"Working with our trusted business partner CRGroup, we deployed a new system that delivers advanced analytics and business intelligence including Cubes, which greatly enhances reporting and vastly improves strategic planning."

Jeffrey Puncher, Director of Finance - Thales Canada

About Thales Canada

Thales Canada is a leading technology supplier of mission critical systems for defense, security, aerospace and ground transportation. Thales Canada employs 1,300 Canadian professionals, with offices in Quebec City, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver. Sales across Thales operations in Canada exceeded $500 million (CAD) for 2011, with a range of customers in Canada and overseas urban rail operators, civil aviation, and defense and security agencies.

THALES

About CRGroup

Since 1989, Corporate Renaissance Group has been a global provider of innovative solutions that improve business management and performance. With over 4,000 customers worldwide, CRGroup has established itself with expertise in business management consulting and software development. CRGroup delivers solutions by leveraging their expertise in Microsoft Dynamics, SharePoint, business intelligence, financial and costing principles, shared services and employee performance management.

Overview

By deploying Microsoft Dynamics GP with help from Corporate Renaissance Group, Thales Canada Defense & Security was able to create a customized, flexible ERP system that enabled better management of its business resources and information.

Late in 2008, Jeffrey Puncher joined Thales Canada as Controller to oversee day-to-day finances for the Corporation. When he arrived, the Finance department was using a corporate version of a mid-market accounting solution and its cost accounting system. "The Defense & Security unit accounts for approximately one-fifth of Thales Canada's annual revenue. I was concerned that the existing accounting system was no longer sufficient to accommodate the company's ever-increasing size and complexity," explains Puncher, now Director of Finance. Four major issues were identified with the system in place at the time:

- Reporting capabilities were very limited within the Crystal Reports framework

- Project tracking was not integrated into the main accounting system

- Regular accounting processes including purchase orders, expense reports and approvals were still being completed manually on paper

- The General Ledger structure was outdated and inadequate for the size of the company

- It was clear that Thales Canada Defense & Security had outgrown the legacy system and required a more robust, integrated solution to support its business moving forward.

Thales' Journey

As he began to explore possible solutions to the problems he was facing, Puncher reached out to Corporate Renaissance Group. CRGroup helped Thales Canada optimize technology investments by providing sound advice and expertise in implementing business solutions.

"I had worked with the team at Corporate Renaissance Group on projects in the past and knew the value they could bring," says Puncher. "They have extensive knowledge and experience working with the full Microsoft portfolio and can integrate the different solutions in ways that work. I also knew the "personality" of the people at Corporate Renaissance Group and had confidence that there would be a good working relationship."

In consultation with Corporate Renaissance Group, Thales Canada Defense & Security selected Microsoft Dynamics® GP™ for its new accounting and financial management system.

The Results

Deep financial insight
To help Thales Canada Defense & Security realize the full potential of its enterprise data, CRGroup recommended deploying the Advanced Analytics and Business Intelligence functionality as part of its Microsoft Dynamics GP solution. The output of this functionality is fundamental for all of the company's key reporting and decisionmaking.

"The new system delivers advanced analytics and business intelligence including Cubes, which makes for better reporting, and better strategic planning," says Puncher.

The Results

Smooth implementation
Throughout the implementation, Corporate Renaissance Group worked closely with members of Thales Canada's finance and IT departments to ensure that everyone's requirements were met without creating an impact to business operations.

Complete integration
Thales Canada Defense & Security was advised to implement the Project Accounting module of Dynamics GP. As part of the process, CRGroup was required to integrate two additional applications being used by different areas of the business into the Project Accounting module; namely, a project management solution by Primavera and a timekeeping tool by Tenrox. This was a very intricate component of the project, as integration points had to be established for employee, project, cost category setup, and timesheet data.

Streamlined processes
Maintaining a lean operation is a key goal for Thales Canada. CRGroup worked with Thales to identify value-added solutions in order to further extend the native functionality of Dynamics GP to best meet its specific needs. This resulted in the deployment of Ariett ReqNet for advanced purchasing functionality, mhance for invoice approvals and accruals, and Image Tag for barcoding functionality. Now many simple tasks have been automated or streamlined, improving efficiency and freeing up hours for employees to put toward more highvalue work.

Flexible for growth
Within the Microsoft Dynamics GP General Ledger framework, Thales Canada Defense & Security was able to design a powerful account structure for improved financial tracking and analysis. Puncher is happy that the modular design of Dynamics GP ensures the system is scalable to handle the company's continuing growth.

"Our aim is to scale our business without adding unnecessary overhead, and Microsoft Dynamics GP helps us do that... CRGroup is an exceptional business technology partner," remarks Puncher. "They are reliable and responsive and do an excellent job of delivering quality service to our business, anytime we need it."

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