

BPM could well be the next revolution in performance management. Jim Banks speaks to **Laurence Trigwell**, senior financial services industry director, EMEA and Asia Pacific, at Cognos Inc, about what BPM can do for your company.



TIMING RIGHT FOR BPM

There are many competing issues wrestling for the attention of Europe's banks, but research has shown that one of the top issues is the need to improve performance management tools and to adapt to a culture that allows these tools to deliver greater competitive advantage. And business performance management (BPM) systems are already becoming a hot topic among senior management.

Research from Financial Insights, sponsored by Cognos Inc, suggests that agile European banks need to simultaneously develop a retail mentality, putting more focus on their customers, and a factory mentality, concentrating on issues such as straight-through processing and seamless, end-to-end business processes. The basis for these developments is a reliable set of financial data generated automatically, reconciling operational transaction systems and providing clear accountabilities for profit and cost centres.

Banks are now taking steps towards achieving this, partly because the tools at their disposal are increasingly mature.

Mature systems

Laurence Trigwell, senior financial services industry director, EMEA and Asia Pacific for Cognos Inc, says: 'Previously, the technology has not been available as an integrated solution, nor has it been robust enough to support enterprise-level implementation. Business intelligence systems have been deployed at a departmental level and planning solutions in finance-led implementations.'

'In recent years, however, there has been an aggressive move towards enterprise-level BPM, with banks focusing integrating data across functional groups, channels and geographies.'

Cognos provides business intelligence and BPM software to over 23,000 organisations around the world, including the top-ten retail banks in Europe and the US, as well as many global leaders in investment banking.

Trigwell adds: 'BPM helps banks realise where profitable revenue growth comes from, and if they can measure the relationships between measures of performance and link those to growth and execution strategies, then they also have a better view of what regulators want, which helps them with their risk management, governance and compliance responsibilities.'

Tailored solutions

Cognos aims to tap into the growing appetite for BPM among banks by offering a solution that blends business intelligence with planning capabilities.

Trigwell says: 'We have been a BI vendor in financial services for a long time and we have the technology heritage for reporting, analysis, dashboard tools and many other elements. Six years ago we bought a planning company and redesigned our BI technologies into a single solution. Only Cognos can link planning with BI. BPM is what we do.'

Its close ties with the financial services industry give Cognos valuable insight into what banks need from performance management, and it has focused on completing the circle by helping such companies to link their financial, business and technology needs. It has also enabled Cognos to develop a solution that can be implemented with the minimum disruption to existing technology infrastructure.

Trigwell adds: 'Our focus on BPM means that we don't come to banks with the requirement to use our database technology, for instance. Our solution can fit around multiple technologies in which a bank has already invested. Our solution fits around ERP, CRM, risk calculation and core banking systems, for example. Banks can cut their teeth on BPM in specific areas and then extend it to other parts of the organisation.'

With a solution that recognises what banks need from BPM, allowing them to implement it in such a way that they can develop over time and minimising disruption to business and systems infrastructure, Cognos is well placed to ride the growing tide of interest in performance management in the financial sector, helping banks achieve greater competitive advantage. FBA

Further information

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