Tridant Pty Ltd

An International Dairy Company
A Business Intelligence Solution

Background

Australia's oldest established dairy company, responsible for the production and distribution of a range of products to the domestic and international markets, was looking for intelligent business solutions to carry their business forward.

This organization was searching for integrated and cohesive solutions, to successfully manage their data, improve reporting and increase the efficiency of their forecasting in a changing market place. A recent ownership change opened the doors for new practices and management to carry the new ideas forward.

The challenge

The business was established in 1888, and its proud history of serving Victoria, and over time, Australia and international markets, has meant the need for more sophisticated and robust solutions to keep abreast of the company's business knowledge.

Given the new ownership and the company's projected growth, it was paramount to have a more cohesive planning and reporting solution. They were experiencing some issues with the existing application, and with the recent growth and acquisition, it was essential these issues were resolved. A comprehensive review was completed to clearly identify their biggest issues or pain points, and how they could be resolved.

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The undertaking

Several software solutions were in use; a financial accounting software feeding into Cognos Express, particularly the Cognos Xcelerator module, and Microsoft Excel.

Management made a decision as to what solutions were of core importance to their business, and as Cognos Express was widely used and liked within the organisation, it was decided to continue with its use. But several issues needed addressing to reach an optimum level of functionality.

Tridant Managing Consultant, Ms Cathy Van Etten worked closely with the business SME's to identify their main pain points. This detailed consultative approach was a lengthy and thorough examination of incumbent products and processes.

"Tridant worked closely with WBCF to determine areas for improvement. Some specific improvements involved re-defining current security configurations and version comparisons processes. Once the improvements were scoped out, we created a roadmap to work to, addressing each issue within a reasonable timeframe, to reach a sense of cohesiveness and transparency of business processes," said Ms Van Etten.

She went on to say, "There was an overall lack of defined business processes within the current model. Therefore, this caused confusions and several versions of the truth. Defining these processes was the first step in creating consistency and accuracy that provided a single version of the truth."

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To progress the project, three main areas were identified to be addressed in the initial scope of work. Firstly was the matter of greater integration between modules. At different times, the company had progressively added modules for planning and production, sales and forecasting, and had automated the flow of data from different sources. The modules functioned well as solo units, but it was a high priority of the optimisation process to have greater integration between the modules.

Ms Van Etten said, "We undertook a process of tightening up the integration between the Cognos Express modules, so that information fed easily from one module to another, optimising the processes and creating a single repository to work from."

Secondly, the organisation wanted more specific reporting capabilities from certain modules; a greater level of transparency of data and information from different areas of the organisation, without the time and complexity of generating individual reports in Excel. Tridant undertook the build to create solutions crafted for WBCF's specifications.

Thirdly, upgrades were undertaken across all platforms to create a standardised environment across the organisation, creating seamless data transfer and recognition without conflicts between software versions.

With those pain points addressed, a key sticking point was still at large. The business' main reporting solution (external to Cognos) did not integrate automatically with TM1. Data needed to be exported and duplicated to generate reports. "This took up a great deal of time and created unnecessary hardship for the business", said Ms Van Etten. "Cognos

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Reporter was an obvious solution. It can generate reports dynamically from the central data repository, leveraging a complementary and completely integrated system."

The benefits

The organisation has keenly felt the benefits of their optimisation drive. Cognos Express modules working together have seen data flow between them without clashes and conflict. Many hours that were once consumed with modifying and manipulating data have been saved.

Time was also saved in generating reports, (no more exporting to third party products,) creating greater transparency and independence of information.

Increased speed and accuracy of report generation increased the lead times in forecasting, allowing management to make decisions more swiftly, responding to market trends and product supply availability.

All of the steps undertaken to streamline processes according to Tridant and Cognos best practice principles enabled the organisation to attain the goal of moving their decision making reliant on multiple versions of data to one that is based upon 'a single version of the truth.'

Tridant's approach in addressing the challenges is one based upon a broad and standardised methodology; the collection of information and data, management of the data, and the correct use of the data to allow for planning, reporting, analysing, predicting and profiling – with the same and consistent

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A strong relationship with organisation and the agile approach to their infrastructure challenges has resulted in a realisation of the full value and potential of their product set.

In this case, the emphasis is for the data, information and knowledge collected to become a genuine strategic asset, enabling real innovation and becoming a competitive differentiator for the organisation.

Tridant's strong relationship with organisation and the agile approach to their infrastructure challenges has resulted in a realisation of the full value and potential of their product set. It has also paved the way to the implementation of additional Cognos solutions that will considerably enhance and complement their current capabilities – a journey keen to be undertaken with similarly positive results.

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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Email | **www.tridant.com.au**

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