

QueBIT®

Formerly Applied Analytix, Inc.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Commercial Real Estate
Development

CSM Corporation

The Benefit of Extending IBM Cognos Business Analytics

CSM Corporation engages in the acquisition, development, leasing, management and ownership of quality real estate assets. Founded in 1976 and headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, CSM's extensive portfolio includes retail, industrial, multi-family residential and hotel properties across the continental United States. Since then, CSM has expanded significantly over the years to over 2,000 employees today.

Addressing the Problem

Like many companies, CSM had been using Excel for their annual planning process. They had an investment in the IBM Cognos BI platform, but it was mainly used for reporting and some analytics. "We had heard a lot about TM1 and understood that it was the foundation for the IBM Cognos Business Analytics strategy," says Chris Fodor — VP & Chief Accounting Officer. On the Excel side, "We had all the common problems with an Excel-based plan. We were consolidating budgets as well as looking at multiple properties but had a number of issues with plan updates." Other challenges included the fact that "the plan was a once-a-year exercise and we had no forecasting capabilities."

Why IBM Cognos TM1?

Because CSM had already decided on IBM Cognos as part of their Business Analytics strategy, the selection of TM1 made perfect sense. Now the planning process is much easier. Not only are they able to shorten the process by two months and incorporate a plan to actual comparison, but CSM is now incorporating some advanced planning methods like a 15-month rolling forecast. They are also "starting to look at the current forecast and ask questions about the plan, and long term impact," according to Chris Fodor.



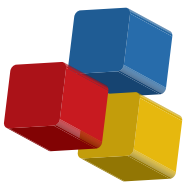
CSM
PROPERTIES

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— Chris Fodor, VP & Chief Accounting Officer



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TM1 has empowered CSM to go beyond the annual planning process. As is usually the case with TM1, it can be leveraged outside of the Office of Finance to other areas. "We are a very labor-intensive company so we need to do more with live data. Being able to understand activities at each property has been a great benefit to CSM," says Fodor. TM1 has become CSM's data depository, and their Cognos Business Intelligence is used for structured data, reporting and dashboards. The company also monitors a set of KPI's to help manage their operations.

The Implementation

One of the main goals of migrating to the IBM Cognos TM1 platform was to get CSM's management team to take ownership of their plans. With the elimination of Excel models, the management team is more involved and is now focused on reviewing operations from a more strategic perspective. CSM does a 5-year plan using a number of drivers as a basis for their projections. With all of this in place, CSM can now look at the individual business units to get a better understanding of their operations and can respond much more quickly to make changes that will have a positive impact where it matters: at the individual business unit.

QueBIT Delivers Results

CSM had partially deployed the TM1 platform when QueBIT was called in for some expert advice. "It's always a good idea to have an outside firm look at the process

and make recommendations," says Sue Monks — Business Analyst. "It was great to have someone like Dan Mannisto (Founder and former CEO of Applied Analytix) help provide guidance on how to leverage our investment in TM1."

With over 15 years' working with TM1, QueBIT was an ideal fit to help CSM take ownership of their planning process, and become an Analytic Organization.

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ABOUT CSM

CSM Corporation is determined to connect the real estate development business to the people it affects. Not surprisingly, the company and its property managers and Line-of-Business directors have won numerous industry awards in the area of Guest Satisfaction, as well as Marketing and Sales Management. Just as importantly, the company is routinely recognized for their generous contributions of time, money and other resources to local and national organizations.

ABOUT QueBIT Consulting

Since 2002, QueBIT has been driven to help organizations to improve their ability to make intelligent decisions that create value. Astute decision makers learn from the past in order to manage the present, predict the future and take prescriptive actions. This is why we're resolute in our commitment to excellence in business analytics strategy and implementation.

For more information about our services, please call us at 1-800-QUEBIT1 or email contact@quebit.com