE STUDY



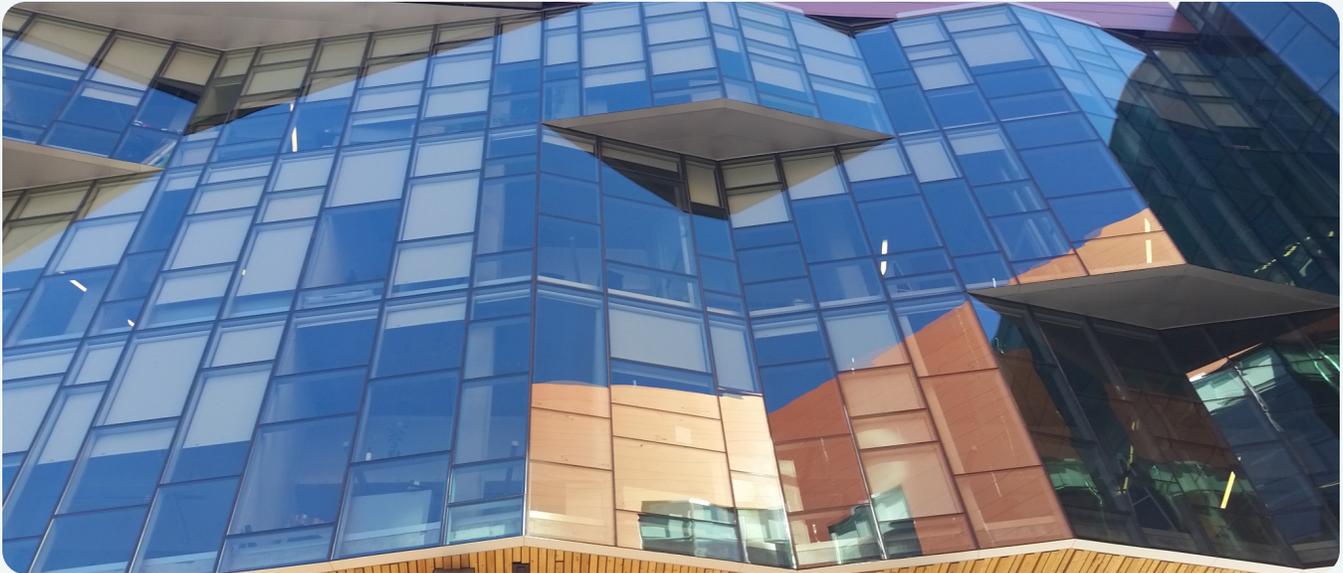
# SML Consulting Structural & Forensic Engineers

Phoenix, AZ

22+ Employees

Structural & Forensic Engineers

smleng.com



## The Power of Integration: Unlocking Efficiency Across Every Project



*“We were struggling with separate platforms that didn’t coordinate, and I knew we could do better. CORE stood out. It was built by engineers, for engineers, and already had the functionality we needed without forcing us into workarounds.”*

Jesse Light, S.E., P.E.  
President



# SML: Engineering Smarter Operations Through Automation & Clarity

## A Legacy of Structural Expertise

Nearly four decades ago, SML Consulting Structural & Forensic Engineers was founded in Phoenix, Arizona with a focus on practical, high-quality engineering solutions across commercial, industrial, and residential markets. Over time, the firm expanded into forensic engineering and failure investigations, building a strong reputation for technical rigor and repeat client relationships.

Today, SML employs more than 22 professionals and completes thousands of fast-moving projects each year—many of them highly repetitive. When Jesse Light became President following the retirement of the firm's longtime owners, he faced a defining challenge:

How do you build a firm that remains competitive, accurate, and valuable decades into the future?

The answer wasn't simply growth. It was eliminating inefficiency, reducing human error, protecting engineering time, and building systems that scale intelligently.

## Fragmented Systems Become a Business Risk

As SML grew, its operations were spread across disconnected platforms. Accounting lived in one system, billing and time tracking in another, payroll in a third, and project data scattered across documents, spreadsheets, and engineering software.

The result was duplication, delays, and rising risk. Wrong jurisdictions in documents led to wrong building codes. Wrong codes led to incorrect

“

*Before CORE, we were entering the same information into multiple systems and checking it over and over again. It slowed us down, created errors, and pulled our engineers away from doing the work clients actually hire us for.*

Jesse Light, S.E., P.E.  
President

loads. Incorrect loads meant rework, often at no cost to the client. Meaning the firm had to carry these costs by writing down the time spent fixing errors.

Highly trained engineers were spending valuable time on data entry and verification instead of engineering judgment.

SML didn't need another accounting tool. They needed a central source of truth.

## A Platform Built for Engineering Workflows

When evaluating solutions, Jesse knew generic business software wouldn't work. He wanted something that reflected the nuances of the engineering industry.

"We were struggling with separate platforms that didn't coordinate, and I knew we could do better. CORE stood out—it was built by engineers, for engineers, and already had the functionality we needed without forcing us into workarounds."

BQE CORE unified projects, clients, billing, accounting, time tracking, payroll, KPIs, and reporting into a single connected system. More importantly, it created a centralized data structure that could support automation, accuracy, and real-time decision-making.

CORE became the operational backbone of the firm, where information is entered once, verified once, and trusted everywhere.

## Streamlined Billing and Clear Financial Visibility

Adopting CORE marked a shift to a unified system that put control back in the firm's hands. SML could now enter information once and trust it to flow accurately across projects, accounting, and billing.



With CORE, SML were able to set up automated billing workflows with embedded ePayments and real-time reconciliation.

Invoices go out faster.  
Clients pay faster.  
Cash flow improved.

Dashboards now provide immediate visibility into project profitability, employee utilization, and business performance, allowing leadership to make proactive decisions instead of relying on delayed spreadsheets.

”

***With CORE, billing became faster and more accurate. We can send invoices, get paid before we deliver the work, and see in real time whether projects are profitable and how effectively our team is working.***

**Jesse Light, S.E., P.E.**  
President

# Turning Central Data into Engineering Automation

The benefits extend beyond the finance team. Project managers use real-time dashboards that highlight budgets, timelines, and profitability. They have the data at their fingertips to make proactive decisions and keep projects on track.

With project data centralized in CORE, SML began building automated engineering workflows through the CORE API.

Project information now flows directly into CAD files, calculation packages, and analysis models. Even critical engineering criteria like jurisdiction, building codes, design loads, and soil data, are automatically pulled and populated.

What once required manual research and repetitive checking now happens in seconds.

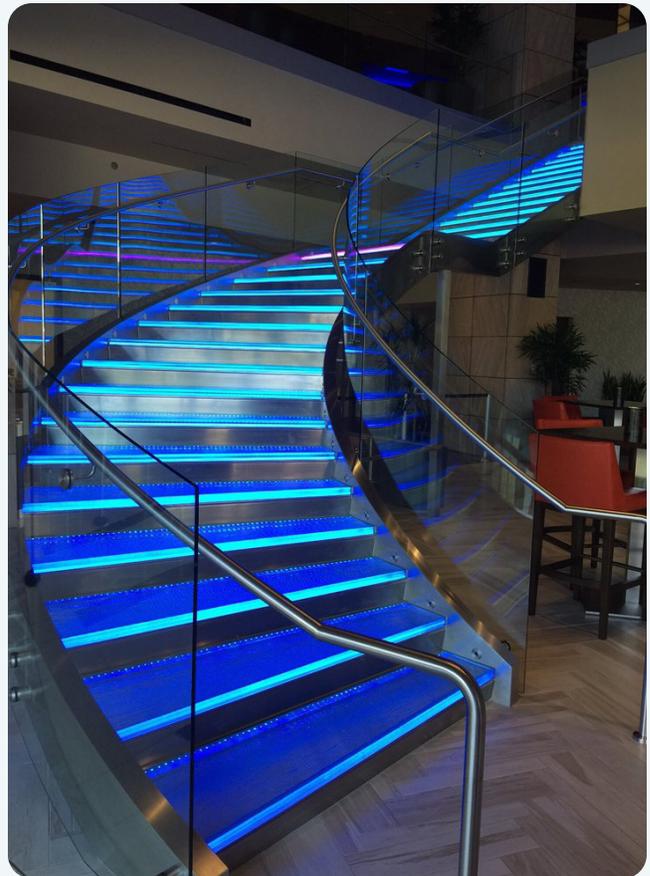
The impact:

- fewer errors
- no duplicate entry
- no redesign from incorrect criteria
- engineers focused on engineering

CORE became the foundation of a fully connected engineering ecosystem. By cutting out duplication, reducing errors, and delivering actionable metrics, the team built confidence that they were managing the business with precision.

# Scaling Services Through Automated Online Delivery

A breakthrough came when SML unlocked the potential of CORE's open API. One of their largest service lines now involves standardized engineering packages such as pool designs used for rapid permitting. The power comes with full automation of the delivery.



Using CORE's API, SML built an integrated online platform where clients can:

- create and manage projects
- purchase engineered products
- pay online
- instantly receive sealed plans and calculations

The entire workflow, from intake to delivery, is fully automated. Cutting out the administrative steps, and delivering small scale projects automatically opened a new, profitable, revenue stream without bogging down the engineering team.

This model is now expanding into additional standardized structural products, allowing SML to scale output without increasing staff or administrative overhead.

# Leaner Operations, Higher Profitability

Since implementing CORE and building out powerful automations, SML delivers the same project volume with fewer staff while improving accuracy and profitability.

With manual handoffs eliminated and repetitive processes streamlined, billing moves faster, duplication has been reduced, and engineers spend far less time on administrative tasks. The result is a team that can focus on high-value technical work instead of chasing paperwork.

Results include:

- faster collections
- reduced errors and rework
- higher profit per engineer
- real-time business insight
- reclaimed engineering time

Automation didn't replace engineers, it amplified them. By working smarter, not harder, SML has created a leaner, more profitable business model that supports steady, sustainable growth.

“

*CORE has allowed us to do more with less. Automation cut out duplication, billing cycles are faster, and our engineers finally get to focus on engineering instead of administration.*

Jesse Light, S.E., P.E.  
President

# Looking Ahead: A Firm Built to Last

For Jesse Light, the long-term goal is building a firm that maintains value through future ownership transitions. That means developing the next generation of owners, creating a culture of accountability, and ensuring the company remains financially strong.

By unifying operations, enabling automation, supporting integrations, and delivering objective performance data, CORE supports a scalable, resilient engineering business built for long-term success.

CORE isn't just software at SML. It's the backbone of a smarter way to practice engineering. SML is positioned to grow as a forward-looking, tech-enabled engineering firm, creating lasting value for future firm leaders and clients alike.

**Build a business that runs as smoothly as your designs, powered by BQE CORE.**

[Request A Demo →](#)

