

Customer Profile

Valley View cuts budget time with Infor Corporate Performance Management



Facts at a glance

Product: Infor Corporate Performance

Management

Industry: Hospitality and Gaming

Country: USA

"Infor Corporate Performance Management put us in a much better position to know how anything impacts our financial performance. It's made a huge difference in our efficiency."

—Leilani Marquiss,Director of Finance,Valley View Casino & Hotel

About the company

Located in Valley Center, California, Valley View Casino & Hotel is one of San Diego's favorite gaming destinations. Casino action combines with beautifully appointed rooms and breathtaking views to create a perfect environment—for adults only—to relax and get away. With San Diego's only Certified Loose slots, exciting table games, seven restaurants, three bars and lounges, and free live entertainment nightly, Valley View Casino & Hotel beckons as Southern California's playground. To learn more, visit www.valleyviewcasino.com/.

Setting the strategy

A big challenge in the gaming industry is to keep its guests coming back. That's why the casino in Valley Center, California, decided to add more than 100 hotel rooms after running a successful casino for nine years. Leilani Marquiss, director of finance at Valley View Casino & Hotel, explains: "We have many loyal guests who visit our casino about 50 to 90 times a year, depending on their level of play. Nearly all of them request a place to stay to relax after a long day at the casino, and many of them come from the Los Angeles area." But to ensure a more efficient process for financial reporting and budgeting with reliable results, Valley View Casino decided to turn to technology to support its cause.

Getting business specific

After seeing a product demo and attending a user conference, individuals in the finance department at Valley View decided that Infor™ offered the exact solutions they needed: Infor Corporate Performance Management for budgeting and financial reporting, and Infor Infinium FMS with general ledger, fixed assets, purchasing, and inventory control capabilities. Fely Joachim, finance manager at Valley View, notes, "We used a manual system for budgeting and forecasting. We're a small finance department, and we consolidate information from so many other departments. Our top objective was to find a system that would help us shave time off the very long consolidation process." Marquiss adds, "We also needed improved accuracy.

When budgeting, we had to link many worksheets and consolidate them into one, and we weren't sure if we could capture all the numbers correctly. After attending the Infor user conference where we saw the product in action, we presented a full-blown product demo to our CFO, Jennifer Bryant, and she was totally impressed." Says Bryant, "With Infor, all data is centralized, so end users always see the same real-time data—one version of the truth. Reliability of the numbers allows us to make more informed decisions. Also, knowing that several very large casino operating companies use the same Infor software gave us even more confidence."

Seeing results

After implementing the Infor solutions, Valley View began to see immediate benefits. "An important advantage is better organization," Marquiss says.

"In pre-Infor days, we needed to keep track of several versions of the budget. And the supporting detail for any budget number that managers and department heads submitted would sometimes get lost. With Infor, the worksheet and the details are attached to the number, and we can drill into the detail anytime."

Joachim notes how reliability plays a big role. "Before, when we'd prepare for a meeting and a change occurred right before the meeting, we weren't confident with the final numbers. Now, we can make a change and just press a button to consolidate and it's done—no worries about lost links or lost spreadsheets or grabbing the data incorrectly. We know it's accurate, and it's only a click away."

During budget week, the finance department no longer needs to work long hours to complete consolidation before a meeting the following day. Joachim says, "We can actually start putting in the pre-numbers and populating some of the areas long before our kickoff meeting, which we could never have done before everyone did their reviews." Marquiss adds, "Everyone says it's user-friendly. We didn't expect users to adapt so well, being so at ease populating their data in spreadsheets. After I put together a simple five-slide presentation to train managers, in 10 minutes they were out of the meeting using the solution."

Marquiss confirms that the Infor solutions met or exceeded the company's ROI expectations. "We can now devote time to getting our day-to-day work done throughout the month. Before, budget time meant working only on the budget; it kind of paralyzed us. We're no longer falling behind on other work, and we no longer use error-prone spreadsheets to consolidate."

As well as providing more reliable data, the finance department streamlined the budget schedule. Joachim asserts, "We easily shaved off half the time from our budget schedule—from eight weeks to four weeks. The end users also like the web-based reports—printed reports are no longer needed. When we make updates, we simply tell the department heads to check the system. And we also save paper when we do our own reviews in the finance department, projecting the information.

In one meeting I showed the setup of our financial reporting and budgeting system with the ability to click on a cell in our financial report and do a real-time drill-through to our financial ledger system.

When I clicked on one number, in two seconds all the details appeared down to the lowest level—a big feature that impressed users."

Response to any budget change is dramatically faster, according to Marquiss. "Before, if we had a last-minute budgeting change, I'd have to say that we needed to wait until the next version because I couldn't do it. Now, I can make the change and update and consolidate the entire process in literally a few minutes."

Valley View also sees soft dollar savings from the investment. "In the finance department alone," Marquiss says, "we no longer work through the wee morning hours. The department heads no longer have their assistants review all the spreadsheets to make sure we inputted what they requested.

They can easily see all of the detailed line-by-line budgeting numbers. Everyone gets their well-deserved R&R and can focus on improving the business, not moving spreadsheets."

"The Infor support people are also phenomenal,"
Joachim proclaims. "There isn't a question they can't
answer, and they're quick to respond—within
an hour."

Since implementing Infor solutions at Valley View, the efficiency benefit has been substantial. Marquiss confirms, "We now use the huge time savings from eliminating manual preparations to focus on higher-level reporting and more detailed analysis to improve the business.

Infor Corporate Performance Management put us in a much better position to know how anything impacts our financial performance. It's made a huge difference in our efficiency and the way we view our budgeting process. My finance staff is happier and more productive."

Infor Corporate Performance Management and Infor Infinium FMS have helped Valley View Casino & Hotel to:

- Slash the budgeting time in half—from 8 weeks to 4 weeks.
- Automate more of the consolidation process while significantly improving report reliability.
- Respond to a budget change within minutes.
- Enable finance staff to devote time to non-budget-related tasks during budgeting season.
- Use staff time saved to focus on higher-level reporting and detailed analysis leading to more informed decision-making.

Doing business better

What's next for Valley View? Marquiss concludes: "Infor's solutions motivated us to look into other ways to be more efficient, including paperless accounts payable. Right now if we need an invoice from a year ago, we have to wait a day or two to get it from storage. If we can scan the invoices and interface them with accounts payable, it'll be just a click away. And that would lead to electronic approvals where managers won't need to physically sign off on invoices. That would save lots of time and energy."



641 Avenue of the Americas New York, NY 10011 800-260-2640 infor.com

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