

# Ensuring strong financial Management for current and future community needs



*Australia's largest City Council – with an annual budget exceeding \$1.3 billion – ensures strong financial management for current and future community needs*

## *The Challenge*

Brisbane City Council is the largest local government organisation in Australia with an annual budget exceeding \$1.3 billion. The Council provides the essential infrastructure and community services to the 820,000 residents of Brisbane, Australia, with offices located throughout the Brisbane region and employing 6000 staff.

The budget is the key financial planning document of Brisbane City Council. This provides the focus for the Council's activities for the coming year and financial accountability through budgeted financial statements. It also reflects the policies and direction of the administration and links to the corporate plan.

## *The Solution*

Brisbane City Council considered solutions provided by over eight prominent industry vendors including those from Performa, Adaytum, and Hyperion.

To ensure strong financial management for current and future community needs, BCC used Performa to implement an enhanced MPC performance management solution.

"Performa's enhanced MPC proposal met all our key requirements," says Greg Ponych, the Principal Finance Officer, for the Brisbane City Council.

## Building on Synergies

"The product development strategy was consistent with our own strategic IT direction. Oracle DBMS is the Council's current standard for all multi-user corporate database applications and Performa was the only vendor that could provide a truly Web-based performance management system on an Oracle database. They could provide the high standard of accounting and budgeting expertise we were looking for", says Ponych.

Prior to the MPC implementation, putting together and publishing this budget was a major challenge.

The Brisbane City Council previously used an in-house budgeting system that suffered from inflexibility, cumbersome reporting, and there was a lack of appropriate skills in the market to perform maintenance and enhancements. Increasingly the process was being handled off-line on spreadsheets, which introduced security, version, control and maintenance issues."

At the same time they were also undertaking a fundamental review of the budget process itself.

The Council has moved from a 'Program Based' accrual budget to a 'Results Based' accrual budget.

This bonded their strategic planning and budgeting processes and brought two previously separate groups – planners and finance people – together.

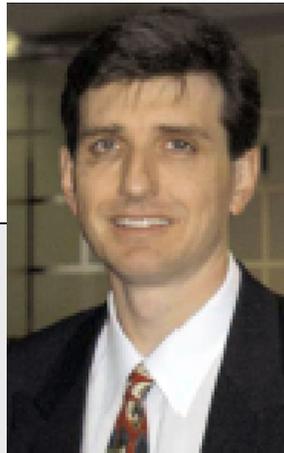
Elements of this re-engineering were still evolving as the project progressed and they needed to be sure that any future direction they wanted to pursue could be supported by their choice of new system.

## The Benefits

Over 100 employees use the system to better execute their corporate plans through having a unified budgeting, consolidation, and management reporting system.

A wide range of users from data entry and reporting staff to budget analysts and financial controllers are using the system to review and approve plans, and reflect these plans in the budget. Users have a Web browser and a password to access the central database.

The Brisbane City Council are now close to achieving their vision of an enterprise-wide MPC system that fully integrates the corporate planning and budget processes. Using management reporting and analysis they will be able to compare actuals against budget and monitor change.



*"From an administrator's perspective, the stability and usability of MPC's web based performance management system is a great benefit.*

*Maintenance is much easier as the software is loaded only once on to the application server and no software had to be loaded on to the users' PCs."*

**Greg Ponych,**  
Principal Finance Officer,  
Brisbane City Council

Flexible reporting and online analysis means the corporate review of the budget prior to the presentation to the CEO has been reduced from 3 weeks to 1 week. Users are alerted to exceptions in the underlying data and spend more time on significant business issues rather than wading through bulky reports."

"Our responsibility is to enhance the lifestyle of Brisbane's residents through innovations in community development and facilities," says Ponych. "To achieve this we want to better execute our strategic plan and reflect this in our operational plans and this requires considerable effort, co-ordination and management.

The system has added great value to Brisbane City Council by making this process easier and more effective, helping us to meet our responsibility and achieve our vision to make Brisbane the most liveable and progressive city in the Asia-Pacific region."

## Further Information

To find out more about Performa's enhanced performance management solutions, and how to boost your organisation's effectiveness, contact your Performa, visit [www.performasolutions.com.au](http://www.performasolutions.com.au)

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