

In the Swing with American Golf Corporation

The Challenge:

American Golf Corporation (AGC), the largest operator of golf courses in the United States, had experienced tremendous growth since teeing off to the golfing public in 1973. With 11,000 employees and 200 properties, the private venture was acquired in 2003, bringing new executive leadership to the organization.

The new leadership quickly addressed AGC's aging computer support systems. IBM Global Services — known for its knowledge and expertise in this area — was engaged to manage the migration.

The first phase replaced the legacy transaction system with JD Edwards (JDE). This project established the foundation to capture all relevant "inputs." The second phase called for the development of a robust budgeting and reporting solution.

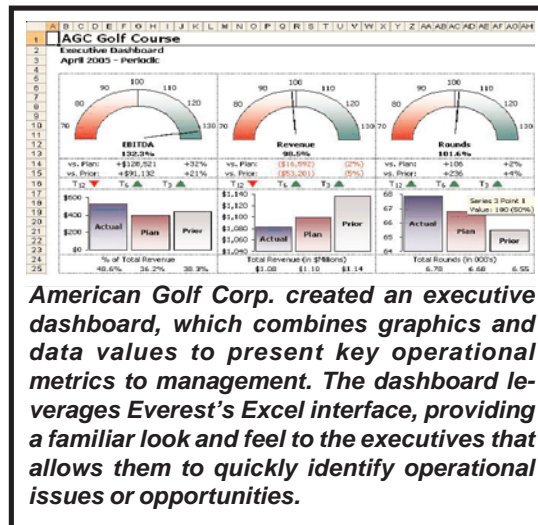
AGC needed ad-hoc reporting capabilities, and the current culture within their diverse property profile was to convert everything into Excel. The result was the constant transfer of weekly operation forecasts between the field and headquarters, a time-consuming manual consolidation effort which led to the finance team's mantra, "Excel + email = Hell." AGC desperately needed "output" capabilities for operations and executive management that didn't put a drain on finance and Information Technology (IT) resources.

The Solution:

To remedy these issues, AGC selected OutlookSoft Everest for budgeting, forecasting, reporting and performance monitoring. While IBM continued to manage the overall project and strategic direction of AGC's system architecture, **Edgewater Technology** was contracted specifically for its OutlookSoft deployment expertise.

Edgewater incorporated an Everest design that created a centralized "one-stop" portal that allowed the properties to connect to headquarters via Citrix. Financial information is now uploaded to Everest nightly from JDE, leveraging Everest's Excel functionality as the interface for input and reporting.

Edgewater created a driver-based budgeting solution that calculates the majority of the model from key input assumptions. Reports and input schedules are all centrally located. The benefits include "real-time" data consolidation — eliminating two weeks of processing time from the cycle — minimizing the review process, reducing training and, most importantly, providing better information to management. The Everest solution also streamlined the forecasting process, eliminating email and the time-consuming manual consolidation, plus providing standardized reports for better accessibility with "apples-to-apples" data reliability.



American Golf Corp. created an executive dashboard, which combines graphics and data values to present key operational metrics to management. The dashboard leverages Everest's Excel interface, providing a familiar look and feel to the executives that allows them to quickly identify operational issues or opportunities.

AGC was successful changing the culture from "pushing" reports (i.e., distribution) to a more efficient "pull" approach from the centralized portal. This change saves one day of cycle time every month. The ad-hoc report wizard that Edgewater created has dynamic reporting functionality that empowers users to create their own analysis, which reduces reliance on finance and IT person-

nel. In addition, the flexible reporting templates generated through the Excel interface are easy to update and maintain.

The final element of reporting was the executive dashboard, which combines graphics and data values to present key operational metrics to management. The dashboard leverages Everest's Excel interface, providing a familiar look and feel to the executives that allows them to quickly identify operational issues or opportunities.