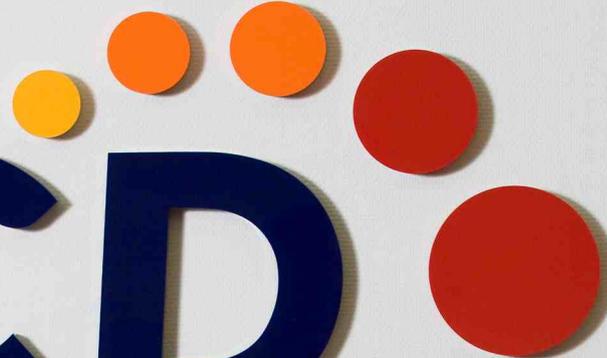


BCD  **tra**



More insight into performance
results in more control at BCD Travel

MORE INSIGHT INTO PERFORMANCE RESULTS IN MORE CONTROL

The global operating BCD Travel wanted to gain more insight into the organization's performance. An ever more complex need for information meant a growing demand for an improved and effective reporting process. In this interview, Cees Batenburg of BCD Travel explains more about the approach and the results of the implementation of SAP BPC by Finext.

Text: Danielle Gruijs | Springfish

"This project actually started a few years earlier," says Cees Batenburg, Senior Vice President Global Accounting & Treasury at BCD Travel. "Our reporting needs became more and more complex, both through our growth and the economic situation. The economic climate in 2008 and 2009 was not really positive and from an organization like ours this demands an ability to react swiftly in order to stay healthy."

GROWING DEMAND FOR INFORMATION

To meet this growing need for information, we chose a new reporting system; SAP BPC. Initially this new reporting system was only implemented within Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). But a growing need to effectively retrieve information from the system arose worldwide. "We discovered a growing need to effectively retrieve information from the system within 'global'," says Batenburg. "The existing system did not provide us the dynamics and flexibility in reporting options we were looking for."

"EMEA was already using SAP BPC, so we could see what the possibilities were. Since those appealed to us, we did not look any further for other systems," Batenburg continues. "Furthermore, introducing another system next to the existing one would not have been logical with regard to effectiveness."

"STICK TO THE BASICS, YOU KNOW YOUR ROUTE, SO DON'T GET OFF ON ANY SIDETRACKS"

"NOT SELF-EVIDENT"

Batenburg is very pleased with the progress of the project. "The 'Go live'-moment we envisaged has been met. That may sound logical, but it is not self-evident within our organization." How we succeeded? "Much effort was invested by both Finext and BCD," says Batenburg. He gives two reasons as to how the project could be completed within the estimated time. "First we formulated a clear goal. By determining the requirements we got a very clear view on what we wanted. Finext played an important role in this." "Based on these clear requirements we made a targeted planning," adds Jaap-Willem de Visser. De Visser was closely involved in the project as project leader from Finext Performance Management.

"DON'T GET OFF ON ANY SIDE TRACKS"

"Secondly, stick to the basics," Batenburg continues. Often extra requirements arise during the project and it is very tempting to extent the scope. "We experienced those moments as well, but yet we decided against this. You know your route, so don't get off on any sidetracks."

After the implementation of SAP BPC by Finext, her sister organization Swap Support takes care of hosting & support. "By outsourcing the application support we guarantee the continuity of our system," says Cees Batenburg.

“THE SYSTEM IS AS ONLY GOOD AS THE INFORMATION IT CONTAINS”

According to Batenburg staying on route does not only have a positive effect on the progress of the project, but also on the impact the new reporting system has on the end-users. “Additional wishes such as details in the system or in the way of reporting have a big impact on the organization. The system is only as good as the data it contains. In some cases additional requirements were already built into the system, so as to be prepared when the rest of the organization is ready for it. At which time we can easily roll out the rest.”

“Do not underestimate the impact of the new system. If you change too much, you lose support,” Batenburg emphasises once more. “You are overshooting the target when you have a beautiful system that no one can or wants to use.”



Cees Batenburg (BCD Travel)

“MORE INSIGHT INTO PERFORMANCE RESULTS IN MORE CONTROL”

Cees Batenburg is positive about the results of the new reporting process. “Our organization really has better insight into our performance now. We are more flexible and dynamic in our ways of reporting and our reporting and analyses actually go faster.”

He is convinced that this has a positive impact on the financial results. “More insight into performance provides more control. That improves the profitability, but that impact is hard to measure.”

NO REDUCTION IN FTES

Often a reduction in FTEs is named as one of the desired goals when choosing a new reporting system. This is something Batenburg disagrees with. “I now have more information at my disposal. If I would want those same insights using the old system, I would need more people.” He does notice a reduction in external staff. “We normally hire people when compiling the year end accounts, but that is no longer necessary. Saving in time does not give saving in FTEs, but it does prevent hiring extra personnel.”

BASIS FIRST

At the moment Batenburg sees the accessible information as the main improvement. A next step is to improve the quality of the data entered. “Previously, we missed certain information that we needed. Since that information is now available, we find that we are still missing quality in some elements.” Batenburg wants to have a solid basis first and subsequently lift the information to a higher level. “Because it should come from within the organization; that is where we gradually need to engage in the dialogue.”

LESSONS LEARNED

When asked to reflect on both projects, Batenburg indicates that he has taken the ‘lessons learned’ from the EMEA project into account when implementing the global project. “In the first project the requirements and the goal were not clear enough. That takes you on a voyage of discovery; what are the possibilities, what do we want? We clearly handled that differently in the global project.” A second lesson was to make a realistic estimation of the availability of the internal staff. “We were too optimistic about the availability of the internal resources,” tells Batenburg. “When a discrepancy occurs between the planned availability and the reality, there are two consequences. Several people need to work overtime plus you run the risk of missing things.”

INTERACTION DURING TRAINING

A final lesson that BCD Travel learned was to make time to train the end-users. "More time for training, both earlier in the process and more or more often," says Batenburg. "We consciously did not ask input from all countries when determining the requirements, as to not lose focus. Instead we chose interaction during training. During a recent training in Singapore it became clear what it means for the end-users in the various countries. We also use a lot of online communication, but face-to-face still gives the best results in these cases."

"YOU MUST NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PERSONAL CONTACT. BETTER COMMUNICATION COMES FROM SHARING THE SAME OFFICE SPACE"

"DON'T BE A YES MAN"

"Finext played a very important part in the project," says Batenburg. "They have a lot of knowledge of the product at their disposal, combined with expertise in financial processes. Furthermore, the role of project leader is a very important one."

Apart from that, he highly values critical performance of the role of advisor. "I am not looking for an advisor who always agrees with everything I say; I might as well do it myself. I am really looking for someone who challenges me. Luckily that meant many discussions with the Finext project team concerning the contents. In order to have a substantive solid discussion there has to be a certain connection, a healthy business relationship," says Batenburg. "Or actually more than that, during such a project it feels like you are becoming colleagues."

At BCD Travel they have very deliberately set up a 'war room' where the Finext team and the people from BCD could get the project going together. "If our people stay in their own office space, it is hard for them to shut themselves off from their daily work," Batenburg concludes. "You must not underestimate the power of personal contact. Better communication comes from sharing the same office space."

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To learn more about the possibilities for your organization, contact Martijn Meuling at 070-300 3000 or martijn.meuling@finext.nl.



WAARDEKETEN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Om soepel te kunnen rapporteren en besturen, is verstand van alle elementen van Performance Management noodzakelijk. Hiervoor bundelen we onze expertise van infrastructuur & installatie, advies & implementatie en beheer & onderhoud.

Elk vanuit ons eigen vakmanschap, verbonden door onze unieke manier van werken. Beter sturen, met betrouwbare cijfers en snelle rapportages uit een stabiel systeem, wordt zo werkelijkheid voor elke organisatie.

Meer informatie:

www.technision.nl

www.performancemanagement.finext.nl

www.swapsupport.nl

www.qwinc.nl