

Use Cases

Financial Planning

Financial Consolidation

Strategic Planning

Challenge

- Need to increase planning agility without compromising financial control across the planning cycle.
- Refocus efforts on valued-added analysis, rather than complex process of consolidating group plan using multiple excel spreadsheets.
- Model the business based on a 'cell' structure aligned to management responsibility, rather than legal entities.

Solution

- A single data source across all businesses ensures continued financial control and a speedy aggregation of group view.
- Cloud-based system enables rapid roll-out and connectivity across all businesses.
- Ability to build scenarios quickly, manage multiple versions and create customized reporting hierarchies through easy to use front-end.
- Rapid collaborative roll-out and training enables seamless efficient transition.

Results at a Glance

- 2-month implementation from design through to go-live and rapid scale-up to 180 users enterprise-wide.
- Time to consolidate the plan numbers reduced from one week to one day.
- Cloud-based process connects business units in real time enabling a faster, more efficient and collaborative planning process without compromising accuracy.



Aviva Brings Agility to Group Planning and Forecasting with Anaplan

Introduction

Aviva plc is a British multinational insurance company headquartered in London. It provides insurance, pensions, savings and investment products to 30 million customers around the globe. In the UK, Aviva is the largest general insurance provider and a leading life insurer.

Darren Craddock, Director of Planning and Forecasting, leads the end-to-end Group Planning processes across the group, incorporating the 16 countries in which Aviva operates. Aligning and optimizing plans and forecasts in an increasingly fast-moving environment is a complex process that must be managed with a high degree of accuracy and agility.

The Business Problem Pre-Anaplan

Historically, Aviva's finance function utilized their existing financial consolidation and external reporting tools for planning. This solution afforded the team financial control, given consistency with external reporting processes, but lacked the agility necessary in planning to build scenarios quickly and deal with multiple versions.

Aviva introduced a new way of segmenting its business into material 'cells' aligned to management structures and individual responsibility. The current planning tool based on financial reporting entities was unable to easily mirror the new cell structure.



Through using Anaplan we have a more agile and efficient planning process.



Selection Process

After a market-wide search, Darren drew up a shortlist of providers and tested the software with proof-of-concept models. The Aviva finance team created a model from scratch using each of the short-listed planning tools and simulated the Aviva planning process. Anaplan emerged the clear winner across all of the team's requirements.

"Our first key criteria was usability," said Darren. "I needed to know that when we wanted to modify the model by adding a new metric or change a hierarchy to match our new 'cells' structure we would be able to do this quickly." Over the course of the build, Darren saw how easily the finance team was able to grasp Anaplan's intuitive business rules and calculations. This gave him the confidence that he and his colleagues would be able to own the solution without relying on consulting or IT.

The second requirement was agility, and Anaplan out-paced the competition: "It became very evident over the two days that we spent with Anaplan that we could rapidly deploy the solution globally," said Darren. However, rapid deployment wasn't the only concern; Darren was also looking to improve the speed of the company's annual planning process. Here again, Anaplan's combination of advanced real-time analytics and in-memory processing power was enough to convince him that the platform would increase agility and save time. "We also had a relatively short window to bring on a new system. I couldn't have done that without an agile, cloud solution like Anaplan," said Darren.

The final requirement was financial control. Darren wanted an agile, enterprise-wide planning solution that could be implemented without sacrificing accuracy. The proof of concept proved Anaplan was capable of this and more. "Anaplan's cloud-based single database enables every one of our businesses to collaborate around a single view of the data," said Darren. "We also loved the audit trail functionality, which enabled complete transparency of the way numbers change over time and the ability to roll-back the model to a previous version if required."

Implementation

Aviva engaged with Anaplan consultants around the initial design, went through the training process, and dove right into iterating a build. "You don't need to go on a lengthy programming course or learn any scripts," said Darren. "The beauty of Anaplan is that you just roll your sleeves up and learn as you go, with the security of being able to roll-back the model to a previous version if required." The finance team built out the planning model themselves, with consultants joining at different stages of the process to provide expertise and make sure everything was moving the right direction.

The collaborative rollout took a total of two months, after which the business units were trained through web casts. From initial implementation, Aviva scaled-up to 180 users on the new platform over the period of two months without any problems. "We found people started using it to self-serve when they needed information, which is a real credit to the usability of the system," said Darren.



Benefits

"By using the Anaplan platform for our end-to-end Group planning process, we've been able to spend far less time generating an accurate forecast, leaving more time to engage with business units, review the numbers, and optimize the end result," said Darren. Consolidating each iteration of the Group plan numbers used to take the Finance team one week. With Anaplan, they've reduced that figure to one day. "Through using Anaplan we have a more agile and efficient planning process."

The Anaplan platform has given Aviva's finance team a familiar, intuitive modeling environment, while delivering a whole new level of power and scalability on an enterprise platform. "The system has allowed us to further optimize our plans by delivering instant results of alternative scenarios," said Darren. "Just as importantly, it gives us the flexibility to deliver those results in different ways to suit varying departmental and executive needs."

Moving Forward

Next, Aviva plans to utilize Anaplan to capture actual monthly performance for key metrics based on their new 'cell' reporting structure. "Anaplan's Software as a Service model means the solution is in constant evolution," commented Darren. "We're constantly learning new ways to take advantage of its full potential."

About Anaplan

Anaplan is the leading planning and performance management platform for smart businesses. Anaplan combines an unrivaled planning and modeling engine, predictive analytics, and cloud collaboration into one simple interface for business users. Anaplan is a privately held company based in San Francisco with 15 offices worldwide. To learn more, visit anaplan.com. Follow us on: [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and [Facebook](#).

