SAP BusinessObjects™

SAP Customer Success Story
Oil and Gas – Refining and Marketing

BP LUBRICANTS
GLOBAL LUBRICANTS BUSINESS STREAMLINES REPORTING WITH SAP® BUSINESSOBJECTS™ SOFTWARE

"SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation . . . will deliver significant strategic advantage and play a key role in supporting future growth."

Andrew Moore, Finance Manager, BP Lubricants

QUICK FACTS

Company
- Name: BP Lubricants
- Location: Swindon, United Kingdom
- Industry: Oil and gas – refining and marketing
- Products and services: Automotive, marine, and industrial lubricants
- Employees: About 7,500
- Web site: www.bplubricants.com
- Implementation partner: SAP® Consulting

Challenges and Opportunities
- Systematize a new forecasting process
- Eliminate manual errors
- Free up time for finance staff to spend on strategic profit improvement initiatives

Objectives
- Provide a standardized template for reporting across all business units
- Consolidate data from over 50 different sources
- Make foreign exchange conversions automatically

SAP Solutions and Services
- SAP BusinessObjects™ Planning and Consolidation application, version for the Microsoft platform
- SAP BusinessObjects Financial Information Management application
- SAP BusinessObjects Dashboards software

Implementation Highlights
- Rapid deployment within 8 months
- Structured approach using BP's "CVP" project management process
- Support provided by SAP Consulting as part of the SAP Ramp-Up program

Why SAP
- Intuitive user experience
- Future potential for integration with existing SAP ERP application
- Straightforward integration with SAP BusinessObjects analytic applications

Benefits
- Up to a 2-day reduction in the amount of time taken to produce reports
- Improved speed and accuracy of reports
- User-friendly functionality, enabling finance personnel to manage the solution
- More time for staff to interpret information and focus on ways to improve operational efficiency
- Centralized data security model

Existing Environment
- Multiple enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications, including SAP ERP
- SAP NetWeaver® Business Warehouse component
- SAP BusinessObjects analytic applications

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Faced with a mountain of reporting spreadsheets each month, BP Lubricants – based in Swindon, United Kingdom – decided to simplify its management information processes. "We wanted to give staff more time to interpret the information available and take proactive steps to optimize operational efficiency," explains Andrew Moore, finance manager at BP Lubricants. To address this, the company implemented the SAP® BusinessObjects™ Planning and Consolidation application, sped up reporting, and freed time for strategic analysis.

Well known for its Castrol brand, BP Lubricants is part of the BP plc group of oil and petrochemical companies. It is one of the global market leaders in lubricants for the automotive, marine, industrial, and aviation markets, with about 7,500 employees in over 60 countries.

Disparate Systems

Reliable, accurate forecasting is business-critical for BP Lubricants. It helps managers to make informed decisions about which products it must supply to meet customer demand successfully across the various industries it serves. It also ensures that the company can deliver on promises made to stakeholders about BP Lubricants' profitability.

However, with multiple systems and processes, staff members at the company's UK headquarters were finding the management information process complex, time consuming, and prone to error. "The reporting process was cumbersome and took finance a while to collate the numbers. As a result, they had little time to analyze the data and add value to the process," comments Moore. "To speed up and simplify our management information reporting, we decided to implement a consolidated solution across all business units."

Structured Approach

The company decided to introduce SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation, version for the Microsoft platform. As BP Lubricants was one of the first global companies to adopt the software, experts from SAP Consulting assisted with the implementation as part of the SAP Ramp-Up program.

The team, made up of BP Lubricants staff members and SAP consultants, used a structured, collaborative approach based on BP's "CVP" project management process. This followed defined project stages, including requirement design workshops and blueprinting, build, configuration, and testing phases. To take full advantage of the flexibility of SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation, an iterative approach was used to create the build, thereby achieving a rapid transition within just eight months.

"As with any project of this scale, there were some stumbling blocks on the way," comments Geoff Moore, strategic performance analyst at BP Lubricants. "But due to detailed planning and thoughtful design, the project went smoothly."

Close Collaboration

According to Geoff Moore, close teamwork between BP Lubricants and SAP Consulting personnel was key to the successful deployment. "We had a great working relationship with the SAP consultants. They were focused and committed to the project," he remarks. "Having a central project room was of paramount importance, as the teams were able to

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Geoff Moore, Strategic Performance Analyst, BP Lubricants

work together in an informal and congenial environment."

Andrew Moore was impressed by the strong collaboration between the teams. "We simply couldn't have achieved the implementation so quickly without some very close teamwork," he says. "The rollout was very successful, and the fact that we went live on schedule was a testament to great work from everyone involved in the project."

Improved Control for Business Users

Initially, 200 users in the United Kingdom, mainland Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, and the Americas went live with the software, with a wider rollout including over 600 users. A "train the trainer" approach saw "superusers" within BP Lubricants training local teams so all end users were comfortable with the software before its launch.

Using SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation, demand managers from each country and business unit now upload forecast sales volumes of each product. Finance staff members then input associated turnover, cost, and profit information, as well as add in actual data when it is known, so that an analysis of forecast accuracy can be made.

A key advantage of the solution is that it has a Microsoft Excel–based interface that is intuitive for nontechnical users. "Because the solution is user-friendly, it can be 'owned' by the finance business users, rather than them having to rely on their IT colleagues," comments Katie Pinnington, global standards manager at BP Lubricants. "This gives them more control and ensures that they can make changes quickly and easily when required."

Fast, Efficient Reporting

With the solution in place, staff members at BP Lubricants have access to a standardized, 24-month forecast across all countries in which the company is active. "Having global visibility into future demand for each of our brands helps us to formulate marketing strategy and make more informed decisions," comments Pinnington.

A later stage of the project saw the introduction of the SAP BusinessObjects Financial Information Management application, which enables automated data loading directly from the SAP NetWeaver® Business Warehouse component. Reporting is quicker and more accurate thanks to the elimination of manual input.

However, it is the time savings achieved that has transformed the way in which finance staff members can fulfill their roles. "Thanks to SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation, the reporting process is now up to two days faster and much more efficient," says Pinnington. "We have time to analyze results and work on improving business profitability."

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Strategic Advantage

BP Lubricants is currently implementing the software across the remainder of its organization so that 100% of its financial forecast and reporting will be supported by SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation. It has also given demonstrations of the solution to other companies within the BP group.

Andrew Moore believes that the deployment is providing the company with a key strategic advantage. "SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Consolidation provides a platform for the simplification of our management information reporting, enabling us to improve the quality of our decision making," he concludes. "We believe this will deliver significant strategic advantage and play a key role in supporting future growth."

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