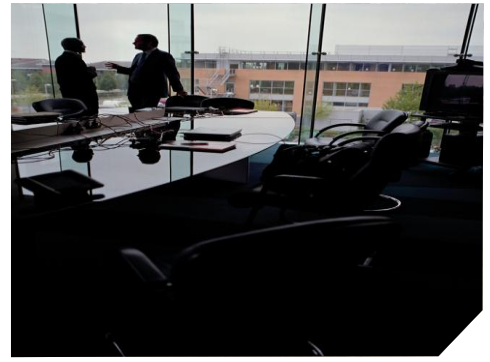


Simmons and Simmons

Global performance management system



Leading international law firm Simmons & Simmons needed a global performance management system that would allow it to measure its performance consistently and accurately against geographic, practice area, client and sector measures. Blueprint provided the solution: a flexible business intelligence system that brings data together from multiple sources, right across the business.

The business case

Simmons & Simmons employs over 2,000 people and has 21 offices in business and financial centres in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. At the end of 2006, the firm adopted an ambitious performance management strategy that aimed to increase profitability by improving performance in a number of areas.

To put the strategy into effect, Simmons & Simmons needed to understand the drivers of its performance in detail, across all of the regions in which it operates as well as by client, sector and practice-group.

The firm's performance management strategy involved:

- developing a practice-group and geographical matrix management framework, so that the firm's resources could be deployed to best effect;
- managing the utilisation of fee-earners more effectively;
- adopting a strong sector focus;
- improving key client relationships internationally;
- improving recruitment and retention rates; and
- improving back-office processes and efficiency.

Simmons & Simmons decided to commission a business intelligence system that would allow the firm to assess the profitability and performance of clients, regions, practice areas, partners and fee-earners in each of its target sectors. This global performance monitoring and reporting application would be based on SAP BusinessObjects technology.

Simmons & Simmons engaged Blueprint to assist with the definition, design and project management of the new system. Blueprint completed the project in phases during 2007-08, providing Simmons & Simmons with access to the system's core capabilities as the project progressed.

Core technologies

- SAP BusinessObjects Data Integrator
- SAP BusinessObjects Planning and Budgeting
- Business Objects Web Intelligence

Simmons & Simmons

Would you like to know more?

Contact Blueprint on 0207 832 1800 or email info@bpms.co.uk
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The project

We began by holding workshops and interviews with the firm's senior people, from global finance teams to the managing partner. Our aim was to identify the 'business questions' they needed to answer in order to perform their roles effectively and meet performance targets. This process informed the design of an adaptable data warehouse that would provide the complex information the firm required in simple formats, taking into account likely future needs as well as immediate requirements. The data warehouse brings data together from HR and finance systems right across the business.

Through secure web pages and dashboards accessed via the firm's intranet, users can now monitor all of the firm's key performance indicators easily. 'Guided analysis' features help them to find the information they need quickly. Partners can check their own billing information, allowing them to monitor their performance in 'real time'. All reports can be updated on demand, typically within ten seconds, and users can switch between sterling and other reporting currencies. Standard reports are available as required; others are routed directly to nominated users.

Applications

Billing: billing information can be analysed by partner, fee earner, client and business area. The system also offers a sector overview to support the firm's strategic plan.

Profitability: analysis of fee earner utilisation helps the firm to improve profitability, make better use of its current resources and forecast what resources it will require in each business area.

Online appraisal: an online partner appraisal system measures business development and fee-earning performance by combining information from HR, CRM and financial systems.

Planning: the workflow features of SAP BusinessObjects Planning help to speed up and streamline the budgeting and planning process.

Performance management: the system employs key performance indicators and a balanced scorecard, which enable Simmons & Simmons explore and analyse cause-and-effect linkages within its business.

Benefits

- The system helped achieve a 25% growth in profit per partner in 2007-08.
- The time needed for month-end financial processing has been reduced and the planning process has been greatly improved.
- Better information on utilisation, headcount and unrecorded time has helped the firm manage its resources more effectively.
- Information is now consistent, accurate and more easily accessible throughout the firm.
- The firm-wide definitions and business measures embodied in the system provided a better basis for strategic decision-making.

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"Simmons & Simmons has developed a strategic performance management culture that is delivering insight into key business performance measures and processes across the firm. Reporting covers all areas of activity, from people to clients to financials."

David McLaughlin
Finance Director
Simmons and Simmons

Our business partners

