

Case Study

Cleveland Potash



Training for Success

Organisation Overview

Cleveland Potash Ltd (CPL) operates the United Kingdom's only potash mine, producing over a million tons of potash for fertilizers and more than half a million tons of salt each year. Part of ICL Fertilizers, one of the world's largest fertilizer companies, the group provides end users and manufacturers on five continents with a wide range of high-performance solutions. It is a group built upon implicit financial and information management.

As a key part of an international group, CPL currently supplies some 55% of the United Kingdom's potash consumption from its Boulby mine. Located within a National Park on the north-east coast of England, workings extend down to 1500m below ground level and as far as 7km underneath the North Sea. Customers use the high-quality potash products for fertilizer production, glass making, and applications in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries. Cleveland's salt products also meet a variety of needs, from road maintenance to sugar beet cultivation and as an ingredient in animal feeds.

The Cleveland business and customer portfolio is wide and complex, producing banks of essential trading data every week. Keeping on top of, but more important interrogating the quantities of data is key to the business.

The Challenge

Effectively the company manages its operation through a live and dynamic SAP/ERP reporting and analysis solution. The reams of business data are crunched via an IBM Cognos business intelligence and analytics program which allows managers to drill down into the information to analyse customer, product and HR information from different parts of the organisation. Cognos Planning is indispensable to CPL.

The Business Challenge

Cleveland Potash rely on Cognos to make informed decisions on their business. Not only must the system be always available but as new staff join it is imperative that they are trained in how to use the system

The Solution

Upgrade Cognos to work under Windows 7 and provide bespoke training to the end users on new functionality

The Key Benefits

Users are able to develop and maintain their own models and meet the increasing information needs of the business

Like all successful organisations, CPL is subject to the rigours of an ever changing work force. In some companies, change can result in a loss of essential skills, particularly where sophisticated software is at work throughout an organisation. CPL is ever-vigilant where succession training is concerned.

Under the direction of Darren King, who was instrumental in setting up CPL's original IBM Cognos Planning Analyst models, all IT system and IT personnel requirements are continually reviewed. Working with Budgeting Solutions' director John Banks, a move to Windows 7 was recommended to increase efficiencies. As the migration would mean that the new version would impact upon aspects of the existing Cognos Planning Analyst version, Budgeting Solutions upgraded the company to version 10.1 and devised a bespoke training programme to keep users up to date with developments.

The Key Benefits

The course was designed to deliver in-depth training in a hands-on environment. The format was adapted to give key users the opportunity to construct, implement and maintain business planning solutions under the guidance of a Budgeting Solutions IBM Cognos Planning Analyst specialist. The objective was to ensure that users had the practical knowledge to build and maintain models using best practice techniques.

Designed by John Banks, the course included advanced modelling techniques, administration and maintenance, building manager flowcharts and menus, together with Excel Add-Ins and manager reports.

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According to CPL's Darren King, it was one of the most detailed and focused courses he had experienced. He said:

"IT hardware and software technologies evolve at a rapid rate. No company can afford not to invest in training to ensure key personnel know how to get the best out of the software. It is equally important that skills are not lost and can be passed on to new system users."

"Budgeting Solutions displayed two key levels of understanding first, their knowledge and experience within Cognos models, but as important their level of business experience. In other words, they know what their customers need to go forward."



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