

Innovative Council Manages Complex Projects and Business Planning with CorVu

The City of Greater Geelong is 75 km southwest of Melbourne, Australia. The Council - the second largest in the state of Victoria - was formed in 1993 as an amalgamation of seven smaller municipalities and is home to more than 208,000 residents.

CorVu® provides Performance Management and Business Intelligence solutions within a single product. At Geelong, CorVu not only facilitated the development of scorecards with CorStrategy and the management of complex projects with CorProject, but Geelong also uses CorVu's software for reporting out of key systems.



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- Mark Ceslar, the City's Corporate Performance Reporting specialist

Situation

The population of the City of Greater Geelong is expected to grow by 23% by the year 2020, making it one of Australia's fastest-growing municipalities. This has created major challenges for the City, which has seen substantial increases in its annual capital budget over the last three years to support Geelong's rapid expansion. The City's paper-based system for proposing, assessing, approving and reporting of projects was inadequate. In order to provide an efficient process, from project initiation to approval, the City turned to CorVu to provide a technology infrastructure that would allow all project information to be accessed through a single platform. The City also uses CorVu's software for scorecards; to report the status of actions within its Council Plan; departmental business plans; and to provide better access to information for budgeting decisions.

Implementation

According to Mark Ceslar, the City's Corporate Performance Reporting specialist, "As part of the Best Value Service Review process, 42 services were critically reviewed over a 5 year period. At the end of that process we needed to design a performance management system to promote a continuous improvement culture. We developed a Continuous Improvement Framework, and followed this with a decision to implement a performance management solution. Following an extensive research and tender process, CorVu was selected as the preferred solution."

Benefits

Alfonso Della Monica, Geelong's Corporate Strategy Co-ordinator, said, "There can be up to 400 projects submitted as part of the annual budget process. Previously this was done manually and was very time consuming. The previous end-to-end process, from project initiation to project delivery, focused mainly on financial performance rather than project delivery. With the introduction of CorVu there has been a move towards more precise project scoping, further inclusion of stakeholders, and an increased focus on project outcomes and benefits."

Ceslar said that one of the key benefits of using CorVu to manage the City's projects was the ease of accessing information.

"Now, any number of people view the same information at the same time," he said.

He added that having all the data in one system allows projects to be carried over from year to year. "When someone registers a new concept it remains in the system, so if it doesn't get approved, the information can be reused the following year."

Mr Della Monica said, "CorVu provides good status reporting against milestones and easy access to project information from inception to completion. CorVu also provides the flexibility and tools to enhance and streamline the process each year based on the feedback from the users."



Key benefits:

- Better project administration
- Reduction of administrative time
- Real-time assessments of projects & performance
- Version control and transparency of projects
- Data is easily accessible and reusable
- Elimination of manual, paper-based process

Results

According to Matthew Clarke, General Manager and Head of Product Development for CorVu Australasia, **"The City of Greater Geelong has shown great vision and initiative in developing a continuous improvement framework based on the Balanced Scorecard to address their Best Value Principles - and in the process have become a highly skilled user of CorVu."**

One of the major benefits for the City of Greater Geelong is the focus on the delivery of commitments at all levels of the organisation. Della Monica said, "There is a quarterly Council Plan that goes to the Executive and Council so they can monitor the progress of actions. Project status reporting via CorVu is in the process of being implemented."

In addition, Della Monica also noted that a lot of administrative work has been eliminated or reduced. "Updating the status of Council Plan actions used to be a drawn out process but now we can do it with one reminder email and an escalation email, if required."

Information gathered for the business planning process can be used for more than one purpose. Ceslar stated that, "It provides a good indication of a department's progress throughout the year, and it's also a good data source when doing annual performance reviews because staff members' performance against plan is clearly documented."

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