

Case Study Daptiv PPM



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Paul Roux, Benefits
Management Consultant

Western Power Manages over 100 projects Simply, Quickly, Easily with Daptiv PPM

Western Power is an electricity networks corporation that is owned by the Western Australian Government. The corporation has historically been a “poles and wires” business – transporting electricity from power stations to towns and cities and then distributing it to homes and businesses via a large network of power lines. The future strategic direction is to be an energy solutions business that offers innovative and sustainable options. Western Power’s responsibilities include:

- Transporting electricity from power stations to towns and cities, and then distributing it to homes and businesses.
- Maintaining the network and restoring power after interruptions.
- Developing the network to meet the needs of customers and developers and to bring electricity to new areas.

The corporation has an independent Board of Directors, which provides high-level strategic advice on the direction of the business. As a corporation, however, Western Power makes commercial decisions based on regulations.

Problem

Within Western Power’s business, there is a range of project activity going on and project management tools are an essential part of planning and evaluating business. In place were a number of different tools and methods of managing projects. While there was an initiative to adopt a common project methodology and system, this was not likely to implement for 18 months.

The Executive Program Office - part of the Strategy and Corporate Affairs Division - focuses on strategic initiatives, business change and alignment with organizational strategy. This department was using an MS-Excel-based method of managing projects, where it was a requirement for each project to have an MS-Excel spreadsheet. Each month, a consolidated report had to be run, designed by a contractor who had left the company. As projects moved through their lifecycle, it became increasingly difficult to update the system. After a project was completed, financial benefits were tracked using another set of spreadsheets. These were designed by the same contractor and were difficult to maintain as they were full of complex formulae. The Executive Program Office manager requested a PPM tool that would provide a facility for benefits management.

“Our biggest problem was that we needed a PPM tool very quickly that could ramp up and support a large number of users in a short amount of time,” says Paul Roux, Benefits Management Consultant, Executive Program Office. “We needed a simple, flexible solution for project managers and non-project managers to use so they could get to their projects quickly without fuss and I needed flexibility to handle benefits tracking.”

Key Facts

- Western Power needed a tool that they could ramp up quickly to 70 users. It was imperative to find a SaaS solution with flexible tracking and reporting capabilities.
- Looking into Onsite solutions didn't make sense to Western Power – a SaaS solution had a lot of support from the IT contract manager because of the lower cost compared to an onsite solution. In addition, with a SaaS solution, there was no in-house IT support required.
- Over 100 projects are managed through Daptiv PPM at Western Power.

An onsite solution wasn't an option for Western Power. "We looked at a traditional onsite option but this was too expensive – especially as a temporary solution," explains Roux. "It's significantly more expensive to get a private server up and running." With the potential for an enterprise wide PPM being implemented in 18 months, Western Power's IT sourcing strategy was very comfortable with the idea of software as a service (SaaS) for the Executive Program Office's needs. "Our internal IT department wouldn't have to support Daptiv PPM since it is a hosted solution. They were overloaded with projects as it is and if our department had our own tool, we could get help from Daptiv's support team in Seattle. There's also no IT cost involved since there are no databases, servers...it is a huge benefit to the IT department. We had support from the IT contract manager to pursue a SaaS solution."

Solution

A comprehensive RFI process was followed with six leading products being considered. Roux was informed about Daptiv after speaking with the project manager from Western Power's IT department who was managing the tool selection. Roux visited Daptiv's website and was put in touch with a Daptiv partner in Australia, Charl Morkel, CEO of Bluenova. "Charl and I were able to sit down and he asked me what I needed to achieve for benefits tracking. It was a personalized experience where I could ask questions and quickly get answers instead of getting a username and password like I did with another product," explains Roux. With the help of Bluenova, Roux could quickly see how Daptiv PPM could address Western Power's needs. "I like the fact that Charl from Bluenova and the Daptiv team are committed to the product and go out of their way to ensure that Daptiv PPM is used as effectively as possible."

Top Reasons Why Western Power Chose Daptiv:

- Time was of the essence. Western Power wanted a tool that was easily accessible and required very little implementation time.
- Flexibility in tracking information. Western Power needed a way to track information in their Benefits Register, which required a customizable application that allowed for flexibility.
- Robust reporting capabilities. Daptiv Advanced Report Builder allows Western Power to build reports in a snap for instant visibility into overall project progress, accountability and direction.
- Scalability of solution. It was important to find a solution that could support the organization.
- Software as a Service (SaaS). Finding a SaaS solution was important to Western Power. They wanted something that would be easily accessible to grow their user database. In addition, the pricing structure was far less than an onsite option.

Western Power's Executive Program Office, Customer Service Division and now Human Resources Division use Daptiv PPM. They currently manage over

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100 projects. While Customer Service and Human Resources use the tool to manage divisional projects, the Executive Program Office uses Daptiv PPM to manage the strategic program and to track benefits across the business. “We have 25 projects in the benefits register and each month we use Daptiv PPM, to track and capture benefit actuals and total them up and put them into a report. Daptiv’s dynamic applications presented a solution where we could continue recording information against the project and did not have to maintain an MS-Excel reporting solution.”

Here are a few ways in which Western Power’s Executive Program Office uses Daptiv PPM to manage projects within The Green Edge strategic theme:

Substation of the Future

This project was developed to gauge the concern with the appearance and appeal of substations in the community and takes a look at how substations might look in the future, design considerations, change appearance of substations, and options to enclose substations into a building in residential areas. All of this planning and information involves gathering strategic information from other utilities. Daptiv is used to track milestones and record project progress.

Demand-side Management

A few days per year, there is a surge in power when temperatures rise above 40 degrees Celsius. It is expensive for the business to build assets that are only required for only a few days per year to meet increased demand when air conditioner usage increases, producing a spike in electricity. Demand-side management is a project to engage with the community to have switches placed on household air conditioners so that they can be turned off remotely for a short period of time. The idea is to lower electricity demand during spikes. Daptiv is used to track milestones and record project progress.

In addition to Daptiv PPM, Western Power also uses Daptiv Advanced Report Builder. Roux can pull together highly customizable reports at the portfolio, program and project level. Says Roux, “With Daptiv Advanced Report Builder data can be accessed in a neat package to prepare reports to give upper management visibility at the portfolio, program and project levels. I can quickly report risks and issues and format that information conveniently into Excel, html or PDF format.”

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Value

For Western Power’s Executive Program Office, the focus has shifted from system-related challenges to the process of managing the work. With Daptiv PPM in place, they are able to gather, update and present information more quickly. “Now we can access more information at a detailed level,” says Roux. “Previously, it was hard to get that information. We’ve shifted in terms of being able to access information quickly, simply and easily.” In addition, there is more visibility into which individuals are contributing to the projects. “People using Daptiv PPM are keener to update status reports because there is clear visibility into who is updating information and who isn’t,” says Roux. “Now it’s so easy to track information at the end of the month and it’s easy to access and enter that information over the web. In a snap we can update issues, milestones and risks.” Daptiv PPM is a tool to get everyone on board so that information can be presented consistently. Explains Roux, “We now have the technology tool that allows us to shift our attention to asking strategic questions like, ‘are we doing the right things?’. With the increased visibility, we know which projects we need to focus on and which ones we need to stop. There is no more chasing around each month; we know how projects and programs are fairing.”

Value of Daptiv PPM for Western Power:

- Central location for all strategic portfolio project information
- Flexible functionality allowed customization of a benefits register application
- Accuracy of information. Get an accurate picture of what’s going on.
- User friendly (as opposed to with MS-Excel)

About Bluenova:

Bluenova is the sales and implementation partner for Daptiv in Australia and New Zealand. Bluenova delivers PPM capability to its customers via a holistic approach that combines people, process, technology, and business intelligence. Solutions range from portfolio management, program management and resource management to project management, innovation management and collaboration. www.bluenova.com.au