

Sage 300 turns Merchants' budgeting process around



Merchants, a Dimension Data company, is a leading provider of bespoke outsource contact centre solutions with a more than 28 year track record of successfully delivering customers contact centre solutions for a variety of blue chip organisations, globally.

A time consuming and potentially error prone process

Merchants previously used a simple application to manage its budgeting process, which was time consuming and increased the opportunity for errors. The company experienced ongoing difficulties in aggregating a number of spreadsheets from various business unit managers, and it was a challenge to get an overall view of the entire budget environment without a concerted effort by the finance team. In addition, individual business unit managers were not able to own and manage their own business unit's budgets due to the lack of system integration.

A streamlined, integrated solution

The idu-Concept Financial Budgeting and Reporting solution was designed to streamline and reduce the time consuming and repetitive process of budgeting, forecasting and management reporting. The solution established a platform of ownership and empowerment by the Merchants' individual business unit managers which resulted in a radical improvement in the effective management and control of each business unit's financial metrics.

Ownership and control of the budgeting process

Budgets in idu-Concept are written to a single database which addresses many of the pitfalls of spreadsheet based budgeting and reporting. Each business unit manager is now aligned to completing the critical formats of the budget, resulting in a single version of the truth that they can own and manage throughout the process.

Customer

Merchants – a Dimension Data Company

Industry

Contact Centre Outsourcing

Location

South Africa

System

Sage 300

Challenge

Merchants needed an integrated, real-time solution to provide an aggregate view of the company's budgets, costs and reporting at any given time that would allow for ownership and control by business unit managers.

Solution

The idu-Concept Financial Budgeting and Reporting solution provided a single budgeting and reporting database that enhances the capabilities of its Sage 300 system.

Results

The cost centre/business unit managers have been empowered to take ownership of their budgets and actual spend, allowing Merchants to leverage the embedded skills and abilities of the entire business.

"The solution, has resulted in Merchants being able to achieve a paradigm shift in relation to our approach to budgeting"

Shane Budd,
Financial Director, Merchants.

The on-line, real time aggregation of budgets at multiple cost centre summary levels removes the iterative process of spreadsheet based budgeting.

The idu-Concept solution has dramatically reduced budget turn-around times. From the moment a budget is open for capture - cost centre, regional, divisional, national and executive managers have a real time, on-line view of the entire system they are responsible for reviewing and updating. If a manager is not in agreement with something that one of the cost centre managers have captured, they are able to communicate this to the cost centre manager so that he/she is able to make the changes to the budget. The physical act of the cost centre managers pushing the keys and updating the budget means that it is their budget and therefore they are responsible for its accuracy.

Business unit manager involvement and buy-in

The idu-Concept solution allows Merchants to take advantage of the benefits of bottom up budgeting, which encourages realistic, sustainable budgets that are owned by the cost centre managers. The cost centre managers set the budget and spend the money, and are therefore best positioned to comment if there are any discrepancies between the two. This reinforces full ownership of the budgets. In addition, the Financial Reporting module, which feeds off the Budget Module, gives non-financial users access to detailed general ledger transactions against each budget line as the spend is incurred, which provides on demand reporting for quick decision making.

The idu-Concept system has provided Merchants with a powerful, flexible and agile budgeting platform that adjusts with Merchant's business needs.

"The implementation of the idu-Concept Financial Budgeting and Reporting solution, has resulted in Merchants being able to achieve a paradigm shift in relation to our approach to budgeting. We have been able to leverage our base Sage solution and provide internal customers with the information they require thanks to a dedicated and dependable on-demand reporting solution." Shane Budd, Financial Director, Merchants. "

About Sage

Sage energizes the success of businesses and their communities around the world through the use of smart technology and the imagination of our people. Sage has reimagined business and brings energy, experience, and technology to inspire our customers to fulfill their dreams. We work with a thriving community of entrepreneurs, business owners, tradespeople, accountants, partners, and developers who drive the global economy. Sage is a FTSE 100 company with 14,000 employees in 24 countries.

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