

Ravensburger Buchverlag backs arcplan Enterprise

„The most useful aspect of the new arcplan application for our publishing company is the fact that we can monitor daily analysis updates and comparisons of how sales of new products are developing. This means, for example, that, working with the marketing department, we can carry out more targeted and effective promotional measures.“

Peter Nowotny, Sales Manager at Ravensburger Buchverlag



INDUSTRY

- Publishing

SOLUTION

- Standardized sales information system

COMPANY / COUNTRY

- Ravensburger Buchverlag / Germany

REQUIREMENTS

- targeted, up-to-date, detailed sales data
- multi-layered, individual and meaningful reports
- better quality of information for analyses

SOFTWARE

- arcplan Enterprise
- Microsoft SQL Server

USERS

- 50 co-workers in sales and marketing

BENEFITS

- improved business management through up-to-date information
- sales development managed through historical analyses
- implementation of effective promotional measures as a result of accurate, flexible analyses
- user-friendly operation leads to reduction in support requirements



Ravensburger Buchverlag has been in existence since 1882 and is a byword for high-quality books for children and young people. Around 450 books appear every year with more than 1,700 titles available. Ravensburger Buchverlag, which employs around 100 inhouse and external co-workers, pays particular attention to the content and material quality of its books. The figures show that it's a winning concept.

Sales of 47.6 million euros in 2006 represent over 14.9 million books sold. To maintain and manage the success story of these books, the publishers introduced a sales information system based on arcplan Enterprise, the Performance Management software from arcplan, which enables hierarchic reports and the evaluation of daily updates of reliable data. Employees can access the data they need from any place at any time, via the Web.

Old high-maintenance system

The sales department has for years relied on IT-supported analyses to analyze sales figures, sales channels and marketing initiatives. The SD and SAP-MM SAP modules delivered the data as text files, which were loaded into an Access database for processing. The results were then distributed as Excel lists. This involved a lot of work, as a new report had to be produced for every problem. The work of maintaining databases and producing lists and reports was a fulltime job. In addition, the data could not be validated, as there was no data warehouse.

Analytical solution – up-to-date and reliable

Over two years ago, the department decided to replace the existing solution with a new future-oriented system. This had to

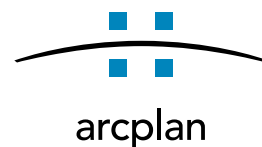
- provide a standardized, consistent database with
- a clearly-structured data model and
- an analytical application that can be accessed directly anywhere by sales co-workers via the Web.

It had to be able to ensure that analyses and evaluations could be carried out swiftly, based on reliable, current data.

After intensive comparison with different solutions, the publishers decided on arcplan Enterprise, working with the Microsoft SQL Server. The superior flexibility of arcplan's BI application in producing reports, in addition to its low purchase, maintenance and support costs were decisive factors in the choice.

arcplan Enterprise directly accesses the data warehouse of SQL Server 2000 and the OLAP components Analysis Services. Data is loaded from the modules into the warehouse via a SAP interface.

Ravensburger Buchverlag carried out the project with business Intelligence consultants Actinium Consulting GmbH in Lindau. Together, the partners defined the report and application requirements in November 2004. By March of the following year,



the sales team was able to use the first three reports based on arcplan Enterprise. The extremely close collaboration of specialists and users in all phases of the project enabled the department to produce all their reports themselves.

Time and cost expenditure drastically reduced

Today, 50 of the publishers' employees throughout Germany use the arcplan application. This includes sales and key account management, as well as inhouse and external co-workers. Marketing checks the results of promotional initiatives and editorial co-workers find out about programs, products and number of items sold. 140 reports are available for daily reports by book title and monthly, quarterly and half-yearly sales reports by sales channel. In addition, users carry out analyses to determine the top 100 customers on the basis of break-even analyses and various market analyses. The arcplan solution enjoys a high level of acceptance by users, as it gives them access to all the vital data from anywhere they choose via a secure VPN (Virtual Private Network) – which is, in addition, both up-to-date and clear. Instead of comparing figures by placing lists next to each other as they did before, sales managers can now click through important information like sales or number of items and, by means of a drill-down function, display details by key figures in a systematic and problem-oriented fashion. The new BI application enables the publishing house to monitor daily the development of new product sales through up-to-date, clear analyses and comparisons. In this way, working with the marketing department, more targeted and effective promotional measures can be carried out. Reports are available for viewing by all departments, so that market or sales comparisons between different sales channels or by different marketing initiatives are possible.

In the book market in particular, analyses of the sales development of a product over several years is particularly important. The new software makes this type of historical analysis possible for the first time.

Through arcplan Enterprise the company also benefited from cost reduction, as the amount of time spent on producing reports has decreased by 80 percent. Due to the application's user-friendliness – a factor that is of high importance for the publishers – all reports are developed internally in the department, so IT support for this area is no longer necessary. In addition, users are disburdened from distributing reports, as they have access to this information via the Web.

Affiliated partners

Consultants Actinium Consulting GmbH in Lindau, working with Ravensburger Buchverlag sales department, were responsible for implementing the sales information system based on arcplan Enterprise. The consultants gained the confidence of the department concerned by offering professional advice. The idea of close collaborations with subsequent user departments was also taken on board.



arcplan Information Services GmbH

arcplan is a vendor of Enterprise Performance Management software and services that enable cost-effective, cross-functional performance management with real-time data access. Founded in 1993, arcplan supports more than 2,500 customers and 300,000 users worldwide.

www.arcplan.com