

# ADP CANADA



## “COGNOS ALLOWS US TO LOOK AT THINGS IN DIFFERENT WAYS AND FIND REAL OPPORTUNITIES.”

**STEFAN SARAZEN, SENIOR DIRECTOR  
FINANCE, ADP CANADA**

ADP Canada is a “business behind the business.” The largest Canadian provider of HR and payroll information solutions, ADP Canada needed to manage the complexities of a steadily expanding client roster as well as the intricacies of its own corporate planning, budgeting, and forecasting processes. Opportunities for cost savings were going unrecognized, the planning

cycle was tedious, and data accuracy needed a boost—until the company implemented a Cognos Enterprise Planning solution.

### **PAIN IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

ADP Canada decided to replace its spreadsheet-and-email planning infrastructure with a new solution to streamline budgeting and planning, improve forecasting accuracy, reduce budget cycle time, and pinpoint opportunities for savings. The solution needed to consolidate a large number of cost centers, analyze data, respond to rapid change, and create and amend management reports. “We needed an integrated planning solution with broad functionality,” said Stefan Sarazen, senior finance director. “It had to have the ease-of-use of Excel, which even non-financial types find fairly easy and straightforward. And it had to be able to make changes at a high level and ripple them back through individual plan submissions, as when you reconcile bottom-up and top-down plans.

“Just as important,” said Sarazen, “we wanted to reduce or eliminate the risk associated with Excel-based planning, where you never know if someone else is adding a row or column or inserting or deleting a formula, which completely derails the consolidation.” Sarazen added that the company required a solution with a flexible architecture, allowing complex client-side calculations, providing instantaneous responses,

#### **ADP CANADA**

Canada’s largest provider of payroll and human resource information solutions, paychecks, securities transactions processing, automotive computing solutions, and auto damage claim estimates.

#### *Industry*

- Business Services

#### *Geography*

- Canada

#### *Planning Requirements*

- New planning infrastructure
- Streamline planning and budgeting
- Improve forecast accuracy
- Reduce cycle time
- Identify cost savings

#### *Previous System*

- Excel spreadsheets and e-mail

#### *System solution*

- Cognos Enterprise Planning

#### *Benefits*

- Rapid implementation
- Faster planning cycle
- 98% forecast accuracy
- Improved user buy-in, accountability, and productivity
- Substantial cost savings
- Oracle integration

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and reducing unnecessary traffic during high-use times typical during the deadline-driven planning process.

### **AN OBVIOUS CHOICE: COGNOS ENTERPRISE PLANNING**

After careful comparison of several competing solutions, ADP Canada made the obvious choice: Cognos—owing to its impressive client roster and history of solid, well-managed growth, along with the features, functions, and user-friendliness of the Cognos platform. Sarazen and his colleagues found Cognos easy-to-use, easy-to-access, easy-to-integrate with in-place systems, and able to consolidate data from numerous cost centers in hours—even minutes—instead of weeks. Said Sarazen, “After we finished evaluations, it was clear that Cognos was the right solution for ADP Canada.”

### **UP AND RUNNING IN EIGHT WEEKS**

The Cognos Enterprise Planning implementation at ADP Canada required less than eight weeks to complete. A major factor was the company’s ability to continue using its existing Oracle database as the central repository for all financial and business planning data. Another factor was near-effortless user orientation: Managers could create their own training processes based on departmental data flow and the information expected from individual users. Existing Internet and intranet infrastructure made it easy to roll out pre-configured templates to plan contributors and provide management reports in real time.

### **THE COGNOS ADVANTAGE**

Cognos has helped ADP Canada expand financial management expertise and accountability. And with Cognos, the company has been able to integrate five separate business units and hundreds of cost centers, gaining a consolidated view of its financial situation. For example, said Sarazen, “Finance staff can review, compare, and forecast expenses across the enterprise at any level of detail.”

Using the Web-based Cognos Contributor module, business managers across departments and divisions can submit data utilizing distributed templates. Users can work simultaneously without inhibiting performance because Contributor calls data from the server only as it’s needed and saves to the server only data that has changed. The Contributor module offers the simplicity end-users appreciate as well as the workflow structure management requires to direct and monitor the planning process. ADP Canada designed a workflow using Contributor that closely reflects its planning operations. “This has been very popular with both the planning department and our users,” Sarazen noted.

Another Cognos Contributor benefit was that budget or forecast changes could be made at a high level. Said Sarazen, “If you’re a reviewer, you can tell at a quick glance exactly what cost centers roll up in your organization—you see immediately what’s happening in your hierarchy.” Once plans and forecasts are approved, ADP Canada can analyze the data and see where top-down goals don’t reconcile with bottom-up projections. “With the Cognos ‘breakback’ function, we make the changes at a summary level to make sure we can meet corporate targets and then pro-rate them over various cost centers,” Sarazen said.

### **BEST-PRACTICE PLANNING ENCOURAGES USER ACCEPTANCE**

Although rolling out major process change and an enterprise-wide software solution can be highly disruptive, the best-practice-based Cognos implementation at ADP Canada actually facilitated user adoption and minimized negative end-user impact. For example, when it was time to deploy the new Cognos system, Sarazen and the implementation team used the Cognos Analyst module to design models that spoke the non-financial language of real-world business unit users, who found the models both easy to understand and easy to use. User enthusiasm ran high.

“Obviously, with Cognos, there has been a high degree of user acceptance,” said Sarazen. “Our access times through the Internet are very fast, which is a huge improvement over Excel. Workflow management is a big hit. The team can focus on analysis rather than

#### *With Cognos Enterprise Planning*

- Corporate expenses down more than \$1 million
- Forecast accuracy up to 98%
- Consolidations in hours—even minutes—not weeks
- Expenditure reviews in seconds, not hours

making sure contributions are complete and the numbers add up. The slice-and-dice ability of the Cognos solution allowed us to look at things in different ways and uncover real opportunities throughout the plan.”

### **A TRUE BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP**

With Cognos Enterprise Planning, monthly forecasting accuracy has jumped from 95 percent to 98 percent. Moreover, corporate expenses have shrunk by more than \$1 million, enabling the company to stay on track with its current profit targets.

According to Sarazen, Cognos planning and forecasting technology has changed the lives of the financial team members at ADP Canada. The team has transitioned from a “consolidation-type” group to a “true business partner-type” group where users can focus on analysis and provide input for field forecasts and plans. Finance staff use Cognos Enterprise Planning to review managers’ expenditures in a matter of seconds instead of wasting endless hours sorting through endless paper documents.

Not surprisingly, all the Cognos Enterprise Planning benefits accruing to ADP Canada have allowed a more determined focus on serving and supporting the company’s more than 38,000 clients.

### **SOLID PLATFORM FOR PLANNING AHEAD**

By leveraging the Cognos platform, ADP Canada has improved focus, accountability, and visibility into its business operations, streamlined communication between its finance and management personnel, and provided significant cost savings. Furthermore, the company has improved resource allocation, boosted planning and forecasting capabilities, increased accountability by managers, and heightened productivity across the organization.

Looking ahead, ADP Canada expects to expand its use of Cognos technology to:

- Enable sales force to generate forecasts by product and geography
- Provide sales managers with access to information on their performance and related compensation, including the ability to drill down for details
- Enable revenue planning by product, business unit, and geography

Both the implementation team and end users at ADP Canada have been impressed with Cognos flexibility—the flexibility to change, collaborate, report, and adapt in a dynamic work environment. Plan submission and workflow procedures have proved seamless and data aggregation is in real time. Going forward with Cognos, says Sarazen, the company is well-equipped to align processes and performance with strategic goals, and to enhance shareholder value.

### **ABOUT ADP CANADA**

Established in 1979, ADP Canada is a division of \$7 billion, US-based Automatic Data Processing, Inc. ADP provides paychecks for more than 30 million workers worldwide, processes securities transactions for clients in 25 countries, delivers computing solutions to 16,000 auto/truck dealers, and produces over 14 million auto damage claim estimates annually.



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