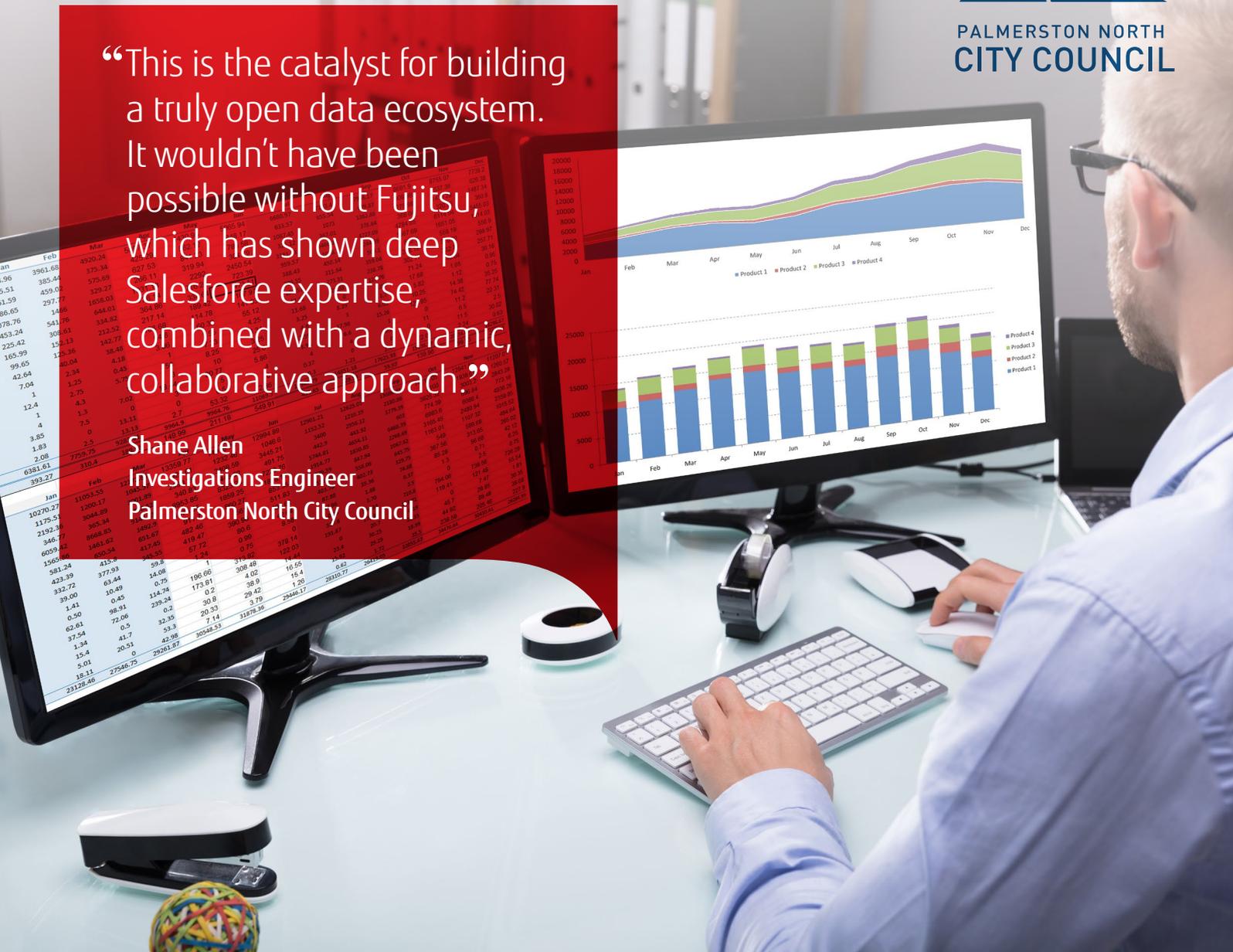


“This is the catalyst for building a truly open data ecosystem. It wouldn't have been possible without Fujitsu, which has shown deep Salesforce expertise, combined with a dynamic, collaborative approach.”

Shane Allen
Investigations Engineer
Palmerston North City Council



PNCC was having to manage multiple data sources and spreadsheets. Fujitsu built a Salesforce solution to better manage the data and provide faster, more accurate results.

At a glance

Country: New Zealand
Industry: Local Government
Founded: 1866
Website: pncc.govt.nz

Challenge

The Council was faced with multiple incomplete siloed data sets, which required significant resources to manage. It wanted to find a more efficient way of retrieving and presenting the data while introducing spatial analysis.

Solution

PNCC partnered with Fujitsu, which designed a Salesforce solution that would automate data management. It standardises, cleans and integrates internal and external data sources, making it simple to access and present crucial information with minimal human intervention.

Benefit

- Automates all aspects of data management for increased efficiency and improved visibility
- Removes the administrative burden from employees, freeing them for more important duties
- Eliminates human error and increases data accuracy
- Enables real-time view of data and spatial analysis
- Reports can be generated in seconds rather than hours

Customer

Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) employs over 500 people and serves almost 90,000 citizens across a land area of 395 square kilometres within New Zealand's North Island. It aims to provide public services that foster an innovative, creative and connected city.

Products and Services

■ Fujitsu Systems Integration

Data mismanagement

Water and waste management forms a key part of PNCC's remit. The Council found that, over the years, it had accumulated multiple siloed data sets in disparate spreadsheets, requiring significant administrative effort. With changing legislation and compliance demands, as well as increasingly complex community requirements, PNCC needed to find a simpler way to manage and integrate the various data sets.

One of the main issues was the sheer amount of time it was taking to retrieve critical lab data, relating to water quality. The Council was relying on a skilled workforce to drag hard to find data out of silos manually and, even then, it was not always clear what changes had been made to the data and whether it was still reliable. Collating data together did not occur in real-time so there was a risk of missing exceptions – and therefore a risk of non-compliance.

"We had little grasp on which data was trustworthy and often had to rebuild data sets from scratch because data was easily lost. We wanted to find a way to bridge the gaps in the data and give our team and the wider community access to robust, reliable and real-time data," explains Shane Allen, Investigations Engineer, Palmerston North City Council. "Our goal was to introduce spatially managed data within complex rule-based relationships for both strategic decision makers and customers."

PNCC evaluated the solutions on the market but found none that met its needs: "There didn't seem to be an integrated platform that would extend data beyond the management team and none offered spatial analysis," adds Allen. "However, Fujitsu turned up, listened and suggested implementing a whole new data ecosystem based on Salesforce. We had a gut feeling that this was the right path to follow."

An automated data ecosystem

Fujitsu began by assessing all the existing spreadsheets and data sets, then working out how they are related. It then carried out two PoCs on real use cases: water demand management and lab result management. These proved that it was viable and cost-effective to automate the Council's data environment within a cloud-based Salesforce solution.

"The PoCs helped ease us into this new world and were so effective that we got internal approval for a full trial encompassing all environmental observation data," says Allen. "We finished the trial and then on-boarded the first two users, configuring Salesforce to meet their specific needs. It was very much a collaboration between ourselves and Fujitsu which relied on co-creation to make it successful."

The outcome, after three months of close partnership, was a new Quality Supply and Demand application, which automates manual processes and adds spatial analytics.



It standardises, cleans and integrates internal and external data sources, making it simple to access and extend crucial information with minimal human intervention.

"Previously, we managed all the lab data in a vast spreadsheet, which would crash frequently and didn't link to associated PDF certificates, which had to be retrieved manually," continues Allen. "Now all the relevant data and documents are presented in an intuitive dashboard, which saves significant hours of effort."

Accurate information at the touch of a button

The new Salesforce platform, built by Fujitsu, has at a stroke hugely improved how PNCC handles its data, increasing the accuracy and making the data available to all stakeholders in real-time. Reports can be generated in minutes rather than hours and the risk of human error – estimated at 25% in some cases – has been removed from the equation entirely.

"Not only do we have instant access to the data we need, we also have removed the administrative burden from our employees. Some people were spending a third of their time sifting through spreadsheets – now they can be redeployed more strategically," comments Allen. "That makes us more efficient as an organisation and ensures we are spending the taxpayers' money most responsibly."

The introduction of spatial analysis also marks a ground-breaking shift in how PNCC operates. Now, users can ask to see environmental alerts within strictly defined geographic parameters and see the results immediately, instead of collating maps, spreadsheets and other sources.

"We live in a spatial world, so having customised maps that can be used to locate data sets means that users who are less familiar with remote sites, for example, are able to find what they need. The map tools allow for plotting certain data sets within a given radius or plotting of triggers and alerts," remarks Allen. "What's more, Fujitsu has given us a solid data model that can easily be exported to other groups."

This successful Salesforce data management platform is merely the first step in a wider journey. PNCC has already decided to extend it to around 20 commercial trade waste customers. Moreover, it is experimenting with IoT meters to help gather the data in real-time.

"This is the catalyst for building a truly open data ecosystem, accessible to all," concludes Allen. "And it wouldn't have been possible without Fujitsu, which has shown deep Salesforce expertise, combined with a dynamic, collaborative approach."

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