

INSIDE PEAK PERFORMANCE

Baldor Announces Savings of £3million!

IFRS - Are You Ready?

Case Study: LeasePlan UK

Request Your Free 7.2 Upgrade

Reporting Options in Cognos Planning

Inca Launches New Training Courses



“Aligning planning and forecasting approaches to corporate objectives”



“LeasePlan UK aligns corporate objectives of service, flexibility and transparency in their own approach to planning and forecasting”

As one of the world's leading vehicle management companies, LeasePlan Corporation is focused on flexibility and service, aiming to offer increased visibility and value to executives charged with running complex vehicle schemes. Having undergone a period of acquisition resulting in a collection of reporting and planning systems, the finance team at the Corporation's subsidiary, LeasePlan UK, set a target of matching the corporate objectives of service, flexibility and transparency in their own approach to planning and forecasting. The aim was to focus on performance as part of a seven-year company growth strategy.

The initial challenge was to find a fast, accurate method of consolidating the complex overhead forecasts from up to 40 cost centres in order to pass them onto the Group Head Office in Holland. LeasePlan UK experienced the common problems of spreadsheet planning and forecasting: with up to three spreadsheets per cost centre, the process of consolidating and checking each forecast could take up to two weeks. This left Finance little time for liaising with budget holders and correcting any errors in calculations, eroding any time for analysis. Cost centre managers would only receive feedback if there were problems with their submissions potentially affecting the credibility of the planning process. When the budgets were ultimately loaded into the reporting system, this was often the first time that cost centre managers would receive visibility to the final plan they would be asked to deliver.



"Once the spreadsheets get to a certain level of complexity, the model starts to break down under its own weight. Errors in large spreadsheets are unavoidable and, as confidence is a high priority for directors when putting forward propositions at group level, we needed to ensure greater control and transparency in the process", comments Stephen Huane, Finance Manager, Tender Support at LeasePlan UK.

The Finance team wanted a planning and forecasting solution to underpin a world-class finance function and unchain them from the task of pouring over spreadsheet consolidation. "A modern Finance function requires strong liaison with the organisation if it truly hopes to understand, reflect and influence the business. However before we could progress, we needed to release Finance resource from pure administration and offer greater potential for user collaboration", continues Huane. LeasePlan believed that the right choice of planning tool would fulfil both these requirements.

LeasePlan put "the rubber to the road" to planning success

With the Cognos Business Intelligence (BI) tools already in place, LeasePlan set out to investigate the market to seek the right planning solutions. The timing of this selection coincided with the acquisition of Adaytum by Cognos and it was at this point that Cognos recommended Inca to support LeasePlan in their evaluation of Cognos Planning. In fact, Inca was already building a relationship with LeasePlan, having introduced the company to the former Adaytum Planning product. Huane understood the need to be practical and realistic in LeasePlan's aspirations, "Having seen lots of planning presentations and experienced planning implementations, I was aware that it is possible to have the best business plan in the world, but without any "rubber on the road" you won't go anywhere. We believed that Cognos Planning could support us on our road to improved performance."

As Huane had used Cognos Planning in a previous role he knew the benefits it could deliver but was still impressed by the speed and efficiency of the Inca implementation that began with an installation completed in just half a day. "From a business consultancy point of view, Inca really show their expertise. They produced an implementation plan in terms of helping us to build and optimise the models and delivered a tailored training course for the majority of the Finance team at their own training centre", explains Huane. His expertise with the modelling and consolidation Cognos Planning Analyst product meant that he could focus on the user collaboration aspect of the project through the use

of Cognos Planning Contributor for both the Overheads and the Fleet.

Cognos Planning Analyst was a major win in terms of large scale complex income modelling. LeasePlan UK had inherited a fundamentally sound planning model covering the full P&L and balance sheet, which suffered from the classic spreadsheet problems of scalability. With a fleet of over 100,000 funded vehicles driving a portfolio of over £1 billion, LeasePlan UK needed something that combined scalability, flexibility, speed and ease of use.

Using the Cognos BI suite, LeasePlan UK pull in the projection of their current portfolio. Each month's new business can then be modelled separately by channel, market segment and product type and laid on top of the projection. Cognos Planning Analyst fulfilled requirements and more, with its ability to run the models through Manager, while the Contributor Fleet website has smoothed the process of data collection from the five channel managers, to feed into the model.

The Finance team understood that the provision of a consistent central planning system would give the opportunity to introduce greater sophistication of information without creating any additional burden for users. One example of this is in the forecasting of staff costs working with the HR team. Cognos Planning is used to meet HR's need to simplify their monthly headcount spreadsheet reporting by using web-based Contributor to submit updates to the staff list. Yet Finance has also been able to use this information to gain greater insight into the detail of staff costs by creating a standard staff cost model for staff cost forecasting. With 40 cost centres and eight grading levels, this model gives LeasePlan managers 320 standard costs all managed easily within the model. "We can now recognise the different mix of skills and associated costs needed for each cost centre.

The cost centre manager then merely forecasts the number of heads they

need per grade in the future periods," explains Huane.

So with improved accuracy and consistency, has LeasePlan also achieved its goal of greater integration and collaboration with the business?

Huane explains the user benefits; "Standard costing has simplified tasks for users whilst at the same time giving them greater detail, thereby increasing confidence in the planning process". The Finance team has seen users take greater ownership over their own departmental numbers with the ability to compare current projections with previous submissions and the Actuals. It is also easier for channel managers to work in a piecemeal fashion, by submitting fleet targets in between other tasks - a feature that is further enhanced by the ability to work offline. Huane concludes, "As we go into the next major planning cycle we find the Planning Team are spending a greater proportion of their time in face-to-face discussions, which was a major objective".

Future Plans

The next step for LeasePlan is to integrate Cognos Planning and Business Intelligence, a major element of the Management Information project led by Paul Gibson, Finance Manager for the MI project. The implementation of v7.2 is eagerly anticipated as part of this next phase.

It will also support the development of applications such as Tender Support Models for sales, and the possibility of using the balanced scorecard tool Cognos Metrics Manager for Executive Meetings. With assistance from Inca and Cognos, members of the Finance team have already spent two days presenting their achievements to representatives from LeasePlan Corporation, at their request. As a result, LeasePlan Corp is considering changing the tools it has available to meet planning and consolidation needs across the entire global organisation.

Benefits Summary

- ▶ **Time** - forecasting period dramatically reduced from weeks to minutes, giving Finance more time for greater analysis and consultation. LeasePlan estimates a saving of 230 man-hours driving a saving over 3 years of at least £70,000
- ▶ **Data Quality** - improved through more centralised control within Analyst and Contributor
- ▶ **Understanding** - of both 'Finance of the Business', and the 'Business of Financials' due to greater confidence and visibility of the numbers
- ▶ **Best Practice** - ability to move towards rolling overheads forecasts.



Request your free Cognos Planning Upgrade complete with New Features Guide from Inca now!

Cognos Planning 7.2 is now available to Inca's supported customers.

New features within Cognos Planning Contributor

Changes to the Administration Console have improved security, performance and functionality:

- ▶ Improved session management for multiple Contributor administrators
- ▶ The ability to restrict administrative access when a Contributor application is integrated with Access Manager
- ▶ The ability to record user actions in the Web Client
- ▶ Easier management of the size of the stored application
- ▶ The creation of different language versions of Contributor applications
- ▶ The ability to use the Apache HTTP Server 2.0 for Windows Web server as an alternative to Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS)
- ▶ Improvements to the Go to Production process
- ▶ A more robust data store connection
- ▶ Better information about job task failures.

The Web Client has also been enhanced so that users can view user actions, use quick commands and view progress when downloading data. In addition, extra Built-in Functions are now supported:

- ▶ Viewing user actions
- ▶ Quick Commands e.g. grow5c grows the underlying number in the cell by a compound growth rate of 5% in each time period
- ▶ Internal Rate of Return (IRR)
- ▶ Net Present Value (NPV).

New Features within Cognos Planning Analyst

There are a number of new Built-in Functions in Analyst:

- ▶ @SeasonLite - performs seasonal adjustments of time to determine seasonal patterns in data user a much simpler method than the @SeasonPro Bif
- ▶ @SeasonPro - providing more functionality and flexibility than @SeasonLite and intended for advanced users of statistical data
- ▶ @Repeat - can be used in a timescale D-List to repeat data from a single period or group of periods through the time scale of the D-List
- ▶ @Simul - provides the building blocks to simulate seasonal data using a variety of shapes
- ▶ @Cycles - combines many sine and cosine waves. It can provide input for the @SeasonPro {Cycle%} input variable and calculate seasonal factors from known Fourier form coefficients
- ▶ @Transform - helps users build equations using angles and trigonometry functions
- ▶ @MoveMed - takes the median value after sorting all input values into ascending sequence
- ▶ @StockflowBQ - makes it possible to use batch quantities in Stockflow calculations.

Other features include:

- ▶ Easy access to Item IDs (IIDs)
- ▶ The ability to directly cut and paste D-List items
- ▶ One click to update a D-Cube
- ▶ The ability to preview a D-List
- ▶ Easier selection of true or formatted items in a D-Link
- ▶ The ability to include D-Links in a D-Cube update table
- ▶ Easy resetting of the local pre-selection in a macro
- ▶ The ability to use dynamic library references (LIB) and (LIBNO) in Manager text boxes
- ▶ The ability to report directly
- ▶ The ability to delete a report without deleting its references.

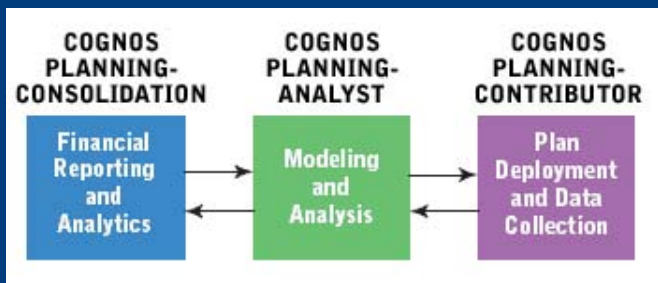
New Reporting Capabilities

The primary aim of the 7.2 release is to enhance the solution for Corporate Performance Management by integrating the Cognos Enterprise Planning Series with Cognos Business Intelligence and Cognos Enterprise Scorecarding.

- ▶ Easier and faster reporting in Analyst
- ▶ An enhanced PowerPlay Enterprise Server
- ▶ The ability to publish to an Impromptu Extension
- ▶ Exporting of data to ReportNet
- ▶ Publishing to ReportNet extension
- ▶ View in PowerPlay web extension
- ▶ Faster export of data to PowerPlay Windows
- ▶ The ability to import data from Cognos Consolidation and Cognos Analytic applications
- ▶ The ability to import Metadata from Impromptu
- ▶ Improved installation and configurations.

The Bottom Line:

Whether you are using the Cognos Planning Series as a stand alone solution or as part of an enterprise-wide CPM foundation, you will appreciate the benefits that version 7.2 provides. Version 7.2 means **innovation** in core planning areas as well as **integration** across all planning solutions with Cognos reporting solutions in all reporting scenarios: Real-time.



If you are an Inca supported customer and would like to request your upgrade complete with the New Features Guide, please email Kevin Gough at kgough@incasoftware.co.uk or call Kevin on 01784 270 870.

Please note that Contributor upgrades may require assistance from our technical consultants. If you are a Contributor user, we advise that you call our Technical Helpdesk on 01784 270 870 for further information and advice.



Baldor announces savings of £3million in inventory and expenses over three years!

Baldor announces its rolling forecast success with Cognos Planning at Inca's Annual User Forum.

A big thank you to all those customers who attended our annual user forum, Peak Performance 2004 recently. We hope that the event proved to be a fantastic opportunity for sharing your planning and forecasting experiences with other users and that you gained further insight into how Inca can support your Cognos applications.

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This year, over 60 attendees gained valuable insight from customer speakers representing Baldor, Leaseplan and CB Richard Ellis.

Peak Performance 2004 was the first opportunity for Inca customers and prospects to hear how Baldor UK Ltd is using Cognos Planning to achieve a rolling forecast, enabling increased accuracy and collaboration within its financial planning process.

As part of a planned three year business optimisation programme, Baldor, a global designer and manufacturer of industrial electric motors, drives and generators, has significantly improved sales forecasting and revenue management, while reducing expenses and inventory across Europe.



The implementation of Cognos Planning to facilitate a monthly rolling forecast cycle, as part of the optimisation programme, has achieved a reduction in expenses of £1million and inventory by £2 million.

James Craner, European Financial Controller at Baldor, shared his experiences, "The nature of our business means that monthly sales are

highly volatile. It is critical that we can accurately predict sales, in order to meet our customers needs, the annual sales and profit plans, and ultimately, deliver on our projections to our shareholders.

Our annual plan was not only inaccurate by the end of the year, but the rigidity of the budget process was not conducive to sales team contribution and input. We also wanted a system that was easy to use, so that our salespeople were out there selling and not updating a complex forecasting system".



Peak Performance aims to help attendees identify with other organisation's forecasting issues and reveal the benefits of using Cognos Planning as a business planning tool. Presentations from Baldor, Leaseplan and CB Richard Ellis not only explained the problems so common within many organisations, but provided valuable experience into solving the issues shared by so many financial departments, in a host of different environments.

James Craner continued, "We can now complete each monthly rolling forecast in eight days, where the annual process used to take months to complete. In addition, Cognos Planning enables us to provide accurate financial projections by engaging with the plan holders, with the ability to assess the financial impact of any change in profit and loss projections.



Ettington Park - Venue for Peak Performance 2004

The sales team can now identify the impact of their successes, which has improved credibility and feedback to budget holders."

"We're delighted with the success of Peak Performance 2004 in helping our customers and prospects to understand the breadth of the Cognos Planning product and discover the extensive benefits they can achieve through accurate, timely forecasting", commented Chris Kerrison, Managing Director at Inca.



Watch out for future issues of Peak Performance which will feature the full Baldor case study, demonstrating how Baldor achieved its rolling forecast success with Inca.

Hot Tips!



HINTS & TIPS

This edition's Hints & Tips has a slightly techie edge as well as a Contributor bias. If these make no sense to you, don't panic. If you use Contributor, show this to your technical support team and let them panic instead!

1. Keeping contributor MSSQL databases under control:
Contributor databases tend to grow very fast when operations such as Publish and GTP's are performed, which, if left unchecked could potentially fill up the entire hard disk and stop Contributor from working. The solution is to regularly truncate the SQL by using the BACKUP LOG statement or better still, to schedule a database maintenance plan from within SQL Enterprise Manager that does this to run nightly. Not only will a maintenance plan allow you to keep the log to a reasonable size but it will also enable you to facilitate automated backups which will allow an easy method of recovering from any data loss.

2. Contributor Portal:
If running multiple contributor applications, it makes sense to set up a single contributor portal page which provides users with links to the respective contributor web application rather than having users save various different links to get to each application. Not only does this make it easier from a user point of view but it also provides an easy and central method for providing any administration notifications.

3. Consider automating your Contributor Models:
If you have tasks that need to be completed in a certain order, set up a Manager front end that steers you through each task or even consider using the automation tools so that a GTP or Publish can be kicked off from Manager or scheduled to run overnight.

4. Don't place plants on top of the television
If you spill water when watering the plant you could fuse your television or even electrocute yourself!



Paul Baron, Professional Services Manager at Peak Performance 2004



Handy Tips for Reporting with Cognos Planning!

If you are an existing Inca customer, chances are that you are using Cognos Planning, (previously known as Adaytum Planning). But how familiar are you with the reporting aspect of Cognos Planning? Did you know that the Analyst Add-In for Excel and Manager products provide you with simple and effective reporting capabilities?

Read on to learn helpful tips on applying formatting to multiple reports, creating a standard for item names, personalising your applications and using Cognos Manager as a Key Performance Indicator application!

Cognos Analyst Add-In for Excel

Many of you will be familiar with the affordable Cognos Add-In for Excel product which allows users to present Analyst data in the familiar Excel environment. Once the information has been imported, users have access to the formatting and calculating options that are available within Excel. The following tips from Inca will help you get more out of the Add-In for Excel option:

Hot Tip!

The Batch Printing function in the Excel Add-In generates new spreadsheets based on a specific item within a cube, such as area, salesperson or cost centre for example. A printed report pack is easy to create by applying all the required formatting (including print areas and graphs) on the base sheet. You are then free to sit back and watch the Batch Printing function replicate your desired formatting across each required sheet.

Step-by-Step Guide

From the Analyst Menu in Excel, choose:

- ▶ New View to create the base sheet.
- ▶ Apply the desired formatting.

Then from the Analyst Menu choose:

- ▶ Batch Printing, then
- ▶ Create Sheets

Hot Tip!

Excel can also be used to translate Cognos Analyst D-List items into final reports. This is useful if items in the reporting pack have different names to those contained in the Analyst D-List (i.e. Analyst uses Jan, Feb, Mar, but the final reports should read January 04 etc...). To achieve this, insert an additional row/column next to the row/column labels of the D-Cube view in Excel and simply add the reporting names in next to the Analyst names. Finally, hide (do not delete!) the Analyst names.

Cognos Manager

Manager is not only useful when creating reports and graphs from information stored within Analyst, but it can also be used as a flowcharting application.

Hot Tip!

It is possible to specify a level for each item that you wish to report on, so that it can be displayed in a specific way depending upon its value. For example, margins below 10% could be highlighted in red to indicate that they need attention, whilst margins above 15% may be highlighted in green. This gives an



immediate indication of performance and turns your Manager application into a Key Performance Monitoring Application!

Step-by-Step Guide

From the D-Cube Menu in Manager, select:

- ▶ Open to select the required D-Cube. Then apply conditional formatting by selecting:
- ▶ Data Colour from the Table Menu, selecting the 'Range of Data Values' radio button and clicking in the 'Colour' selection area.

Hot Tip!

Use bitmaps as buttons and backgrounds to increase the user-friendliness of your Manager application:

Step-by-Step Guide

To change the background, select:

- ▶ Report Options from the File Menu and browse to the location where the required image is stored.

To change the Buttons, select:

- ▶ Import from the Bitmap Menu and insert the required image.
- ▶ Then Ctrl + Click the image, select Link from the Bitmap Menu and specify the destination of the button.

COGNOS[®]

REPORTNET™

So, you want to produce even more sophisticated, web-enabled reports?

Why not have a look at Cognos ReportNet, the first all-in-one reporting software that lets you create, modify, and distribute any report your company requires. ReportNet enables organisations to standardise all enterprise reporting, not simply with one vendor, but with one product and architecture.

Cognos ReportNet eliminates the need for multiple reporting tools and the resulting costs due to duplicated training, maintenance, administration, servers, support, and lack of consistency in the information users need to make decisions.

The software is simple to manage, with zero-footprint deployment, scalability to support hundreds of thousands of users and the ability to integrate with any application or environment you have.

Most importantly, Cognos ReportNet is easy for users. Even the most novice of users can build all manner of reports with drag-and-drop simplicity. Yet, its powerful features satisfy advanced users' need to create complex queries and dynamic, multi-object reports.

Cognos ReportNet has set a new standard for company reporting and is available from Inca now!



Please email sweston@incasoftware.co.uk to request a copy of the Cognos ReportNet Interactive Demo CD or the Cognos ReportNet factsheet.



Inca launches new updated Cognos Planning training courses!

Public Training Courses

In response to your suggestions, Inca is pleased to announce the introduction of its new Public Training Course Schedule.

This schedule has been designed to provide a range of course options to our customers, whether new users of the software, or existing users simply in need of a Refresher Course.

Courses take place at the Inca Academy in Berkshire, providing the perfect environment for your project team to concentrate on completing the Intensive Training Courses provided by Inca's accredited trainers.

Inca will keep customers updated with public training course dates on a quarterly basis. In addition, our quarterly schedule will be available online at www.incasoftware.co.uk

Tailored Training Courses

As an alternative to attending the Inca Academy, if you have a team of people to send on a training course, our trainers will be more than happy to conduct any of our set courses on-site, subject to availability.

Bespoke Training Course

Customers are able to choose a combination of the modules available, to develop a more tailored course.

Tailored Bespoke Courses

Similar to the Bespoke Training Course above, but based on your live model.

End User Courses

Inca will develop and write courses specifically to train end users on their own systems and applications.

Training Audit Days

Enables you to review the training courses that you have already taken and identify future training requirements for your team.

To check course availability or to make a booking please contact Gemma Huggett on 01784 270 860 or alternatively you may email ghuggett@incasoftware.co.uk.

IFRS - Only six months left... are you ready?

"Only 34% of finance directors believe their employees are ready for IFRS"
Source: Accounting Age Survey of Finance Directors, February 2004.

If you are the Finance Director of a European Union Plc, and you are not ready to comply with the new Operating and Financial Review (OFR) requirements that are to be introduced in January 2005, you have less than six months to prepare your organisation for this legally enforceable requirement..

The purpose of the OFR is to provide greater transparency, quality and relevancy in financial reporting, recently brought to light by a spate of company scandals.

The new rules will affect your approach to P&L, budgeting, forecasting and management reporting. It will also affect your approach to revenue recognition, management rewards and corporate governance rules. Ultimately your ability to report the intangible as well as the tangible values of your organisation to your stakeholders will be challenged.

Be warned that non-compliance may result in:

- ▶ Reduced share price value
- ▶ Reduced corporate value
- ▶ Business disruption
- ▶ A shortage in expertise as the deadline approaches
- ▶ The inherent costs of poor planning
- ▶ Penalties for failure to comply

The good news, however, is that you now have someone to turn to. Inca are here to help you with the project set-up and management process and ensure that you have sufficient resources to comply with the new legal requirement.

Inca are pleased to offer you a free consultation to get you firmly on the road to compliance.

To take advantage of this offer, please don't delay in contacting Samantha Ruffle on 01784 270 860 to arrange a suitable time.

Course Name	Course Code	Duration (Days)	Cost per person per day	Total Cost per person	July	August	Sept
Cognos Analyst	A3	3	£600	£1800	20-22	17-19	21-23
Cognos Analyst/Manager and Add-in for Excel*	AMAE4	4	£600	£2400	20-23	17-20	21-24
Cognos Manager and Add-In for Excel*	MAE1	1	£600	£600	23	20	24
Cognos Analyst Refresher	AREF1	1	£600	£600	13	10	14
Cognos Contributor	CON2	2	£600	£1200	14-15	11-12	15-16

Your Ideas...

Our newsletter is designed specifically with our customers in mind, so we would like to encourage as many ideas for content from you as possible!

Email your suggestions to marketing@incasoftware.co.uk and we will happily consider your ideas for future issues.

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