



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

SAP® BusinessObjects™ SOFTWARE TRANSFORMS CAMPUS REPORTING

QUICK FACTS

Company

- Name: Brigham Young University
- Location: Provo, Utah
- Industry: Higher education and research
- Products and services: Education and research
- Employees: 4,000
- Web site: www.byu.edu

Challenges and Opportunities

- Improve information and analysis throughout the campus
- Speed up the reporting process
- Enable professors to more easily monitor the status of grants and keep track of funds and expenditures
- Reduce reliance on IT for report preparation

Objectives

- Implement reporting solution that would enable individual users to access data and develop reports
- Provide security feature to ensure that individuals can access only the data they are authorized to view

SAP® Solutions and Services

- SAP® BusinessObjects™ XI solutions
- Xcelsius® software
- SAP BusinessObjects Data Integrator software
- SAP BusinessObjects Web Intelligence® software
- Crystal Reports® software

Implementation Highlights

- Provided 3,300 users with access to functionality they never had before
- Exceeded what IT was able to do with COBOL application

Why SAP

- Convincing product demonstration
- Self-service product that meets the needs of professors and managers
- Cost-effective solution that provides the required reporting functionalities
- Ability of SAP consultant to respond to specific security needs

Benefits

- More streamlined administration and better insight into business operations
- Reduction in time to obtain reports from 8 months, using IT, to 15 seconds at the individual's desktop
- Lower administrative costs
- Better and more timely decision making, using information that was not readily accessible before

“The SAP BusinessObjects software has enhanced our reporting and analysis and transformed the way we work . . . saving us enough money to hire additional faculty. Everybody wins – our staff, our professors, and most important, our students.”

Kevin Walker, Director of Financial Solutions,
Brigham Young University

Brigham Young University (BYU) is a private, coeducational research university located in Provo, Utah, and the flagship university of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. With 30,000 full-time students, BYU is the largest private, religious-sponsored university in the world. It combines secular and spiritual learning with the aim of developing next-generation leaders of faith, intellect, and character. Most of BYU's funding – along with its core principles – comes from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. But its top-notch business intelligence (BI) software comes from the SAP® BusinessObjects™ portfolio.

Kevin Walker started the university's whole BI initiative. Walker, the director of financial solutions within BYU's administrative services group, recognized the need to improve information analysis and reporting throughout the campus. He recalls, "We were mired in a world of slow, costly reporting." The problem was manual reporting processes, built on a million lines of COBOL programming, plus about 12 boxes of paper that had to be hand-sorted and hand-delivered across campus every month.

BYU was rolling out a new PeopleSoft financial application and sought a new reporting system to coincide with the rollout. Walker says, "Our professors have to monitor the status of their research grants frequently, so that they know exactly how much money they have left. Similarly, the various departments on campus need to keep track of budgeted funds and actual expenditures, so that they know when they're reaching projections. The COBOL

application developed by our IT department got the job done with some effort, but every time we upgraded our PeopleSoft system, we had to rewrite the entire extract. There had to be a better way."

Electronic Reports with a High Level of Security

There was – and Walker witnessed it firsthand when he attended a PeopleSoft conference. "I saw an SAP BusinessObjects product demonstration and thought, 'Now that's something we wouldn't necessarily need to wait for IT to do.' Waiting for IT was the real holdup – they had so many other projects, that they didn't have the staff or time to develop an outstanding reporting solution for us."

Garnering support from BYU's CFO, Walker looked into installing an SAP BusinessObjects solution. "I attended a training session at the SAP facility, wrote the first report in about a week, and it's blossomed from there," he says.

BYU now delivers reports electronically. In addition, with SAP BusinessObjects Intelligence® software, users (3,300 at present and growing) have a level of ad hoc query functionality that they never had before. This translates into better administration for the university and a clearer understanding of funding status for professors.

Security was a critical issue in setting up the query part of the system, and an SAP consultant stepped in to help. "Because BYU is a private university, we need to be especially careful to ensure that individuals can access only the financial data they're authorized to view," says Walker. "The consultant was fantastic. He quickly understood our needs and helped us write a small HTML program that automatically exports data from PeopleSoft software every night, puts it in a security table, and populates the security side of our SAP BusinessObjects software. It's a great solution."

Greater Efficiency, Reduced Costs

Initially, the BI project encountered skepticism from an IT engineer who felt that the SAP BusinessObjects software wouldn't be able to handle reporting as effectively as the COBOL solution. "I took that as a challenge," says Walker, "even though my background is in accounting, not IT." Walker's confidence was well placed. He says, "As it turns out, we have far exceeded what IT was able to do with the million lines of code. And thanks to the SAP BusinessObjects semantic layer, virtually no change is required when we upgrade our PeopleSoft system – which we've already done



“The individual managers of each department and college can now access data and make decisions right at their desktop. . . . This and other similar initiatives have already saved us several hundred thousand dollars, and, as a result, we’ve been able to make a real contribution to BYU’s fundamental mission.”

Kevin Walker, Director of Financial Solutions, Brigham Young University

twice.” As a result, the IT engineer has not only conceded the superiority of the SAP BusinessObjects solution but has also recommended that it become the standard reporting tool for the entire campus.

BYU’s reporting efficiency translates directly into cost savings. “About two and a half years ago, our CFO wanted to restructure administrative services so that our mission would tie in more closely with the mission of the university. That mission is to produce students who can go out and lead in the world,” says Walker. “We held a series of retreats and came up with an audacious goal. We would transfer 25 full-time

send it to IT. And then, maybe, they’d get the report they wanted eight months later. Now, they can do it in 15 seconds at their desk. This and other similar initiatives have already saved us several hundred thousand dollars, and, as a result, we’ve been able to make a real contribution to BYU’s fundamental mission.” Eleven new professors have already been hired in areas such as nursing, engineering, humanities, and religion.

Expansion Plans

Walker looks forward to expanding the use of the SAP BusinessObjects software at BYU to include the enterprise

own areas by giving them ready access to information they didn’t have before. The SAP BusinessObjects software has enhanced our reporting and analysis and transformed the way we work, reducing our administrative costs and saving us enough money to hire additional faculty. Everybody wins – our staff, our professors, and most important, our students.”

“I attended a training session at the SAP facility, wrote the first report in about a week, and it’s blossomed from there.”

Kevin Walker, Director of Financial Solutions, Brigham Young University

equivalent administrative and IT staff positions to the academic side of the house over a five-year period. We’re tight – it’s not like we have excess capacity – so how could we do that?”

According to Walker, the SAP BusinessObjects software helped make this possible by enabling more streamlined administration and better insight into business operations. “The individual managers of each department and college can now access data and make decisions right at their desktop,” he says. “In the old model, they would have to call IT, fill out a form, list their justification, have the department chairperson and dean sign the form, and

performance management (EPM) functionalities. “Today,” he says, “we prepare a monthly summary of all activities on the campus for our president’s council. We use Microsoft Excel to do this, and it takes us about two weeks to put it together. With EPM, particularly with the dashboard piece, we think there’s a real opportunity to automate that whole process so the information can be updated instantaneously.”

“The strategic goal of our organization has always been to become trusted business advisors in a self-service environment,” concludes Walker. “We wanted to enable campus users to make better, more timely decisions in their

50 096 924 (09/09)

©2009 by SAP AG.

All rights reserved. SAP, R/3, SAP NetWeaver, Duet, PartnerEdge, ByDesign, SAP Business ByDesign, and other SAP products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of SAP AG in Germany and other countries.

Business Objects and the Business Objects logo, BusinessObjects, Crystal Reports, Crystal Decisions, Web Intelligence, Xcelsius, and other Business Objects products and services mentioned herein as well as their respective logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of Business Objects S.A. in the United States and in other countries. Business Objects is an SAP company.

All other product and service names mentioned are the trademarks of their respective companies. Data contained in this document serves informational purposes only. National product specifications may vary.

These materials are subject to change without notice. These materials are provided by SAP AG and its affiliated companies ("SAP Group") for informational purposes only, without representation or warranty of any kind, and SAP Group shall not be liable for errors or omissions with respect to the materials. The only warranties for SAP Group products and services are those that are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services, if any. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty.