

Customer reference



Bluegarden has shortened its budget process to one month with wide margin.

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Inger Söderström
CFO Bluegarden

Bluegarden budgeted in a complex and unsustainable Excel-based solution and needed a planning system that would clarify and shorten the budget process. They wanted to be able to see real time outcomes and thereby have a more efficient and transparent approach. Having good experience of working with Konsultnet in the past, the natural choice was Effectplan.

Bluegarden’s challenge

Bluegarden is part of a Scandinavian organization with the parent company in Denmark. The parent company was responsible for the systems in Norway and Sweden. In 2013 the organization became more country based. At that time, the Swedish organization had an ERP system from Agresso, as well as a large number of Excel reports as the basis for their budget processes.

It was a long, drawn out process that created a lot of frustration and was no longer a sustainable approach to handle budget and forecasting. With the Excel solution, there was also extremely low participation due to the way it was set up.

Inger Söderström, CFO at Bluegarden, decided to move forward with a different tool in an attempt to shorten the budget process, and obtain better data for forecasting.

“Without taking too big a risk, I wanted a system that was easy to set up, and to be able to work in a way where we can develop the system and processes as we

go along.” says Inger Söderström. “We had such a good experience with Konsultnet so it was only natural to proceed with Effectplan in terms of a budget and forecasting system.”

Bluegarden’s solution

Effectplan was implemented in the early summer of 2013, and was connected to QlikView which had already been implemented as the Business Intelligence tool. With Effectplan, Bluegarden got a web-based tool that allowed for more communication around the numbers, as the budgeting managers had the opportunity to focus more on the costs and revenues that lay within their business areas. It was also easier to analyze data in real time.

“It’s easier for me to communicate revenues, costs and associations, and quality assurance can also be done on the business areas in an entirely different manner.” says Inger.

It has become a more efficient process that also has become significantly more transparent.



BLUEGARDEN

Bluegarden has operations in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Each country has its history in three different companies. The Swedish company’s origin is from PA-konsult AB, started in 1979. In Norway, the foundation is in ‘Statens Driftssentral for Databehandling’, founded 1972. In Denmark, Multidata has been working with salaries since 1968. The company has its foundation on years of experience and knowledge of system support for HR and salary processes. Bluegarden offers complete solutions within HR and salary administration. Together, Bluegarden handles 20% of Scandinavia’s employees, in total 2,3 million people. The company has 600 employees.



An additional forecast, in addition to the two that Bluegarden usually do every year, was performed in August 2013 in a live Effectplan environment. This was a really good way to get users to learn the system. When the budget process commenced, the users were already familiar with Effectplan.

A shorter process

Inger feels that the biggest change since the introduction of Effectplan is that she has saved a lot of time. It has become a considerably shorter budget process and it's much easier to set up a time schedule. The entire process is completed within four weeks with plenty of margin.

"Within one month, we're done with the budget and even allowed ourselves to take it quite calmly, and are well within the timeframe for the whole company's budget process." says Inger.

The system Effectplan

"Effectplan is easy to understand and it has a short learning curve. It has a very intuitive interface, which is a big advantage." says Inger. "I'm very happy with the seamless transfer from Effectplan to the QlikView analysis tab where I receive my budget information and can compare it with the outcome."

Inger also thinks it was very easy to set up new versions, new templates, add customers and accounts. The whole structure is simple to set up without needing special technical expertise.

With that said, she also wants to point

out that because it is so easy, it's specially important to set up a clear framework from the beginning in Effectplan and around the process.

Improved efficiency in the budget process

Another strong recommendation from Inger is not to decentralize things unnecessarily. Give those who should budget assignments that they can influence.

"Limit the number of rows in Effectplan to the individual cost centers, then you also get much greater involvement which the budgeting managers can influence. I also believe that the budget will have better quality and will be faster. Then the central function can take care of general costs such as rent, etc." says Inger.

Furthermore, she also feels that they have found a good model for the budget process by working iteratively. Budget managers can do a broad version of the budget the first time, then have a chance to go into the details in the second iteration.

Bluegarden on working with Konsultnet

It has been an open communication with Konsultnet from the start. Bluegarden's feedback on Effectplan as a system and the process itself, has been taken into consideration by Konsultnet.

"We are about to upgrade to the new version, Effectplan 2015, and my hope is that we will start working more with rolling forecasts" concludes Inger.

Advice from Bluegarden

"Perform a practice round based on actual figures in Effectplan before the budget process begins. Bluegarden made an extra forecast in a live Effectplan setting with current figures and discovered some issues that could have prevented a quick and smooth process when budget process actually started.

When there are so many people involved, it is also an advantage to do a test run so that everyone will be allowed to test the system. It's a good educational activity."

Konsultnet on the project

"It was a very good project with straight communication from the customer. They were clear in their process and what they wanted with the system. Now they're facing an upgrade to Effectplan 2015, which will lead to further improvements of their process."

Tips from Konsultnet

"Best results are achieved by discussing the "best practice" for each project on how Effectplan should be used in each specific organization.

Try not to work on a too detailed row level. Concentrate the planning on a level you can influence.

There needs to be a clear framework from the start in Effectplan for it to be manageable later in the budget process and prior to forecasting."