FUJITSU

CASE STUDY
NORTHERN IRELAND WATER (NIW)

INTEGRATED SOLUTION MAXIMISES NIW INVESTMENT

»FUJITSU CONSULTANTS HAVE HELPED NORTHERN IRELAND WATER TO ESTABLISH A KEY LINK FOR THE FIRST TIME BETWEEN OUR OPERATIONAL WORK MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS, SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVING THE GRANULARITY AND ACCURACY OF OUR INFORMATION AND PROVIDING MORE DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THE COST OF SERVING OUR CUSTOMERS. «

ALAN STEWART, HEAD OF FINANCIAL SYSTEMS, NORTHERN IRELAND WATER

THE CUSTOMER

- Northern Ireland Water (NIW) is a Government Owned Company (GoCo) employing 1,400 people
- It delivers 625 million litres of water a day to almost 1.7 million people
- It also treats 134 million cubic metres of wastewater every year

northern ireland water

THE CHALLENGE

- NIW aims to increase efficiency and improve service to customers. It has made substantial investments in Oracle applications and wanted to gain maximum efficiency from that investment

THE SOLUTION

- Fujitsu provides system integration services for NIW's Oracle eBusiness modules, in addition to ongoing hardware and software support
- A fully integrated solution was implemented utilising Oracle General Ledger, Payables, iProcurement, Inventory, Receivables, Cash Management, Enterprise Asset Management plus Human Resources (HR) solutions including Self-Service, Payroll, Learning Management and Oracle Time & Labor, Hyperion Strategic Finance, and Business Object XI reporting solution

THE BENEFITS

- MAXIMISED INVESTMENT – this integrated solution leverages maximum efficiency and value from the Oracle investment
- STATUTORY COMPLIANCE – granularity of information supports NIW in making its statutory Government returns to obtain funding
- KNOWLEDGE OF COST – for the first time, NIW can now link work management to financials and so make effective judgements on cost
- BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE – having a wider overall picture of work and costs enables NIW to drive efficiencies and improve services

CHALLENGE

Northern Ireland Water (NIW) was established as a Government Owned Company (GoCo) in 2007, to provide the water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland. Headquartered in Belfast, it has offices across the region and employs 1,400 people to supply 625 million litres of clean water a day to almost 1.7 million people and to treat 134 million cubic metres of wastewater every year.

To deliver these services requires a huge system of pipes and pumping stations including 26,500 kilometres of water mains and 14,500 kilometres of sewers (long enough to stretch from Belfast to New York and back four times).

NIW is striving to match or exceed the performance levels of similar UK water companies, delivering a better quality of service at a lower cost to customers.

As a regulated company, NIW must ensure that it can provide accurate detailed information within its statutory returns. It therefore needed to establish a link between the front office operational systems and its financial systems to allow accurate costing data to be recorded against each asset and activity. NIW also wanted to increase data accuracy by introducing self service Human Resources (HR) and improve its time recording processes by utilising the operational data and removing double-keying of paper timesheets.

SOLUTION

Fujitsu has played a central role in the implementation, support and management of all NIW's Oracle eBusiness suite applications since the initial implementation in 1995. In 2005 NIW re-implemented version 11.5.10, encompassing the Procure to Pay Process, Inventory Management, Cash Management, Receivables, General Ledger, Human Resources and Payroll. Fujitsu was also responsible for the provision of the enterprise reporting solution, using Business Objects XI.

Fujitsu consultants worked closely with NIW in the discovery stage, establishing NIW's detailed requirements, and identifying the solution which would best meet NIW's needs, and minimise the need for costly customisations.

By implementing Oracle Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) and Oracle Time & Labor (OTL) NIW has a costing solution which mirrors the asset and job structures within the front end systems, and seamlessly integrates with the financial and payroll functions within the overall Oracle eBusiness suite footprint. Self Service HR and Oracle Learning Management (OLM) have also been implemented to drive efficiencies within the HR Directorate, allowing staff to maintain their own data and manage training requirements online.

"Fujitsu advised us around these modules and provided support as we were making our setup decisions and implementing the modules," says Alan Stewart, Head of Financial Systems at NIW. *"Their existing knowledge of how our footprint and systems fitted together was obviously invaluable to ensure that we did not adversely affect anything else that we had been working on and this was achieved successfully."*

As well as expert consultancy support during system implementation, Fujitsu also provides ongoing hardware and software support under a long term managed service contract. These services include remote hardware and database monitoring, consultancy support, call handling and helpdesk services. Fujitsu manages the relationships with all third parties associated with the solution, including Oracle Support. Fujitsu application support staff provide call resolution and manage routine patch application and bug fixes.

IMPACT

NIW has made a substantial investment in Oracle licences and Fujitsu's work has enabled it to create a fully integrated solution that leverages the maximum value from that investment.

The new costing solution, based on Oracle Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) now processes the labour, equipment and material overhead transactions associated with over 600,000 work orders per year. Work orders are raised in the work planning system and automatically interfaced into Oracle EAM on a near real time basis, allowing NIW staff to raise purchase orders for materials and requisites, directly against the Work Order number to which they relate.

"We also have a main contractor that supports us and we are in the process of being able to cost all of the work they do for us right down to work order level so we know what every piece of work costs," adds Stewart. *"The main reason for doing this was to allow finance and our asset management teams to get a much better handle on what was going on. Previously we did not have much visibility of the work management system but that is all changing. We are at the first stage where we have linked up all the systems and are getting the information through and the next two years will be about how we can best use that information."*

"It is difficult to exactly measure the value of the work that Fujitsu is doing for us but the resulting savings will be quite significant because we will know a lot more about the business than we have done in the past."

In addition, Oracle Time and Labor allows the detailed labour transactions to be collated into an online timesheet, which once approved by the relevant line manager, automatically feeds the relevant payroll information into Oracle Payroll for processing. This integrated solution replaces a paper based timesheeting process which required information to be manually keyed into Oracle Payroll.

The Oracle eBusiness suite solution supported by Fujitsu, also helps NIW to meet its regulatory reporting obligations. Although it is a registered company, it is funded out of public expenditure and is accountable to its parent department, the Department for Regional Development (DRD). As a regulated utility, NIW is required to submit an Annual Information Return to the Regulator each year which must be both detailed and accurate.

"To make these annual submissions we have to have a lot of granularity in our information and a lot of that information is now going to be available to us through the Oracle and Fujitsu projects we have just done and that will enable us to justify the costs we are incurring," says Stewart. *" This translates into better service for our customers because we are now able to look at everything that we do, make judgements and conduct internal benchmarking so that we can look at the activities of different teams across Northern Ireland, pinpoint best practice and address inefficiencies.*

"The detailed knowledge we now have will be used to identify cost efficiencies as well as inform future capital investment decisions."

NIW has also recently extended its Oracle HR implementation, with the introduction of Oracle Self Service HR. By allowing staff to view and maintain key personal details online NIW has reduced the administrative overhead and improved data accuracy. The implementation of Oracle Learning Management has allowed NIW to migrate from a number of disparate, largely manual training databases, to one centralised training solution which is fully integrated with Oracle HR. NIW now has a training solution which allows NIW HR professionals to proactively manage staff training records, ensuring that mandatory training requirements are met. Training courses are now managed online, with application, approval and attendance at training courses all being managed within the integrated solution.

EXPERTISE

Fujitsu Group and Oracle Corporation have worked for more than 16 years in a strategic alliance that encompasses product development, marketing and sales.

Fujitsu is an Oracle Platinum Partner globally and a Certified Advantage Partner with over 2,500 Oracle professionals. It provides applications managed services to over a quarter of a million Oracle end-users and also provides implementation services across the full breadth of Oracle eBusiness Suite software solutions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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