



CASE STUDY

Decision Inc. delivers value and ROI on Leading Food Retailer's SAP BPC Implementation



Decision Inc. has implemented SAP BPC at one of Africa's biggest food retailers, assisting more than 500 users across HR planning, financial planning and financial consolidation. The solution has seen a reduction in budgeting and planning down from months to days.

The retailer, which has a significant number of outlets and a footprint across numerous countries on the continent, approached Decision Inc. to assist them with resolving challenges across three distinct business areas of HR planning, financial planning, and financial consolidation. They required an implementation that could deliver a clear return on investment. They opted to work with Decision Inc. to develop a rich, flexible and scalable SAP Business Planning and Consolidation (BPC) solution.

By the end of the project Decision Inc. had more than 500 users engaging with the solutions throughout the group, from Cape Town to outlets in Africa. It was a lengthy and impressive roll-out that has delivered inordinate value to the brand.

Decision Inc. created three distinct solutions for the leading retail giant. Each one addressed the pain points felt by the business, and each one has delivered measurable value and return on investment.

1. The Human Resources Planning Solutions

"The client plans their salary and wages, their hours and FTEs, and measures the productivity of the people working for them through their HR planning system," explains Allan Saffy, Executive for Enterprise Performance Management at Decision Inc. "There are around 80, 000 permanent employees on their rosters and the client allocates a budget for each one, making these processes extremely complex."

The retailer required a solution which would allow them to streamline the system and ensure that data remained clean and accurate throughout. They needed to overcome the challenge they had of reams of paperwork spread across different departments and people, all containing different data which was being manually updated.



“The SAP BPC implementation has allowed for the organisation to feed information from across all of its various systems, stores, and countries into a central repository that is accessible and easy to use.

In the past, only those at a certain level within the business could do the budgets due to the proliferation of paper,” says Saffy.

“Now there is a user base of more than 100 people who can capture their own budgets into the system, giving store managers more ownership of the data.

The load is spread more efficiently, and the head office now has increased time to analyse the information. Accuracy and time savings are two of the biggest improvements of this new system.”

2. The Financial Planning Solution

Some of the driving forces behind all three of the retailer’s BPC solutions were the need to spread the workload, improve accuracy and data availability along with a desire to increase employee engagement. The Financial Planning solution successfully ticked all of these boxes as it allowed for users to become far more proficient in handling data while reducing the amount of time spent working with spreadsheets, paper and numbers.



The biggest improvement can be seen in how much more efficient the team’s weekly sales forecasts and planning has become. In the past, accessing the data and processing the weekly sales and budget forecasts took a lot of time out of the department. Now they can instantly see the impact of, for example, an extra week of sales thanks to a leap year.

“The entire application delivers swift answers for the whole group, across all stores,” says Saffy. “Income statements and financial reporting tasks which used to take months to finalise, now take a week and this has allowed the client to perform these three to four times a year.

The whole income statement planning and balance sheet planning for up to five years in advance can be done as often as the organisation requires and uses data that is relevant and up to date.”

3. The Financial Consolidation Solution

This solution adds a lot of value to the business,” says Saffy. “In the past, they could only do a financial consolidation (FC) once a year and the process took them about a month. This included them sending out working papers, submitting the information, sending it back for checks and approvals and following this pattern until the final data was collated. Now it only takes them two to three days.”

“The system consolidates data from across the whole group and they are now using the information to publish their own glossy publication for submission to the Johannesburg Stock Exchange,” says Saffy.

The solution also has a few other value-adding adjustments. One of these is the ability to change the reporting currency used for consolidation reporting. They can now instantly switch reports between South African Rands and US dollars with a click of a button. Previously, this was done manually, now it is automatically calculated during the consolidation. Another of the tweaks is the recently adapted GB Growth reporting tool which allows them to analyse their stores and compare data.

The team can examine data from one store in one environment and compare it to last year, or to another store in a similar environment and compare sales across them both. They are able to use this information to assess growth, see efficiencies and put measures in place to improve activities in specific stores. This new capability opens up a whole new world for them in terms of store management.

A Working Relationship.

The relationship between Decision Inc. and the client has grown alongside the project over the past 14 months and looks set to continue steadily into the future. The retailer has signed a support agreement with Decision Inc. which is a testament to their faith in the work and the value it offers to the business.

“We operate in a very high-risk environment. When we embark on projects of this nature, we are dealing with financial information that our clients report to the market on, so getting it wrong is never an option.



The reality is that these types of complex financial projects carry a high risk of failure, so using a trusted, experienced partner like Decision Inc. is critical,” concludes Saffy.

About Decision Inc.



Decision Inc. is a global leader in information-driven transformation with a core focus on data, digital and performance intelligence. Our expertise in technology and industry specialisations have enabled us to help companies around the world make better decisions faster. Our emphasis on local excellence and global scale enables us to bring clients best of breed technology solutions that enable significant improvement whilst leveraging our Global Research and Innovation teams to accelerate the time to insight. Our local consulting teams are experts in the implementation, support, and execution of these solutions and work with our clients to deliver real results and improvement.