

Beckman Coulter Addresses Consolidations with SAP BPC

The Challenge

Beckman Coulter, a leading provider of instrument systems and complementary products that simplify and automate laboratory processes, already recognizes the value of SAP BPC's unified BPM solution.

As an early adaptor of the technology, Beckman deployed SAP BPC to address budgeting and forecasting for the Clinical Diagnostics Division. Collecting information from over 250 people in 20 countries for 100 separate reporting entities, Beckman recognized a dramatic improvement in data integrity and the Excel interface minimized training and simplified administration.

Based upon this past success, Beckman set out to leverage SAP BPC to address their consolidation process. The current approach, built in Oracle Hyperion Enterprise, was meeting the basic consolidation needs — collecting and consolidating data, handling journal entries, eliminations, and translating foreign currency.

But management needed more flexible multi-dimensional reporting, more robust security, and functionality to comply with Sarbanes Oxley requirements. Beckman also desired to establish a single integrated system for their financial information to eliminate transferring data between separate solutions.

The Solution

Since SAP BPC's consolidation features were fairly new, no customer references were established. So Beckman engaged **Edgewater Technology** to provide guidance and expertise for a Proof-of-Concept of the consolidation functionality. The strategy involved creating a separate stand-alone application using the SAP Consolidation Accelerator that leveraged the existing dimensionality of their budgeting application. Key elements of the project included mapping monthly data, creating a journal entry template, and developing consolidation reports.

"The Consolidation Accelerator met our out-of-the-box consolidation requirements without customization to the default calculation logic. Now we will have a single integrated solution for both our budgeting and consolidation needs."

Gary Willenbrecht
Assistant Treasurer & Director of Corporate Planning
Beckman Coulter

Beckman outlined success factors for the POC stating the solution must:

- Address Sarbanes Oxley requirements of audit trail, error tracking, and password authentication;
- Accept data from a variety of sources with validation capabilities;
- Perform out-of-the box calculations for items such as EPS, foreign currency translation, and retained earnings roll-forward;
- Create standard reports to view the business by product line, product type, business code, and department with the ability to drill down to greater detail; and
- Allow multiple levels of security and meet performance expectations.

Although gathering data was challenging because of Oracle Hyperion Enterprise's four dimension limitation, Beckman found that once data was loaded, the Reporting and Schedule Accelerator within SAP BPC was instrumental in the validation process. The tool provides an easy-to-use interface to create reports, queries and pivots within the application.

The determining success factor in the POC were the benefits gained from the Consolidation Accelerator ("Zoom Engine"), a pre-built application set that addresses advanced consolidation functions. The majority of requirements were met without customization to the default calculation logic.

As a result, Beckman will have a single integrated solution for budgeting and consolidation, therefore reducing support, maintenance and training requirements while improving data integrity within the system.