DXC TECHNOLOGY

Deague Group takes a technological leap forward into the cloud

CUSTOMER
Deague Group

LOCATION
Melbourne, Australia

INDUSTRY
Consumer and retail

Challenge

- Systems becoming unsupported and expensive to maintain
- Siloed information slowing down speed and reliability of financial reporting
- Need to bring all recording and reporting needs into one place for one source of truth

Solution

- Implement SAP Business ByDesign, a tailored cloud ERP solution that offers integrated functionality across finance, CRM, reporting and billing processes
- Cloud-based deployment offers anytime and anywhere access to system, especially valuable during lockdown/crisis conditions
- Reduced use of spreadsheets, amalgamation of reporting tools, and implementation of specialist billing process to accommodate services side of business

Results

- One source of truth available to all business units
- Integrated system is less costly to maintain and operate
- Real-time reporting provides better visibility of business performance

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Deague Group is a well-established, privately owned Australian property development company that has successfully developed over 12,000 commercial, residential and hotel buildings. It operates primarily in Victoria but has recently developed properties in Queensland and South Australia.

"DXC's consultants took the time to understand our billing requirements and made sure the software incorporated all the necessary feeds. It wasn't something SAP Business ByDesign could do out of the box, but with the right expertise the software proved flexible enough to accommodate our complex billing process. This is now much more automated, less costly to maintain and we can manage it ourselves without any help from IT."

— Myles Rigby
  Group accountant
  Deague Group

Cloud-based SAP system integrates core processes for anytime access and improved reporting

Founded in 1859, Deague operates two key divisions — a property and development arm that drives new property purchases, and its company group which comprises over 30 different operational businesses.

"Once we develop a property a lot of things follow on from that," says Myles Rigby, group accountant for Deague Group. "We try to provide a full suite of business property services which might include real estate management and sales, car park operations, as well as serviced and virtual offices. We also have a loans and investment arm."

"We now have a scalable, future-proofed platform in place that is already providing us with a range of business benefits. DXC and Deague worked together as one team to deliver the result we wanted."

Challenge

Following the divestment of a number of its hotels, Deague Group decided the time was right to upgrade its entire technology infrastructure.

"It was the perfect time to move," said Rigby. "We had some clear air to get rid of our old systems which were rapidly becoming outdated and unsupported. We were determined to go down the cloud path, because we wanted the flexibility of any time, anywhere access to the system. We also saw it as an opportunity to take a technological leap forward, by implementing a future-proofed enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform."

One of the project's key business drivers was the desire to ensure all Deague's business units could see one source of truth, from one system that integrated all its core business processes.

"What became clear during the initial project scoping was that all our business units had different ways of obtaining the information they needed," says Rigby. "We knew that wasn't efficient or reliable and were determined to bring all the data that supported our processes into one centralised location. We wanted finance, billing, and CRM to see the same information and be able to rely on one set of figures."

Solution

After analysing a number of software providers, Deague Group chose to partner with DXC Technology to implement SAP Business ByDesign — a 'ready to run', cloud-based ERP solution that promises the power of real-time

visibility into its business performance.

As the leading SAP solutions provider in Australasia, and certified SAP Services Platinum Partner, DXC specialises in using SAP's world-leading technology to solve real business problems and provide measurable business value.

Deague Group's decision to choose SAP Business ByDesign as its cloud-based ERP platform was heavily influenced by the software's ability to satisfy two key prerequisites.

Firstly, it needed a business management platform that could cope with its unique customer billing process.

"We had a legacy custom-built billing module that was specific to the services side of our business," says Rigby. "The IT team had to constantly maintain it for us, which was both inefficient and risky as it gave us a single point of failure. We wanted to get rid of the custom development and bring the billing process into the new system."

Secondly, Deague wanted software that would make it easy to undertake transactions across its numerous different business entities.

"We operate each property development as a separate trust, and currently have around 30 different entities. We needed an efficient way of managing these, without having to log in and out of different screens or systems."

"The whole implementation ran very smoothly, and we always had great pre- and post-implementation support. We had no SAP experience in-house, so we appreciated the expert level of project management. We always knew where we were and what was ahead."

— **Myles Rigby**
    Group accountant
    Deague Group

Solving key issues

The built-in smarts of SAP's Business ByDesign software, combined with some innovative design-thinking from DXC's technical team, has seen both issues neatly squared away, says Rigby.

"DXC's consultants took the time to understand our billing requirements and made sure the software incorporated all the necessary feeds. It wasn't something SAP Business ByDesign could do out of the box, but with the right expertise the software proved flexible enough to accommodate our complex billing process. This is now much more automated, less costly to maintain and we can manage it ourselves without any help from IT."

Similarly, the difficulty of moving from one business entity to another is a thing of the past. "Making a journal entry in one entity and doing a reciprocal one in another is now as simple as changing the entity number at the top of the screen. It is a great timesaver," says Rigby.

Better decision-making during a crisis

Rigby says the company is pleased with the software's reporting capabilities — something that has helped improve decision-making through the COVID-19 crisis.

"Axing spreadsheets and amalgamating reporting tools has meant we have one source of truth for greater visibility and reliability. Real-time reporting has been possible and that has allowed us to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on a daily basis."

Primarily as a landlord, Deague Group has been heavily involved in providing cashflow or rent relief to many lessees who are struggling through the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Knowing exactly what money has been billed and what has been collected has given us a much more informed picture of our business from day-to-day and has improved our cashflow management," says Rigby. "SAP also has an Excel-based add-in function that has meant people who are comfortable looking at figures in Excel can digest the information quickly. The information comes straight from the SAP system into Excel, which means it is accurate, up to date and available for users to do their own analyses."

The bank reconciliation tool in SAP Business ByDesign has also been a hit. Says Rigby: "With over 30 different entities we have to manage at least 90 bank accounts. When things have not been posted, it is very obvious in the system. SAP has lots of controls to ensure nothing is out of balance."

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Textbook partnership

Rigby says the results since the company went live with the SAP software reflect the expertise of DXC and the textbook partnership between the organisations.

"The whole implementation ran very smoothly, and we always had great pre- and post-implementation support. We had no SAP experience in-house, so we appreciated the expert level of project management. We always knew where we were and what was ahead."

Rigby says the company spent more time than anticipated on user acceptance training, but that proved to be a wise decision.

"The product was new to everyone, so we wanted to be sure all our users were comfortable with the software before we went live. We also took the time to document how everything works, so we can easily transfer that knowledge in house."

Adopting an incremental approach, Deague Group went live with the finance software first and is now looking to on-board CRM, operational worksheets, contract management and customer portals.
"We now have a scalable, future-proofed platform in place that is already providing us with a range of business benefits. DXC and Deague worked together as one team to deliver the result we wanted."

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