

Swiss Railways backs arcplan Enterprise for financial planning

„With the new solution, today we are in a position to plan strategically. We can now react to changing requirements in the market place and in the organization itself within a very short time. The methodical procedures and transparent structures mean results are always comprehensible. Through simulations, the planning process becomes the goal-setting process!“

Silvan von Rohr, Group Planning Corporate Finance and Controlling,
Swiss Railways, SBB



INDUSTRY

- Transport

SOLUTION

- Financial planning application

COMPANY / COUNTRY

- Swiss Railways / Switzerland

REQUIREMENTS

- Flexible six-year planning, with simulations
- Transparent, verifiable results presentation

SOFTWARE

- arcplan Enterprise
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005
- Citrix

USERS

- 170 controllers, cost center managers Europe-wide

BENEFITS

- Strategic business management through flexible planning and simulations
- Faster planning execution
- User-friendliness
- Less maintenance

Swiss Railways (SBB) is the largest travel and transport company in Switzerland. With a 3,000-kilometer rail network, the total public transport network in Switzerland comprises 28,500 kilometers – SBB trains are responsible for around 87 percent of person kilometers traveled and around 90 percent of freight traffic tonne kilometers. SBB's 28,000 co-workers achieve annual sales of 2.16 billion Swiss francs from passenger traffic and 0.97 billion Swiss francs from freight traffic.

The company consists of three units: passenger traffic, freight traffic and infrastructure. In addition, there are the areas of real estate and central services, to which Finance and Human Resources belong.

After becoming a joint-stock company, SBB introduced a Europe-wide planning solution to its Finance and Accounting Department that enabled much more flexible and transparent planning: arcplan Enterprise, the performance management software from arcplan. Changes in the market place and in the company can be displayed swiftly, simply and comprehensibly. In addition, the planning procedures for internal cost allocations ensure a transparent presentation of results that is also comprehensible externally.

Financial planning procedures out of date

The company's entire financial planning process – from data capture, through illustration of dependencies and data compression to evaluation – was previously carried out with Excel. Each organizational unit collected basic data decentrally and sent it in the form of an Excel spreadsheet to the central Finance & Accounting Department, where data from some 1,000 applications was condensed and reproduced into an Excel file.

With the millennium SSB became an incorporated company, 100 percent-owned by the Swiss Confederation, the old form of financial planning could no longer keep pace with new requirements. Ongoing organizational changes in the company and the new orientation of the company in the market place could no longer be presented transparently with the overrigid Excel applications. To make matters worse, ongoing maintenance, expansion and data linking was carried out by a single co-worker in the existing solution and could not be documented anywhere.



Transparent and flexible planning with arcplan Enterprise

When SBB made the decision to introduce several SAP modules (FI, BW, SEM and others) company-wide, managers also wanted to base financial planning on an analytic solution. The new application was to

- enable centralized data holding and
- allow ongoing changes in planning to be presented flexibly and transparently.

In addition, the user in Finance and Accounting had to be able

- to continuously control the planning application him/herself and
- if necessary, be able to adjust metrics and data

– and all without the need for programming.

Having checked out several business intelligence products, SBB finally decided on the arcplan Enterprise-based application from PIT Informationssysteme AG. The arcplan solution was convincing because of

- the openness of access to data-holding systems
- master data in SAP,
- the option of data entry, plus
- write-back after evaluation

– a decided advantage over solutions offered by the competition.

Within just three months of working with the SBB team, PIT Informationssysteme AG was able to implement the arcplan solution ready-to-plan. This was possible, firstly, through close collaboration with the users and, secondly, through arcplan Enterprise's flexibility, through which users' demands could be implemented swiftly. Since its introduction, 170 Finance and Accounting co-workers work with the planning system across Europe.

The front-end arcplan Enterprise-based solution is deployed in a Citrix environment. It accesses the Microsoft SQL Server 2005 via an ODBC connection. Additionally, automatic processes in the form of stored procedures are deposited in this environment.

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

The application manages and reproduces Swiss Railways' entire (six year) financial planning process. The software is also used for

- budgets and forecasts,
- human resources planning,
- planning procedures for internal cost allocations, and
- flexible depiction of planned dependencies, taking into account success drivers.

Advantages of the new solution

The solution enables strategic planning. Thanks to transparent structures, controllers can react flexibly to changes in the market and the company at any time, in the shortest possible time, and adjust their planning.

The new application has a second decisive use for SBB. The planning procedures for internal cost allocations integrated into the planning process guarantees results presentations suited to the need and the level in question required by the state. Internal service streams between individual areas and cost centers are portrayed transparently and verifiably. The solution is constantly adjusted to changing requirements by an internal SBB team and PIT Informationssysteme can be consulted if required. The partner is also responsible for user training and further training.

Affiliated partners

In collaboration with the existing SBB section, PIT Informationssysteme AG was responsible for the conceptualization and implementation of the arcplan Enterprise-based planning solution. The software and service company has extensive specialist knowledge of both analytical software and standard applications.

