



## MARQUARD & BAHL

### UP-TO-DATE, RELIABLE FINANCIAL INFORMATION SUPPORTS GROWTH

#### QUICK FACTS

##### Company

- Name: Marquard & Bahls AG
- Location: Hamburg, Germany
- Industry: Oil and gas
- Products and services: Petroleum products, service stations, and energy services
- Revenue: €11.5 billion
- Employees: 4,145
- Web site: [www.mbholding.de](http://www.mbholding.de)

##### Challenges and Opportunities

- Deliver accurate, reliable, and consistent financial data
- Shorten cycle times for planning and creating budgets
- Help ensure timely financial reporting

##### Objectives

- Increase transparency and accuracy of business processes
- Streamline reporting processes to keep pace with the company's continuing growth

##### SAP® Solution and Services

SAP® Business Planning and Consolidation application, part of the SAP solutions for enterprise performance management

##### Implementation Highlights

- Continual development of the application on the basis of positive experiences and results
- Continuous expansion of the scope of reporting and analysis

##### Why SAP

- Strength and flexibility of the SAP application
- Superior features of SAP Business Planning and Consolidation, determined after evaluating solutions from different providers under realistic conditions

##### Benefits

- Improved decision making by providing access to up-to-date financial information
- Increased productivity through automated and workflow-controlled processes
- Enabled faster results due to global online collaboration when entering and transferring financial data
- Enhanced forecast accuracy as a result of what-if and scenario analysis
- Supplied ability to react rapidly to changes in the market and fluctuations in exchange rates and prices
- Increased time for analysis since the financial data no longer has to be entered and processed manually

##### Existing Environment

Third-party-based enterprise resource planning application

##### Third-Party Integration

- Database: Lotus Notes
- Hardware: Intel Xeon
- Operating system: Microsoft

“Having fast, reliable, and structured financial information improves decision making. It makes business performance transparent and ensures accurate financial reporting. Cycle times for creating and approving budgets are also reduced, and it's possible to compare target and actual data from 17 countries in real time.”

**Christopher Falkenberg**, Project Manager,  
Marquard & Bahls AG



Marquard & Bahls AG is renowned throughout the international petroleum industry as one of the leading private companies in this sector. The company's key services include oil trading, service stations, tank-terminal storage (62 terminals worldwide), aviation fueling, and renewable energies. Marquard & Bahls – based in Hamburg, Germany – has made a name for itself in other sectors of the energy industry as well, and in 2007 the company, with its 4,145 employees, reported revenues of €11.5 billion.

### **Growth Renders Real-Time Financial Information Essential**

Controlled and long-term growth lies at the heart of the company's strategy, and this requires accurate, real-time, informative data about the company's performance. The existing information-retrieval procedure at Marquard & Bahls was no longer able to deliver the necessary quality of data quickly. In 2005, therefore, Marquard & Bahls implemented an adaptable and standardized solution to run reporting and performance measurement for its oil tanking division.

Since then, the company has had a powerful platform for reliable and up-to-date financial information based on the SAP® Business Planning and Consolidation application. The application, which was implemented in a third-party enterprise resource planning software landscape and is mainly used by the finance department, can:

- Analyze and offer reliable conclusions about events
- Support planning and forecast processes

- Provide the managing directors of the individual companies as well as finance managers with an up-to-date overview of the financial status of their businesses
- Help ensure accurate and timely financial reporting using consolidated data

### **A Time-Saving, Real-Time Solution**

The old financial reporting procedure could no longer meet the company's requirements. "Previously, the financial and budget data from 17 countries was processed using Microsoft Excel and then sent by e-mail to headquarters, where it was collected, prepared, consolidated, and analyzed. The process was incredibly time-consuming," recalls Christopher Falkenberg, project manager at Marquard & Bahls. "Because we are growing as a company, it was simply not a feasible solution for the long term."

Marquard & Bahls needed a smart, time-saving, real-time alternative to the Excel-based procedure. They based their decision to implement SAP Busi-

ness Planning and Consolidation on the results of a thorough evaluation of the available software on the market. In a five-day workshop, two short-listed software providers had to put their products through a realistic test. This "learning by doing" approach also proved to be key to the implementation project itself: the employees at Marquard & Bahls not only learned quickly, they also rapidly delivered convincing results with the help of the new software.

### **Unexpected Benefits**

The resulting increase in transparency was met with a very positive response. Consequently, Marquard & Bahls has implemented the software at other companies and is continually increasing the range of reports the software handles. "It was only when we started to use the application that we discovered how much we could do with it," explains Falkenberg, referring to the 20 to 30 reports that can now be created for the different group companies. The application's potential seems to be endless, with the team continuing to get requests for new projects on a



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regular basis. With SAP Business Planning and Consolidation, however, this demand is met.

### State-of-the-Art Online Processing

The old laborious data transfer process has long since been replaced by state-of-the-art online processing throughout the global petroleum group. The financial data from the individual companies is transferred online to the holding company's headquarters using Citrix

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technology. Once it has arrived, it is collected, managed, aggregated, and consolidated with database support to provide business intelligence.

The range of reports that can be produced using such standardized data is expansive: status reports, analyses of events, comparisons of actual and target budget data, cash flow analyses, and forecasts for different periods, to name just a few. This applies to both financial reporting for the holding company and the individual group companies, the managers of which receive an up-to-date, consistent, and transparent overview of their financial situation and performance.

### Short Cycle Times – Quicker Reactions

The SAP application has had another very positive impact at Marquard & Bahls by shortening cycle times for creating and approving budgets. High-level financial targets and requirements can be reconciled with local planning through a combination of top-down and bottom-up planning. What-if and scenario analyses help measure and analyze target results from different

perspectives. Currency conversion functions help ensure that the effects of the latest events on the money markets in the world of petroleum wholesale are always accurately mapped in the system. The software also reacts directly to exchange rate fluctuations and determines the effects of these for both currency directions within minutes. “This helps us make not only quick decisions but, above all, informed decisions,” says Falkenberg.

The software has proven to be the key to problem-free, timely financial reports. SAP Business Planning and Consolidation transfers planning data and results to internal consolidation and reporting,

reports result and cash flow calculations, and presents financial statements. At Marquard & Bahls, all of this is done in compliance with both the international financial reporting standards and local GAAP.

### User-Friendly, Familiar Interface

Around 90 employees from both company headquarters and the individual group companies work on performance measurement and presentation. They benefit from a user interface that specifies how to use the various steps and in what order. A workflow management function helps ensure data is reconciled in real time. This also includes accessing unstructured data. Consequently, incoming project applications based on Lotus Notes can be transferred directly to the database at the push of a button, where they immediately undergo further processing. “A high degree of automation and direct access to data ensure high user productivity and reduce the considerable amount of manual data entry and preparation previously required by the old process” explains Falkenberg. “This means that we can now concentrate on strategically more important tasks such as analysis and reporting.”

With the increasing number of projects from Marquard & Bahls and its group companies, new chapters are constantly being added to this success story. SAP Business Planning and Consolidation has laid the foundation for further development and will continue to play a key role in financial reporting at Marquard & Bahls.

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