

CASE STUDY: SAP upgrade for leading tyre manufacturer

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SAP TECHNICAL UPGRADE CONSOLIDATES BRIDGESTONE BUSINESS PROCESSES

Oxygen has completed an SAP upgrade for Bridgestone Australia which has laid the groundwork for the tyre company to unite the financial operations of Bridgestone New Zealand and Bridgestone Australia. The project will also provide employees with improved access to key human resource information via a new SAP self-service portal and give its executive management access to real time reporting, helping improve visibility of overall business performance.

Brought in on time and under budget, the technical upgrade from SAP 4.6C to SAP ERP6.0 was a critical first step in an extended program of SAP implementation work underway at Bridgestone. Bridgestone Australia's Project Manager, Simon Burke, says the move to the latest SAP platform was essential in order to consolidate financial accounting processes of its New Zealand and Australian companies.

"The new platform allows us to better operate both companies from the same general ledger and take advantage of the new SAP applications that are crucial to improving our operations. It also gets us back onto the mainstream SAP support cycle which saves us money in software support costs."

Bridgestone identified key finance and human resource applications to leverage its upgrade investment, asking Oxygen to implement SAP Employee Self Service (ESS) and Manager Self

Service (MSS) HR applications, together with SAP Business Intelligence 7.0 (BI7) to enhance reporting capabilities.

Burke says the SAP ESS and MSS applications aim to provide core functionality that lessens the day-to-day workload of the human resources department. "Our employees will be able to answer their own queries via the SAP ESS HR portal which allows them to check on personal leave entitlements, organise leave approvals, and print pay slips."

The technical upgrade has enhanced Bridgestone's ability to develop new functionality and strengthened its compliance with new governance regulations.

Says Burke: "SAP Solution Manager provides enhanced security features and auditable support protocols, whilst ERP6.0 has put us in a position to implement governance, risk and compliance tools in the future."

"We achieved the technical upgrade on time and on budget, which has given us an excellent start to our ongoing program of SAP work over the next year."

Simon Burke,
Project Manager, Bridgestone Australia

“The SAP BI7 implementation gives executives an instant view of how sales are tracking across our various divisions. It also presents key production data in a timely and easily digestible format.”

Simon Burke, Project Manager, Bridgestone Australia

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Bridgestone was facing an increase in maintenance costs if it continued to run an old version of SAP
- Bridgestone's existing SAP platform could not consolidate the financial and cost control operations of its New Zealand and Australian businesses
- A tight deadline and small in-house support team meant the project had to be tightly managed, demanding close partnership between the customer and Oxygen project team

THE OXYGEN SOLUTION

- Upgrade Bridgestone from SAP 4.6c to SAP ERP6.0 in order to bring company back onto regular SAP maintenance cycle and reduce support costs
- Manage technical upgrade, but also scope and implement new human resources and business intelligence functionality, piloted to a small subset of the user community

- Implement executive dashboard giving executives instant view of sales and productivity performance
- Provide staff portal access to SAP Employee Self Serve and Manager Self Serve applications
- Ensure scope for implementation of new functionality was tightly defined and manage technical upgrade remotely to save on costs

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- Better user experience and productivity through the introduction of portal access to manage human resources data
- Improved business partner integration through enhanced technical infrastructure
- Enhanced return on investment through extended support life of SAP ERP6.0
- Improved visibility of business operations thanks to implementation of business intelligence executive dashboards

CUSTOMER PROFILE

The Bridgestone Australia Ltd. Group is a major supplier to the Australian automotive industry, employing in excess of 1,500 people nationwide. The company is best known as a tyre manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer. The company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation of Japan, the world's largest tyre and rubber company. Bridgestone Australia has a proud tradition of innovation and development, resulting in products that set new standards for quality and performance. This was further enhanced with the acquisition of Bandag Manufacturing in 2000, which has provided Bridgestone with access to a quality truck retread product to complement the Bridgestone range of new tyres.

Source: <http://www.bridgestone.com.au/corporate/information.aspx>

