



- Improved sales results
- Flexible budgeting & sales forecasting
- Secure worldwide access of sales data
- IBM Cognos TM1 as a cloud solution

Planning in the cloud at Global Collect

GlobalCollect, an Ingenico Group company, is the world's most knowledgeable payment service provider, processing international ecommerce payments for more than 600 of the world's most recognized ecommerce brands. To provide salespeople around the world safe access to valuable data, the organization implemented a user-based cloud solution for budgeting & sales forecasting.

PLANNING IN THE CLOUD AT GLOBAL COLLECT

By implementing a new budgeting & sales forecast tool, GlobalCollect wanted to improve the flexibility of the budgeting process and add value to the sales processes by providing worldwide access. "The reason to implement a new budgeting & sales forecasting tool was twofold. First of all, we wanted to improve our budgeting process, and make it more precise and efficient. The main reason, however, was that we wanted to find a global and secure solution for our sales team for sales forecasting," says Alex Essens, Vice President Planning & Business Control at GlobalCollect.

"The sales forecasts contain a lot of sensitive information, which we want to protect. To prevent leakage and exposure of valuable data, we had to limit the distribution of and access to our files. A reliable and global solution for sharing confident information was needed."

"TO ENSURE SAFE, GLOBAL ACCESS, IBM COGNOS TM1 WAS ADAPTED TO BE CLOUD-BASED"

USING THE CLOUD

GlobalCollect selected IBM Cognos TM1 as their new budgeting & sales forecasting tool. To ensure safe, global access, the application was adapted to be cloud-based. This approach was unique, as it is one of the first implementations in the Netherlands using TM1 in a 'Platform as a Service' (PaaS) solution. "At the time, TM1 was an application you had to buy and install in your own IT environment. However, we created a platform on which TM1 can be used as a secured service outside the company," says Bas Jansen, Finext Performance Management. He is the lead consultant during the implementation of the planning tool.

To create the new cloud environment, Finext worked closely together with her sister company Swap Support. "Together, we combine the diversity of expertise in infrastructure, platform and application software necessary to create a complete planning solution in the cloud. Finext implemented the new application model using the cloud solution environment built by Swap Support. They also take care of the hosting, the functional and the technical support," says Bas.

"All the data was already gathered and stored in one place; here at our headquarters in Hoofddorp," says Mark van den Berg, business controller at GlobalCollect and developer of the sales model. He is responsible for the sales data gathering process and the sales model. "We wanted to give the sales people around the world access to their part, with a good security structure. Using TM1 in the cloud enables this."



Eelco Bilstra, Yingyi Zhu, Bas Jansen, Mark van den Berg and Alex Essens

TM1 IN A PAAS SOLUTION

Using IBM Cognos TM1 as a PaaS (Platform as a Service) solution for their budgeting & sales forecasting has additional advantages. "First of all, there is a price component," says Alex. "The PaaS solution gives a stable cost fee," says Eelco Bilstra, Finext Improvement, project manager during the implementation of the new sales forecasting process. "There is a fixed monthly fee for licenses, hosting, technical support and a number of users."

Also, using the cloud solution, GlobalCollect does not have to invest in on-premise hardware. "We are no longer completely dependent on IT. In fact, our IT department is hardly involved. This gives us optimum flexibility." "We have direct control," Mark agrees. "We know what the application has to do, we can apply the changes ourselves whenever needed." Swap Support assists with the technical, application and functional support. "Whenever I need them, I give the Swap Support service desk a call," Mark says.

SECURE GLOBAL ACCESS

The new solution was heavily tested. "As a payment service provider, security and data protection are very important for us," explains Yingyi Zhu, business controller at GlobalCollect, one of the super users of the application with focus on the budgeting model. "Our security levels are very high; we wanted to ensure the same security for remote access as for the on-premise systems."

"It is very reliable," says Mark. "The secure global access we required is ensured by multiple hierarchies depending on responsibilities. This involved various security layers to be set up in the application as well as in the cloud platform." Also, TM1 is integrated with the BI databases. "This allows for easy and secure access to more detailed data whenever needed."

FLEXIBLE AND RELIABLE

GlobalCollect is positive about the results of the new budgeting and sales forecasting process. "We achieved our business goals and even overachieved at the sales side," says Alex. "The budgeting tool is more flexible and much easier to maintain. Before, it took us a long time to correct the budget if something went wrong". "The new planning application ensures that the data is much more reliable. This allows GlobalCollect to focus on the budgeting or the sales forecasting process without getting disturbed by functional or technical issues," says Eelco.



Users around the world are positive as well. "Worldwide, we have a growing number of business development and account managers using the sales forecasting, bonus calculations and result reporting," says Yingyi. "They use the tool on a daily base, monitor their own regions and have feedback on their actions."

"Mark even got a company 'Thank You Award' for the work he has done regarding the tool. This award was recommended by a large number of sales people," says Alex.

IMPROVED SALES RESULTS

"Data accessibility is greatly improved for sales; the sales forecast is used 20 times more than before," Mark says. "It is a more or less interactive model, in which they can drill down to a certain month. This has greatly improved the sales results. They can see the underlying payment streams, which affect the costs. If a merchant suddenly sends a lot of expensive payments to us, the sales person can see it immediately and take action."

"DATA ACCESSIBILITY IS GREATLY IMPROVED; THE SALES FORECAST IS USED 20 TIMES MORE THAN BEFORE"

"The sales people now answer 100% of the questions they previously had themselves. However, we do get new types of questions; what-if questions. For instance, 'if I change the price on this, what will be the impact?'" says Alex. This improves the quality of the sales process. "Now, the account managers are able to spend more time helping their merchants to sell more globally."

"An invoice can have 100 lines. We can now easily see if a certain payment has not been paid. This gives our sales people a great opportunity to optimize the possibilities per merchant," explains Alex. "We can also improve the service, by looking at the costs for the merchants and advising them the best products for their situation. The application enables both us as well as the merchant to optimize the flow."

IN SHORT

GlobalCollect, an Ingenico Group company, is a leading global Payment Service Provider. To provide salespeople around the world safe access to valuable data, the organization implemented a PaaS (Platform as a Service) solution for budgeting & sales forecasting. As TM1 is not normally used as PaaS, Finext and her sister company Swap Support created a platform to enable the use of TM1 in the cloud. The new solution improves the sales results by providing sales people worldwide with more detailed information.

KNOWLEDGE ON-PREMISE, TOOLING OFF-PREMISE

Mark and Yingyi played a large role in the implementation of the TM1 cloud solution. "We used a 'coaching model', in which we advised and coached, while Mark and Yingyi built most of the application," explains Bas. "We focused on learning by doing, by combining resources and coaching," says Eelco. "I believe a company should have somebody, or actually a minimum of two people, wanting to learn the new system. Have the first-line knowledge 'in-house', while you have the platform, the functional and the technical support outside," says Alex.

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WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Would you like to know more about the possibilities of bringing your Performance Management applications to the cloud?

Please contact Eelco Bilstra at eelco.bilstra@finext.nl or 070-300 3000.

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