

Mastering your data

Owning data accuracy is something all finance executives find themselves doing. Records of debtors, suppliers and employees, means data being produced everywhere. Managing this and ensuring the right information is at the right place for the right people to take in and action is, a large undertaking. At Professional Advantage, we've encountered many of these issues and we've found, most of the time, the problem starts "out there", where the data was once information. Here are some brief snapshots on how others have solved their "out there problems" and become masters of their data.



Retiring the corporate army

A large trading organisation with front, mid and back office needed a single source of truth across its systems (trading, CRM, legal, financial). To remove financial and corporate risk, it used a fast growing corporate army responsible for trying to reconcile a moving target. Through a digital system of checks, its finance system now sits in sync and it can start to eliminate the growing body count of fixers and checkers.



Closing the flood gates

A large international agency has a shared service hub and spoke network servicing regional and national financial controllers across Asia Pacific. Regional requests for things, like suppliers, flooded in via email and the hub was swamped with a back log, creating problems with front line delivery. The solution was to close the gap and extend the reach direct to key suppliers and move the hub from processing, managing and controlling requests to providing decision support and global growth strategy input.



How did we used to do that?

Good policies don't guarantee good processes. How do you know that the new customers, suppliers and staff have been through all the right checks and balances? Questions arising over a period of time just couldn't be validated. Improvements didn't resolve the issue with visibility and audit trails. The solution was to remove this uncertainty with automated checking (including Dunn & Bradstreet, ABN validation, address checks, etc) and to provide a precise audit trail for every decision. Fixed!



Million dollar baby

Imagine a million dollar asset sitting idle all because of poor processes. Each fix revealed another exception, whether it was a new job, contract, insurance certification. Getting it running and possible customer and contract detail problems could lead to lost or delayed billing. Exceptions are not the norm but how many fails are acceptable? The solution? To eliminate the mismatches, so time is not spent fixing problems but making money.



No bean counters

This large, open-spaces asset management business was encountering considerable growth, with rising customer and staff numbers. This green-fingered mobile workforce needed to focus on exceptional service, not spreadsheets and administration. However financial needs had to be met. They now have a portal to engage easily with processes on their terms without having to deal directly with their complex finance systems. The business continues to grow, retain customers and the workforce loves it.



Rolling out the red carpet

An international organisation has globetrotting executives empowered to do their business as they see fit. Have you run behind someone with large coat tails? Imagine being in a finance team where you need perfection but your executives can't be controlled. New suppliers pop up, contracts are signed, assets are purchased by those who can, but the trail of catching up is an unfeasible task. The solution? To go mobile, go internet anywhere, and to connect these decisions to finance as and when the executives wanted it with everything traceable, compliant and financial accurate.



Self-healing keeps me running

Want to combine lots of businesses into a shared services operation and get going at lightning speed? Can't afford the time to fix data between all the legacy systems? Businesses have a high number of common suppliers and accounts? No time to fix! The answer? Set up a process of new or updating suppliers / accounts and as you do business, the process cleans up historical data with minimal down time. Something that could have been highly disruptive becomes an asset for this national conglomerate group.



Death in the desert

An organisation spread over large geographical and remote areas, where business could literally result in a "death in the desert". This meant travel requests, job costs, employees and ASIC codes couldn't be separated from operational risk, let alone the reputational and commercial considerations. The consequences had been avoided "with good luck". Ultimately this risk would not go away and no amount of fixing was acceptable. The solution was to manage the trips and resources and streamline processes in and out of finance. Good governance and oversight was applied with side line benefits in reduced maintenance and capital expenditure.



Mind the gap

A national water and wastewater provider works with a lot of contractors and suppliers. Taking these on goes way beyond just creating a new valid record for Accounts Payable. For the operations team and proper procurement, massive amounts of due diligence needs to be done. Two regimes operating in silos, each critical to the other, created a growing gap. The solution was to implement an end to end new supplier process right into Finance that supported OH&S, operational SLAs and business strategies with ease, traceability and transparency.



Home in time for dinner

This world-leading organiser of trade and consumer exhibitions has a large mobile sales force. Both finance and sales found themselves immersed in 'noise' resulting from lost correspondence, internal disputes and paper and email trails with little visibility and accountability. For Finance this meant nobody went 'home in time for dinner' and huge amounts of time spent addressing long lead times for month ends, etc. The solution was to give the sales team self-service access to financial processes as they wanted them, digital processes managed and controlled into Finance with full visibility and accountability. The sales team are 'raving fans' and the finance team has time with the family.



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Professional Advantage is a leading provider of business management systems. Our 250-strong team in 6 offices across Australia and internationally has successfully worked with over 1000 organisations.

Our broad understanding of multiple industries and holistic approach to software development, design and implementation makes us a trusted advisor to our clients advancing their system's development.

