



Staying Ahead Of The Game In The Current Economic Climate

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Together with our customers and other Australian and global organisations, the recent economic crisis and the ongoing slow down of the economy present a major challenge for all of us to stay competitive. How do we stay ahead of the game in the face of declining demands on product and services? How do you maintain a solid business foundation and retain a continuous competitive advantage in this tough environment?

From our experience and looking at how our customers have been facing this challenge, it becomes clear that in order to survive and thrive in this setting, businesses must strengthen its position by not only growing their customer base but find ways to sustain and maintain its existing customers and becoming more efficient and productive while reducing overheads. Minimising risk with better business insight, increasing business agility to respond to the market and finding recurring revenue from existing customer base are just some of the ways Praxa and our customers are addressing these tough times with positive results.

Australia's largest employers Wesfarmers, Cricket Australia and Australia's No.1 provider of grid connect solar power, Solar Shop Australia all understand the importance of a good CRM system while Queensland Health added an enterprise feedback management (EFM) solution recently to ensure they are responding and serving their customers' feedback better. With better customer insight at their finger tips, these CRM and EFM solutions have helped our customers retain and deepen its

relationships with their customers and indirectly drive further revenue opportunity.

Leveraging on the power of Business Intelligence (BI), the world's largest cosmetics and beauty company L'Oreal, National Australia Bank and Australia's premier entertainment, hospitality, and tourism and leisure companies, AHL (Amalgamated Holdings Limited) all have valuable, real

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"Praxa customers have learnt and used business productivity management tools in the form of CRM, BI, ERP and EFM to help them achieve better efficiency, insight and growth and thus combating the negative economic trend."

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time business information on tap to better manage their operation and make better, informed business decisions faster. A BI solution ensures business agility, relevancy and profitability for these companies.

St John Ambulance on the other hand has opted for a financial forecasting & budgeting solution to help them streamline and control their financial processes: This solution improves their data integrity, visibility, collaboration and confidence within their organisation.

Reino International, the largest paid parking equipment and

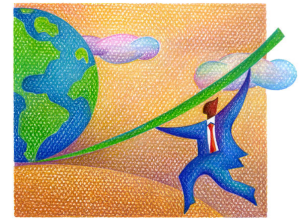
service provider in Australasia and TR Corporation, a diverse group of businesses delivering specialised technology solutions to commercial and government customers across the Asia Pacific region see the benefit of a comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution that improves their financial and supply chain management, customer service delivery, compliance and accountability.

All of these Praxa customers have learnt and used business productivity management tools in the form of CRM, BI, ERP and EFM to help them achieve better efficiency, insight and growth and thus combating the negative economic trend. Praxa is fortunate to be in a position to help them during Q1 to establish a solid business foundation by adopting these business productivity management solutions that have driven their internal resources to the maximum.

Ultimately, the challenge in this climate is to strengthen your position by having a better business process, productivity, insight and customer relationships while reducing your operation cost in your organisation: A CRM, BI, ERP and EFM solution can help and Praxa is one of Australia's leading consultants and specialists in these areas. Staying ahead of the game in the current economic climate is tough for many organisations, including Praxa, but the tough can get a little easier when you have the help of a good and robust CRM, BI, ERP and EFM solution in place.

- Frank Hung
Managing Director

Can A Performance Management Solution Help Organisations Break Through The Downturn?



During a tough economic climate like now, all organisations are under tremendous pressure to reduce operational costs, minimise risk and maximise profitability. Management and executive teams need to learn to be lean and be keen to find ways to reduce cycle time for planning and budgeting, improve staff productivity, streamline compulsory statutory compliance and make the most of the critical operational and financial information available in the organisation to take decisive action when confronted by unpredictable economic variables.

To be effective, organisations need to have reliable, up-to-date financial and operational data for planning purposes as well as budgeting, forecasting, analysis, and management reporting but getting a current, clear and trustworthy view of an organisation's status can be very difficult to achieve. Critical company data is often spread across multiple applications, databases and different personnel or trapped as unstructured data living in an employee's e-mail attachments, spreadsheets, hard drive or external storage devices. Operational and financial information may not be dependable either due to ineffective control and most of the time, they are difficult to audit.

In this scenario, business planning becomes frustrating and messy. The whole process is ineffective and time consuming. Budgeting can turn into "spreadsheet hell" as managers submit unrealistic



budgets, executives change figures

without their knowledge, and version control problems cause confusion. Consolidation of information becomes a challenge and you can forget about predicting your future company performance under this backdrop. These are just the internal operational issues but an organisation also needs to meet compliance with regulatory mandates such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act as well. Operational obstacles and lack of processes like these often hinder effective management and organisation growth and no organisation today can afford to be complacent when it comes to operation effectiveness.

An organisation needs to access up-to-date company data and have a complete picture of how the business has performed, is performing and how it is expected to perform – from the actual results posted previously to the plans and budgets for the coming year. "Live" operational data that is updated in real time and instantly accessible gives an organisation a single, consistent version of 'truth.' This data integrity and accuracy saves time and arguments. The ability to seamlessly integrate reliable "live" corporate and departmental data is key to understand how the company performs and how to optimise the planning, budgeting and consolidation processes.

The integrity, accuracy and accessibility of an organisation's data is not the only hindrance to the planning, budgeting and consolidation process. Performing bottom-up and top-down financial and operational planning requires collaboration on plans, engagement and management of stakeholder interactions, track versions and changes of plans and ensuring ownership and accountability. The planning process must be supported by workflows and automation that ensure that the right people participate at the right time for

maximum efficiency. Without the right process support in place, even small deviations can throw off key figures. Business process flows that are automatically tracked and audited become indispensable.

To move ahead or sustain competitiveness in this unpredictable economic environment, an organisation also needs to prepare itself with the ability to predict negative variances. Automated, predictive analytics give an organisation an early-warning system of performance metrics at risk of underperforming in the future and can automatically recommend actions that can change predicted outcomes.

A predictive analytics tool provides "What-if modelling" and "scenario-planning" functions that would leverage on an organisation's historical data and automatically analyses them and gives you critical information such as reasons and root causes that can help assess what has happened in the past and make risk-adjusted plans that improve future performance preparing the organisation for re-alignment of its corporate goals, initiatives, and metrics when necessary.

When the going gets tough, the tough can get a robust performance management solution in place. A management solution that streamlines and automates business process planning, budgeting, forecast and consolidation and has an ability to perform perceptive predictive analysis would all help an organisation during the downturn ensuring efficiency and increasing staff productivity. The advantage of centralising all performance-related data and the ability to access them in real time would enable finance and line-of-business managers to collaborate for faster development and alignment of accurate budgets

while reduce cycle time in creating and approving budgets.

A performance management solution would also enable calculated decision making by taking risk probabilities into account through predict analysis and minimise business and compliance risk by ensuring fully transparent finances and reporting with a fast close and fully documented audit trail. An organisation with a strategic business process in place and a greater understanding of its operation and performance, combined with an insight into its internal and external risk probabilities, can make better decisions to help them manage the operation and contribute positively to its overall future results.

If you are looking for a solution to streamline, analyse, predict and manage your forecasting, budgeting and reporting and seamlessly integrate corporate and departmental planning with your financials backed by a fully documented audit trail and compliance with regulatory mandates for consolidating and reporting company information, both externally and internally, Praxa has a host of performance management solution from SAP BusinessObjects, Microsoft, Zap and Wensoft to maximise your business operation and profitability that optimises your corporate systems, people and processes.

Talk to us to find out what performance management solution best fit your organisation.



Are You Free From Information Obstacles that Impede Critical Decision Making?

Managers, let's have a quick survey.

Do you find it difficult to get relevant company data you need to make accurate decisions? Are you finding it harder and harder to make sound decisions today compared to a few years ago? Do you base half of your decision making on your gut feel instead of hard facts because you cannot get access to the right kinds of information that you need? Are you finding there is just too much or too little information to sift and get through? Do you feel like you are wasting time getting information instead of using it to analyse, plan and implement your business strategy? Do you think the insufficient information and inefficient information access and delivery in your workplace significantly impact your productivity? Do you find it difficult to make collaborative decisions quickly and accurately in your organisation? Have you come across situations where managers have made bad business decisions because they did not have the right, timely or historical information? Or worse, they have made bad decisions based on bad data?

If you answered yes to most of the above questions, then you are not alone. BusinessWeek Research Services study on the state of decision making and information access amongst executives in the US and Europe found one of the biggest obstacles for managers and executives when it comes to effective decision making is the lack of information accuracy, visibility, accessibility and analysis.

Managers and Executives simply cannot make good strategic business decisions if they cannot find the information; the data is insufficient, inaccurate or incomplete; data analysis and root causes cannot be validated or tested; or if their organisation does not have the capacity to

collaborate in sync with employees, customers and suppliers across an extended enterprise. Managers need to have complete and precise data for proactive decision making at their finger tips to make informed decisions based on facts.

Quality of data is also crucial in formulating critical business decisions. Bad data leads to bad decisions and may involve millions of dollars and compromise a company's competitive position. Decisions made on inaccurate or incomplete information are apt to be repeated until the problem data is corrected. The Data Warehousing Institute has estimated that data quality problems cost organisations more than \$858 billion a year in the US alone. In a different study of 20,000 Dutch companies, poor data quality costs them an estimated \$ 776 million.

The BusinessWeek Research Services study also found too many executives spent the majority of their time making day to day, low tactical activities and spent far less time on broader, strategic decisions that have more impact on the success of their companies. Why?

Without the accessibility, visibility, accuracy and analysis of information, managers are hesitant or find it difficult to find motivation to formalise a strategic plan or direction so these high impact activity is pushed aside or under 'the too hard basket' in favour of the lower tactical ones. This is one of the hidden costs of poor data management and the inability for the organisation to perform at its best.

This is bad news. Today, the number of critical business decisions a typical manager or executive needs to make has increased compared to a few years ago and they are significantly more difficult to resolve especially when the critical information

required to make these decisions is out of reach, out of time or just completely out.

Compound to this, organisation decision makers are pressured to comply with new and existing regulatory and corporate governance initiatives and the recent collapse of many high profiled institutions and corporations in the finance, insurance, banking and manufacturing sectors has already got industry and government bodies asking for better and more accountability and stricter requirements to report and to abide to mandatory company information dissemination. This is a daunting task for organisations with fragmented information systems.

A majority of these obstacles that impede critical decision making among executives lie primarily, though not exclusively, in the limitation of an organisation's information system & processes that includes incompatible applications and databases scattered across a decentralised enterprise, a lack of data storage capacity, no clearly defined processes or authority and an inadequate IT staffing and high turnover.

These systems limitations in an organisation undermine the confidence in managers and executives to make sound decisions, if they make it at all?

BusinessWeek Research Services study shows the majority of executives surveyed make well over half their decisions based NOT on empirical information but on gut feel.

Clearly an organisation that has a sound content information management system and process in place will proactively assist managers with decision making. Managers need faster access to more accurate data; more time for data assessment and

consideration; real-time data personalisation to individual needs; and greater and better collaboration capacity between internal and external stakeholders, customers, suppliers and partners.

An integrated information management system incorporating elements of business intelligence (BI), customer relationship management (CRM) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) can help managers and executives with timely and accurate information giving them the ability to extract the latest and historical data from disparate systems (ie sales, operations, marketing, supply chain etc); provide key metrics and performance indicators, drill through and interrogate the data for greater insight and forecast future company performance and a platform for collaboration with colleagues and relevant stakeholders.

The inability to access and analyse key business information on a real-time-needs basis has a material and cost impact on productivity, decision quality and the overall fortunes of businesses.

Praxa is a leading specialist in BI, CRM & ERP so if you recognised some of these 'obstacles' in your organisation and would like to eliminate them so better critical decisions can be made then please call us.

Click Here if you would like to get a copy of the BusinessWeek Research Services study on the state of decision making and information access amongst executives in the US and Europe.



Case Study:

Jackson & Jackson Refrigeration Achieves 242% Growth with Less Than 50% Increase in Administration Staff

Click Jackson & Jackson's logo right to read the full story.



"WennSoft was integral in helping us outpace our revenue projections and achieve growth of 242% while our admin staff increased by less than 50%."

*Jeff Jackson
Managing Director
Jackson & Jackson Pty Ltd*



CUSTOMER PROFILE

Jackson & Jackson Refrigeration is a mechanical contractor that provides professional sales, installation, service and repair of refrigeration, air-conditioning and electrical services

BUSINESS SITUATION

Company needed a software solution for achieving profitability on service calls and contracting, invoicing customers quickly, managing maintenance contracts and ensuring the accuracy of financials

SOLUTION

Jackson & Jackson adopted the WennSoft Job Cost and Service Management which improved invoicing, increased efficiency and reduced data entry

SOFTWARE

Microsoft GP
WennSoft Job Cost
WennSoft Service Management

Praxa Welcomes Two New General Managers



Praxa is very pleased to welcome Kent Lawrence (right) and Stephen Pettitt (left) who have been promoted to General Manager of Praxa Queensland and Praxa NSW respectively. Kent has been the Professional Services Manager in Praxa's Queensland office since July 2007 and has been instrumental in building Praxa's brand and reputation in Queensland while Stephen has been an integral part to the success of the Praxa's NSW Enterprise Solutions group since joining Praxa in 2007 as Enterprise Solutions Practice Manager.



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