SAP Business All-in-One

**SAP Customer Success Story**
Professional Services – IT Consulting

# CIBER INTERNATIONAL

## INTEGRATING FINANCE PROCESSES WITH SAP® SOLUTIONS TO ACHIEVE TIGHTER CONTROL

"With our SAP Business All-in-One solution, we have more intelligence at our fingertips. We're able to do more analysis, more interpretation of information, and more reporting without having to go back to our territory finance teams."

**Paul Williams,** Group Financial Controller, CIBER International

## QUICK FACTS

**Company**
- Name: CIBER International
- Location: Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Industry: Professional services – IT consulting
- Products and services: IT services and solutions for private and public enterprises
- Revenue: €300 million
- Employees: 2,500
- Web site: www.ciber-international.com

**Challenges and Opportunities**
- Consolidate disparate IT landscape
- Implement a common time sheet and billing engine with integrated financial ledgers
- Reduce the complexity of group financial reporting structures
- Increase visibility of business performance to improve management information

**Objectives**
- Standardize in a common enterprise resource planning installation
- Establish standard, enterprise-wide accounting policies
- Automate financial consolidation and reporting processes
- Provide management with tools and metrics to achieve better enterprise-wide business insight

**SAP® Solutions and Services**
SAP® Business All-in-One solution

**Implementation Highlights**
- Adopted phased implementation approach
- Leveraged a template to streamline rollout to territories
- Deployed resources available from own talent pool
- Focused on core functionality first, then local customization
- Tailored training to match skill set of diverse user base

**Why SAP**
- Comprehensive, integrated, and scalable business solution
- Ability to meet resource, price, and business requirements
- Ability to demonstrate proficiency with SAP software to customers
- Partner relationship with SAP

**Benefits**
- Streamlined financial close process
- Automated the capture of time information and invoice generation
- Increased data accuracy and reduced time spent on manual tasks
- Improved flow of financial information from territories to corporate office, providing better support to corporate finance teams
- Improved support for decisions through improved analysis tools and standard accounting policies across territories
- Improved productivity to support business growth without adding staff
- Became more responsive to ad hoc reporting requirements

**Existing Environment**
Disparate application environment with multiple reporting and consolidation tools

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When your operations in 16 countries use a motley assortment of business software, complex financial processes can obscure your view of enterprise-wide performance. That was the situation Netherlands-based CIBER International sought to remedy when it standardized on its SAP® Business All-in-One solution. Now the international provider of IT services has improved the quality and flow of financial information from its outlying sales territories, providing better support to the corporate finance team and enabling better control of local operations.

CIBER International had undergone a period of growth, both organic and through acquisition, which rapidly transformed its operations and expanded the market reach of the global IT services company. While this expansion was good for business, it complicated processes for the company's finance teams. "We have offices throughout the world that were running different software applications," says Paul Williams, CIBER International's group financial controller. "Our group reporting structures were complicated, and a lot of tasks were being carried out manually in spreadsheet software." The consolidation process was time consuming and labor intensive. Plus, the disparate applications hindered management's ability to adequately assess business performance.

## Standardizing on SAP Software

CIBER International made the decision to standardize applications and processes on enterprise resource planning (ERP) software and selected an SAP Business All-in-One solution. "There was a significant marketing upside to choosing SAP software since we are a channel partner," Williams explains. "But we did go through a selection process. We chose SAP software over four other ERP solutions because it fit our business needs the best."

## Mobilizing the Bench

One advantage to operating an IT consulting business is that you don't have to look too far to find a team to implement new software. Since a large portion of its business is dedicated to providing services related to SAP software, CIBER International was able to assign resources that were between projects to implement its own software. One disadvantage to this approach, however, was that those resources had to be pulled off the project at different times to service paying customers. But despite the team's changing roster, the company successfully deployed the software by following best practices it had established through its own experiences implementing SAP software.

## Prioritizing the Implementation

CIBER International approached the implementation in phases and used a global rollout template as the basis for the blueprint for the project. During the first phase, CIBER International focused on core finance functionality and on centralizing those processes in its SAP Business All-in-One solution. "We implemented a common time sheet and billing engine with financial ledgers integrated into the process," Williams explains.

During phase two, the implementation focus was more specialized. "We tightened the interconnection to our central finance system so we could analyze revenues and performance metrics in different ways," Williams explains. CIBER International also built standard queries to analyze key performance indicators for the business using the SAP NetWeaver® Business Intelligence component, functionality that is now found in the SAP NetWeaver Business Warehouse component. All key performance indicators

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were designed around the service elements of the business – time registration, resource utilization, project management, and billing.

## Responding to Local Needs

CIBER International believes in giving its territories what they need to support local business requirements. So during phase two – in addition to standard adjustments to fit the software more closely to local requirements, like tailoring invoice layouts and developing connections to external payroll and banking systems – CIBER International also provided additional support to CIBER Norway, one of its subsidiaries. The subsidiary wanted to implement enhanced SAP Customer Relationship Management application functionality to support its own local operations.

"We had a customer relationship management system that was up for license renewal and instead implemented the SAP CRM application," says Steinar Sveen, country manager for CIBER Norway. "We had the skills to implement it locally, so we integrated the software into our footprint over a three-month period." The Norway office uses the software to reduce its service costs while enhancing customer satisfaction by streamlining its service operations. "Once we've fully assessed the local impact of the software, we'll consider how to expand it into our overall solution landscape," Sveen adds.

"Now that we have common policies and more controls in place, we're better at identifying anomalies and have a higher comfort level that we're producing valid and accurate report results."

**Paul Williams,** Group Financial Controller, CIBER International

## Ensuring User Competency

While CIBER International's technical staff is well versed in the use of SAP software, members of the extended financial team had varying degrees of competency. During phase one of the implementation, CIBER International made use of standard training processes with documentation and classroom training. During the second phase, CIBER International took a more personalized approach. "We have a multinational staff with different user requirements," Williams adds. "We tailored our training to match the needs of the user community and engaged in face-to-face training and user forums to share the knowledge of the most proficient users."

## Streamlining Financial Processes

CIBER International's integrated environment has improved the flow of financial information from its operating territories to the central office. The corporate finance team can now run reports on territory financials directly from the software and can complete financial closings much more quickly. Finance teams throughout the extended enterprise also have a better set of tools to carry out day-to-day activities. "We used to cut and paste from spreadsheets; that's gone. We now take the data right from our SAP Business All-in-One solution," Williams says.

By centralizing processes, the corporate finance team spends less time performing accounting tasks like preparing backward-looking data and more time on analysis. "We can now focus on interpreting the information and running analytics without having to go back to the territory finance teams," Williams explains. "Plus, we have standardized accounting policies across our territories so that the quality of our information is higher and our measures are consistent and accurate when we monitor performance."

## Increasing Bandwidth and Scope

Since implementing its SAP Business All-in-One solution, CIBER International has been able to support its growth without adding additional staff. "We've been able to deal with a significant increase in the size of our operation with the same overhead that we had before," Williams adds. "We're able to produce more information and value with the same number of people."

Even with its increased workload, the finance team is now better able to respond to ad hoc reporting requirements coming

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from CIBER International's United States–based parent company. "Our finance organization extends to some outlying locations, and the teams have varying skill levels," Williams explains. "Now that we have common policies and more controls in place, we're better at identifying anomalies and have a higher comfort level that we're producing valid and accurate report results."

With its core financial processes well under control, CIBER International will now focus on expanding its SAP software footprint and upgrading its software to gain more self-service and mobile functionality. "We plan to apply some of the same best-run business practices that we've adopted for our finance team to other areas of the business – like sales forecasting, skills management, and resourcing processes," Williams explains. "The results we've achieved so far with SAP Business All-in-One have been remarkable, and we would like them to extend to other areas of our business."

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