

A Large Mining Company Electronic Capital Management System

Need

The TM1 model was growing exponentially, and due to some inefficiencies in design, this resulted in an enormous memory usage that was neither sustainable nor conforming to best practice principles.

Solution

Work was undertaken to initially address the inconsistencies that had been identified, realigning Cognos TM1 to proven practice principles.

Benefit

The company's success at using and embracing Cognos TM1 led to an upgrade to Cognos TM1 Enterprise, offering enhanced functionality to more users across the organisation.

Background

One of Australia's largest and most successful mining contracting services providers has been supplying a professional workforce to sites throughout the world including Australia, for many years. Their contractors are skilled in a multitude of areas of open and underground mining and their supportive ancillary services.

The company's projected growth was unprecedented, fuelled by the worldwide market for mineral resources and accompanying skilled workforce, and the diversity and complexity of the business intensified with the business' growth.

Such growth saw the organisation reach a stage of appraisal – how best to enable the company's increasing data, planning, forecasting and budgeting needs?

The Challenge

The company was winning big projects and contracts, and the speed of growth was unlike any other period in the company's recent history. The high dependency on their current systems for managing, planning and forecasting was revealing the need for change.

The system of choice was Cognos TM1, and its implementation (by another distributor) had served them well. But with the model growing exponentially, and due to some inefficiencies in design, this resulted in an enormous memory usage that was neither sustainable nor conforming to best practice principles.

Tridant had formed a strong relationship with the company to help them evaluate their options, which grew into a much larger undertaking to achieve product and process optimisation.

The Undertaking

Mr James Wakefield, Tridant's TM1 Practice Lead, was called in to assess the company's Cognos TM1 system and undertake a health check. Combined with a thorough consultative process, their pain points were identified and a number of recommendations were made.

Work was undertaken to initially address the inconsistencies that had been identified, realigning Cognos TM1 to proven practice principles. This was a large but necessary undertaking to create an environment capable of being the foundation for the next stage of development.

Mr Wakefield said, "TM1 Rules and Feeders are the core of any successful TM1 deployment. Getting these right and using TM1 proven practices

Solution components

- Cognos TM1 Enterprise
- Cognos Express

Client outcome

All these steps have led the organisation to reach a level of maturity, confidence and self-sufficiency utilising their Cognos suite of solutions.

“...The capabilities of the eCMS cubes replaced the use and dependency on Excel, created a working environment that was based upon many already established practices, greatly increased the functionality”

ensures this company have a best in class Performance Management Solution.”

The next phase of TM1 development was in a very unique area. All capital planning and expenditure was originally done in MS Excel. The increasing volume of data, a greater need for the reduction of manual processing, and an increased need for transparency for CAPEX sign-off and approvals demanded attention.

“They wanted greater control and transparency of these CAPEX processes”, Mr Wakefield said, “so we designed an all in one system for the Mining division which is eCMS – Electronic Capital Management System.”

Tridant built the eCMS module within TM1. The capabilities of the eCMS cubes replaced the use and dependency on Excel, and created a working environment that was based upon many already established practices, but greatly increased the functionality.

CAPEX requests, for example, can be more easily monitored as it progresses from a draft stage, through to being lodged, submitted, approved and completed, or rejected and cancelled. And by using filters, reports can be easily generated to view the status of the CAPEXes, or other information, such as by unit, or project or financial year.

Within the build were a number of additional fields to the CAPEX form that allowed for additional information to be added like external references for attached files, alternatives to the capital expenditure, funding arrangements, a summary of requested amount against the actual budget and/or the tender amount.

“It was also an important aspect of the eCMS project to have dynamic reporting for users,” said Mr Wakefield, “whereby the reporting tool had a predefined view with flexible prompts. This ensures a level of consistency across the board.”

The overhaul of the original Cognos Express TM1 installation, coupled with the successful implementation of eCMS lead to major improvements in productivity. Having reached the upper limits of Cognos Express licensing, Tridant also assisted with the installation and migration to Cognos TM1 Enterprise.

The eCMS module was designed to be fully accessible via the web but now the budgeting and planning module also needed to be modernised. With Tridant’s assistance, the entire Financial Management System was made available via the TM1 web functionality and meant users did not have to use a third party product in current use, Citrix, for access.

“...It has been a great journey aiding them to reach this level of success with TM1”, James Wakefield, Tridant TM1, Practice Lead

The Benefits & Outcomes

Tridant’s close working relationship with this company is one that has spanned over several years, bringing them closer to their desired level of product and process optimisation.

Tridant’s initial support, mentoring and recommendations lead to the Cognos TM1 installation to be realigned to proven practices, enabling the next step of developing an Electronic Capital Management System, specific to their needs with their niche within the mining sector.

The company’s success at using and embracing Cognos TM1 lead to an upgrade to Cognos TM1 Enterprise, offering enhanced functionality to more users across the organisation.

This client access was gained by the deployment of TM1 via the web, allowing users unprecedented and direct access to information in real time on the company server, from anywhere at any time.

All these steps have lead the organisation to reach a level of maturity, confidence and self-sufficiency utilising their Cognos suite of solutions. Their reliance on external consultative services provided by Tridant has been greatly reduced and used in an as needed basis. Conversely, more people are using the Cognos solutions, more efficiently and effectively, increasing their productivity across the organisation.

“This undertaking has brought this company to stage where they are ready to explore more options within the Cognos suite of solutions to enhance their capabilities, especially in the area of reporting for management”, said Mr Wakefield. “It has been a great journey aiding them to reach this level of success with TM1.”

About Tridant

Tridant is a leading technology and solution provider serving clients throughout Australia. We are experts in designing and implementing applications optimised for the management processes of planning, reporting, analysing, profiling and risk management. We help our clients leverage their data assets to improve performance, increase revenue, reduce risk and make their businesses more responsive to market opportunities and threats.

Since our inception we have delivered successful data-driven technology solutions to public, private and government organisations and can rightfully claim to work with six out of the ten largest companies in Australia.

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