Case Study   Colorado Department of Transportation

The Challenge

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has a lot of moving parts. This 3,300-person organization is responsible for a multi-modal transportation system that includes 9,146 miles of highway, 3,447 bridges, as well as airports, rail and transit systems statewide. They're the people who plow the roads when it snows, the engineers who evaluate structural safety and the organization that provides funding for special projects, from stopping drunk drivers to promoting the use of seat belts. From its finance team to its maintenance crews, from its HR organization to its engineering experts, CDOT is dedicated to getting people, goods and information where they need to go.

For many years, each of CDOT's departments operated autonomously, working on various systems without the cohesion and integration an agency of this size requires. So, in 2004, CDOT officials invested in SAP Enterprise (ERP), to bring new capabilities and efficiencies that needed integration to the organization's IT systems.

Although CDOT would own and run SAP internally, agency officials wanted to make sure they got the most out of their investment. So, they hired a vendor to manage SAP implementation and provide post go-live support.

However, things did not go according to plan.

Because of insufficient training and significant customization of the system, the bulk of the CDOT community was unhappy with SAP. Most users found it difficult and cumbersome. They couldn't extract the right data or generate the types or reports they needed. To make matters worse, the system was perceived by some as unstable, a situation that lowered already lagging adoption rates even further.

The problem was not SAP Enterprise itself, but the original implementation and support partner.

To stop the bleeding, CDOT officials decided to make a change, and to rebid the five-year managed services contract, with a new mission. Officials wanted a partner who could:

• Stabilize the SAP system.

• Quickly remediate the lack of adoption.

• Work with CDOT leadership on Center of Excellence planning for its IT organization.

• Help CDOT expand system utilization, leveraging as many features as possible.

• Provide responsive, second-tier support.

After extensive due diligence, CDOT chose Conduent as its new managed services partner because of our broad SAP expertise and proven success in the government sector.

The Solution

The first year of this five-year engagement began with an extensive needs analysis. Our team sat down with users to identify the issues and pinpoint what the real problems were.

We discovered that most users didn't fully understand what SAP could do or what kinds of information they could pull from it. So, we spent time with each department, explaining what they could get out of SAP, and then discussing which data each group needed to see on a regular basis. Based on this input, we customized the various dashboards to specific departmental needs.

Just as important, we identified the training gaps within the individual constituent groups – as well as inventorying existing training aids and recommending upgrades and revisions.

At the same time, our back-end team worked with CDOT's internal IT staff to stabilize the system, and rectify deficiencies that were prompting an average of 30–40 help tickets every month.

Year two, we focused on user training to increase proficiency and adoption, using the intelligence we gathered in year one to enhance existing materials and courses. We also developed a variety of custom reports for each of the constituent groups, based on their input. All SAP transaction and master data was extracted to the reporting "back end." Users could select and retrieve their specific reports from a front-end portal, or import SAP data into Crystal reports.

Throughout the engagement, we worked with CDOT to establish a center of excellence-principled support function in IT; looking at its operational processes and procedures, establishing service levels and ultimately, positioning IT to more effectively support the entire CDOT organization. This initiative involved continuous process improvement, measuring, goal setting and building expertise throughout the maturation cycle.

During year three, CDOT decided to implement SAP's new Public Budget Formation (PBF) module, making it the first state DOT in the country to do so. To ensure success, we brought together a team of experts to migrate the agency from the existing budget software to PBF over a two-year timeframe.

In January 2011, CDOT officials requested that we accelerate the implementation by a full nine months, so the agency could use the software to create its fiscal 2013 budget. We adjusted the schedule, pulled in resources and successfully completed the implementation in 15 months instead of 24. Few other companies, if any, could have implemented this software this quickly without issue.

The Results

In just five years, Conduent helped CDOT transform their SAP from a rarely used, problematic system to a fully leveraged, highly efficient solution that benefits every constituent group.

The system is now fully stabilized, evidenced by a reduction in trouble tickets from the original 30-40 per month down to zero.

The center of excellence has advanced from level one, or "evolving" to level four, "beyond steady state."

User proficiency, user satisfaction and system adoption have significantly increased.

We systematically added new features that enabled CDOT to accelerate efficiency and get more value from its SAP investment, without overtaxing its internal IT staff.

We implemented the new SAP Public Budget Formation module in just 15 months, making CDOT the first state DOT in the country to have this software.

Ultimately, this engagement got the Colorado Department of Transportation back on track with SAP Enterprise, bringing new momentum to a once-stalled project – and big benefits to the agency and the citizens it serves.

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