Case Study

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Waimate District Council

The Challenge

Waimate District Council had identified a level of business risk associated with the use of complex, manual spreadsheet processes to manage its financial planning.

The Solution

Council has implemented the MAGIQ Performance software application to reduce business risk and improve overall efficiency of its Annual and 10-year Long Term Financial Planning processes.

The Benefits

The organisation is achieving a significant reduction in business risk and improved business efficiency using the MAGIQ Performance software application to deliver its Annual and 10-year Long Term Financial Plans.

Overall confidence in the quality of the data has also improved, which has been a positive step towards building greater transparency and accountability across the organisation.

About Waimate District Council

Local Government industry

50+ staff members

7,890+ residents

$15m annual expenditure

"By implementing MAGIQ Performance, changes that used to take hours and sometimes days to implement, are now completed within the hour. That's a huge benefit which is freeing up time across the entire organisation."

Andy Hilton, Corporate Services Manager

> "As an organisation we need to make the most efficient use of our time and resources - that's our responsibility to our ratepayers. MAGIQ Performance has delivered a much more efficient modelling and planning process."
> Andy Hilton, Corporate Services Manager

Waimate District Council in New Zealand is achieving a significant reduction in business risk and improved business efficiency using the MAGIQ Performance software application to deliver its Annual and 10-Year Long Term Financial Plans.

MAGIQ Performance is a suite of highly sophisticated and easy to use Budgeting, Financial and Strategic Planning software. The MAGIQ Financial Planning solution is designed to provide organisations with a sophisticated and highly automated application to model and produce their Long Term and Annual Financial Plans.

Council Reduces Business Risk With MAGIQ Performance

Waimate District Council had identified a level of business risk associated with the use of a complex, manual spreadsheet process to manage its financial planning. By implementing MAGIQ Performance, Council has been able to eliminate the spreadsheets, thereby significantly reducing its business risk and delivering greater efficiency across the organisation.

Andy Hilton, Corporate Services Manager, Waimate District Council observes that the Long Term Financial Planning process inherently requires a significant time and effort by people across the entire organisation. Relying on a manual 'hands on' approach to manage the process had become very time-consuming and wasn't sustainable in the long-term.

"Spreadsheets tend to be fairly 'idiosyncratic' by nature; and the full complexity and logic behind the model is often largely retained by the individual that built them. We had become reliant on external resources to assist us which introduced a level of risk we simply weren't comfortable with and was also a costly exercise," he said.

"By implementing MAGIQ Performance, changes that used to take hours and sometimes days to implement, are now completed within the hour," said Andy. "That's a huge benefit, which is freeing up time across the entire organisation."

Andy believes overall confidence in the quality of the data has also improved, which has been a positive step towards building greater transparency and accountability across the organisation.

"Our senior managers need accurate financial insights to support their decision-making. MAGIQ Performance has allowed us to be a lot more responsive in this regard and we can now be very confident that decisions are being made on the basis of a single, consistent view of the data."

Single Vendor Approach Delivers Value

According to Andy the decision to implement MAGIQ Performance was a natural step from a systems perspective, allowing Council to fully leverage its existing business relationship with MAGIQ Software. Waimate District Council has used the MAGIQ Platform to meet its finance and council management needs for 20 years.

"As a smaller organisation we're not geared for highly complex systems. We have limited access to resources, so knowing we can rely on the team at MAGIQ for additional support as and when we need it, is of high value and again reduces our overall risk," he said.

Council's Accountant Melissa Thomson has taken on the responsibility of building and maintaining the model in MAGIQ Performance. Andy believes having someone with a strong understanding of the business rules and assumptions and Council's other internal business systems is vital to success.

"The results we have achieved are testament to the time and effort that Melissa has put into this project and her understanding of what we are trying to achieve," said Andy. "It's really important to invest internally as an organisation to get this done."

Both Melissa and Andy are confident the time and effort invested in the short-term to build the model will continue to deliver real value in the long-term.

"The time we're investing now means that preparing and producing our Annual Plans next year is going to be a much more efficient process. All we will need to do is distribute the budgets and then any changes will be automatically updated and reflected within the model," said Melissa.

"As an organisation we need to make the most efficient use of our time and resources – that's our responsibility to our ratepayers. MAGIQ Performance has delivered a much more efficient modelling and planning process, and we'll continue to look at how we can use the software to generate more business efficiencies," he said.

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About Waimate District Council

The Waimate District is located in the centre of the South Island, bounded by the Waitaki River in the south, the Pareora River in the north and the Hakataramea Valley to the west. The District is a productive agricultural area with a mix of pastoral, cropping, dairy farming, fruit and vegetable growing. Farming, forestry and milk processing are significant contributors to the local economy.

About MAGIQ Software

MAGIQ Software is an international software business focused on the delivery of the MAGIQ Cloud Enterprise-wide Finance and Administration Platform. MAGIQ Software has more than 500 customers throughout Australia, New Zealand, the USA, the UK, Singapore and South Africa. Key markets include Local Government, Health and Community Services, Utilities, Education and Not for Profit. A highly experienced and skilled team of more than 100 staff deliver local support and development from offices in Napier, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Christchurch and Los Angeles.

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