



Microsoft Business Solutions Customer Solution Case Study



Overview

Country or Region: Canada

Industry: Utilities

Customer Profile

Great Lakes Power, Ltd., a subsidiary of Brascan Power, is a power generation utility.

Business Situation

Because of deregulation, the Generation Division of Great Lakes Power needed a new business management system for the reorganized company.

Solution

By implementing Microsoft® Business Solutions, the company has gained efficiency and reduced costs.

Benefits

- Faster monthly close
- Increased productivity
- Reduced IT costs
- Enhanced reporting
- Lower total cost of ownership

Great Lakes Power Reduces IT Budget By 57 Percent with Microsoft Business Solutions

"Not only does [Microsoft Business Solutions]–Great Plains have a lower total cost of ownership than SAP, but user satisfaction and system functionality is vastly superior to SAP, too."

Gary T. Wight, Manager, Finance and IT, Great Lakes Power, Ltd.

Implementing Microsoft Business Solutions–Great Plains has increased productivity, reduced training costs, and slashed Great Lakes Power's IT budget by 57 percent over several disparate financial solutions, including SAP.



Situation

The Generation Division of Great Lakes Power Limited—a subsidiary of Brascan Power—was formed after the deregulation of the power industry in Ontario, Canada. When manager of finance Gary Wight was hired, one of his mandates was to find a more efficient financial system. “Great Lakes Power Generation was unbundled from the other divisions, so we had to establish all our own functional areas,” Wight says.

Previously, the company used HTE for financials and billing and Elke for maintenance management. Wight wanted to find a fully integrated system to avoid the cost and potential error associated with redundant systems.

Wight considered several different systems, including JD Edwards, and quickly decided the fully integrated functionality of Microsoft® Business Solutions–Great Plains® proposed by Microsoft Business Solutions partner Options Software & Consulting to be the best fit for the company.

Solution

Great Lakes Power began implementing their new solution and, when the go-live date was only six weeks away, they learned they were acquiring another power generation company, Mississagi Power, which would also need to be up and running with the new system on the same go-live date.

“We didn’t purchase Mississagi Power’s SAP solution, so we had a very short window to close that deal and get them up and running,” Wight says. “We’d almost finished our implementation here at Great Lakes Power and we were able to dovetail that implementation into Mississagi. We used the same team and were able to quickly get them up and running.”

Great Lakes Power believes their swift and successful implementation is a direct result of the strong integration and ease-of-use of Microsoft Business Solutions. The company has eliminated redundant data entry, which had previously led to confusion and costly reconciliations. Tasks such as payroll are more efficient because of automatic data population and, according to Wight, training costs have decreased significantly. Mississagi Power alone is saving over 50 percent per year compared to their previous SAP system.

Because of the company’s success with Microsoft Business Solutions, the parent company is switching solutions, too.

Benefits

Great Lakes Power receives many benefits from their new Microsoft Business Solutions implementation, including:

- **Faster monthly close**—“Monthly close is now three days compared to six or seven days before Microsoft Business Solutions,” says Wight.
- **Increased productivity**—“Project managers are now considerably more productive,” Wight says. “Project status reports used to require several days for managers to produce them. Now reports are automatic, and subsequent analysis requires a half-day of manager effort.”
- **Increased productivity**—Great Lakes Power now manages the IT infrastructure with two FTEs—down from 5.5. A hosted Microsoft Business Solutions system and an outsourced help desk dramatically reduce the need for internal support personnel.
- **Enhanced reporting**—Management now receives month-end reports in five days compared to 10 days previously.
- **IT budget reduced 57 percent**—Mississagi Power reduced their IT budget of \$700,000 CAD under SAP to \$300,000 CAD with Microsoft Business Solutions—a reduction of 57 percent.

For More Information

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For more information about Great Lakes Power, Ltd. products and services, visit the Web site at: www.glp.on.ca

For more information about Options Software & Consulting Inc. products and services, call (800) 665-6787 or visit the Web site at: www.options.com

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Microsoft Business Solutions

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