Competitor Group Sprints through the Finish Line with Oracle PBCS

Competitor Group Inc. (CGI) is the leading global media and event entertainment company dedicated to promoting the active lifestyle. Headquartered in San Diego, CA, their core purpose is to inspire and empower people to lead a healthier and more active life. They manage 50+ world-class events that include the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series, the TriRock Series presented by REI, the Women's Running Series benefiting the Edith Sanford Breast Cancer Foundation and the Events DC Nation's Triathlon. CGI also provides multiplatform media offerings that include national publications, *Competitor, Triathlete, Velo and Women's Running* and an active lifestyle digital network, the *Competitor Endurance Sports Network.* Additionally, CGI's network captures active individuals at the point of commitment through *RaceIt*, a leading event registration platform.

Challenge

CGI suffered from similar challenges that other fast growing, industry-leading organizations have experienced… planning and budgeting in Microsoft Excel. It was simply a nightmare for the Finance team to plan and forecast each unique division of the organization. They found themselves drowning in spreadsheets with difficulty in gathering planning inputs across the organization. CGI also could not slice and dice the data unless their analysts linked the data to their backend accounting system and then to Microsoft Access and then to Microsoft FRx, a discontinued financial reporting and analysis software product. The Finance team spent hours on managing spreadsheets in order to access information such as T&E by department or contract labor by event. Hence, CGI could not fully understand their profitability by products, events, or customers.

Although Executive Management supported the investment of a new planning and budgeting system, they also required that the system be implemented for the 2015 budget cycle. This left the Finance and IT team to identify a system and go-live within three months!

Solution

In order to move away from disconnected spreadsheets, CGI selected Oracle® Hyperion Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service™ (PBCS) because it provided several key benefits, including:

- Based on Oracle Hyperion Planning™ that supports enterprise wide planning, budgeting, and forecasting in a Cloud-based deployment model
- No CAPEX infrastructure investments
- Virtually no learning curve
- Minimal IT resources required; owned by Finance
- Built-in management reporting capabilities

However, in order to implement PBCS in three short months, CGI partnered with Key Performance Ideas, the nation's leader with the most successful go-lives of PBCS and the only *Specialized Oracle Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service* partner that offers a unique methodology (**PLAN***tastic*) for getting organizations up and running on a forecasting solution in a short period of time, and in an efficient manner.

Key Performance Ideas built the centralized, web based solution for CGI that provides an Excel or browser interface for budgeting and forecasting activities with inputs of key metrics for reporting. The solution leverages Essbase™ as the back-end to store and calculate data, providing CGI automatic report updates due to calculation changes or account additions. Key Performance Ideas also helped CGI implement Oracle Financial Reporting™ that delivers a comprehensive report development tool, generating highly formatted reports accessed from the web or any Microsoft Office product that can easily be changed by end-users to show previous months and/or different functional areas.

Additionally, due to the complexity of CGI's business model, Key Performance Ideas helped them define dimensions to categorize every data value and provide the segmentation the company needed for input, calculations, and variance analysis across time periods, years and scenarios. Account dimensions included CGI's Income Statement and Balance Sheet, each sourced from their accounting system, and statistical data such as race registrations, runners, etc.

Finally, Key Performance Ideas implemented metadata administration via the Hyperion Planning Class Administration web client that enables administrators to create, manage, and deploy applications and implemented role based security to provide access permissions assigned by members, data forms, business rules, menus and task lists.

> *Key Performance Ideas is **an amazing business partner!** We were drowning in spreadsheets and Key Performance Ideas assisted us in a s**eamless implementation.** In only a few short months, we graduated to a system that supports our enterprise wide planning in an **easy to use Cloud-based model.** Analysis that used to take hours to perform can now be done with a few clicks. As a result, **we are able to spend our time more efficiently on analysis and strategy** as opposed to data collection.*
>
> — Director of Finance, Competitor Group, Inc.

Benefits Achieved

By partnering with Key Performance Ideas, CGI was live with their new planning and budgeting solution in just three short months! A successful finish-line sprint, CGI has achieved the following benefits:

- A "single version of the truth" via consistent & correct reports for users to view directly against the application

- Improved planning and forecasting accuracy with the removal of "spreadsheets chaos" to gather data

- Streamlined the entire planning and budgeting process

- Leveraged existing user competencies with Microsoft Office integration

- Created line-of-sight into business drivers so that time can be spent on analysis and strategy, rather than data collection

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