

Efficiency. Visibility. Control.



OpenPlanning

In touch with your business

Advanced Business Solutions provides leading business application software that enables public and private sector organisations to retain control, improve visibility and streamline their processes.

Our affordable solutions help medium and large-sized organisations to manage their operations intelligently with tools that enable managers to be proactive whilst improving productivity.

By reducing admin and improving efficiency, Advanced Business Solutions' approach releases skilled resources so that organisations can grow without necessarily increasing headcount.

Excel spreadsheets are a popular, low cost choice for many organisations in their planning, budgeting and forecasting functions. However, at a certain point, finance teams and budget holders can find themselves spending more time managing the spreadsheets than they do using them to manage operations.

- Duplicate data entry leads to inaccuracies - formulas have to be checked and rechecked
- Multiple users and complex linked sheets extend consolidation times and turnaround becomes a problem
- Confidence in the integrity of the information declines
- The process becomes unwieldy and starts to take an unacceptable toll on the organisation's performance

Advanced Business Solutions' OpenPlanning is a smart, affordable alternative which turns an organisation's planning, budgeting and forecasting input into a powerful daily management tool.

- OpenPlanning models your business so that it works the way you do – not the other way round.
- Information is entered once therefore eliminating duplicate data errors.

- Annual budgets can be produced in days, not months
- Accurate budgetary forecasts can be produced using the latest data from budget holders.
- Powerful "what if" modelling supports better decision making
- The organisation is able to respond quickly and knowledgeably to new opportunities, changing legislation and market conditions
- Valuable extra management time can be put to more productive use in improving the organisation's prospects and performance

Gaining the advantage

At the heart of OpenPlanning is a robust, intuitive modelling tool which faithfully replicates an organisations' individual planning, budgeting and forecasting processes.

Models can be built rapidly because there is no need to input complicated formulas. This by itself represents a huge potential time saving compared to working in Excel. Data can be pulled into the model directly from existing back office systems - including account codes and subcodes - ensuring data integrity. The back office systems may be an Advanced Business Solutions application or software from another well known brands such as Sage, Oracle or Agresso.

OpenPlanning is multi-dimensional so that users can "slice and dice" their data and analyse it across any or all of their dimensions. Users can also test a variety of scenarios using flexible "what if" features to validate their decisions.

During the plan building phase, an unlimited number of versions can be stored and modelled by users before submitting a final contribution for consolidation. As the data is stored in a single database, only one version of the truth can exist and this is available at any time to all users.

Productivity improvements

Empowered with accurate data and processes, and freed from time-consuming manual intervention and corrections, OpenPlanning delivers business benefits through tangible productivity improvements to finance teams and budget holders.

The time saved can be used to manage their own functional areas more effectively which contributes to the improved performance of the organisation as a whole.

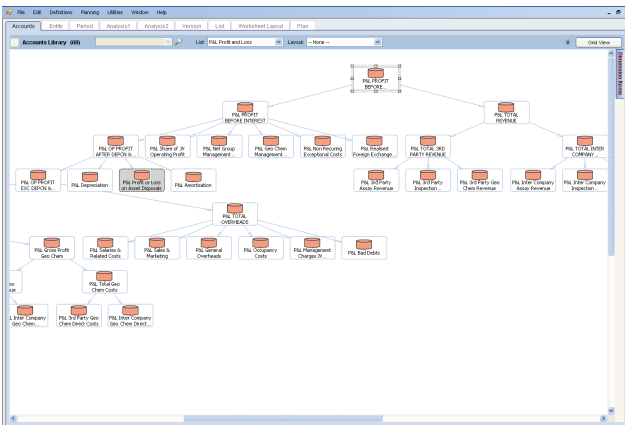


Fig 1. Hierarchical view example

Besides dramatically speeding up the planning process, every manager and budget holder gains access to the same accurate view of future performance – at organisational level and in their own individual area. This improved visibility supports faster and consistent decision-making throughout the organisation. Updates and changes can be entered easily and made available almost instantly. Significantly reduced turnaround times in plans, budgets and reports turn the organisation's financial information into an invaluable, real time management resource.

Financial agility

This financial agility is particularly useful when an unexpected opportunity or event arises; the organisation can respond faster to changing circumstances which may result in advantages other less nimble competitors are unable to grasp.

OpenPlanning can also produce accurate budgetary forecasts based on the very latest data for 18 months or more ahead, without management needing to take an eye off the current year-end situation.

With this level of functionality in easy reach, OpenPlanning becomes a powerful, real-time management tool which makes a tangible contribution to operational performance, strategic planning and investor confidence. It positively encourages high levels of collaboration and participation from budget holders throughout the organisation and for everyone's benefit in the short and long-term.

Dramatic time savings

Within OpenPlanning collaborative functions mean that changes to the model will be immediately visible to all users.

The participation of individual budget holders can be tracked, and full audit trail records all amendments. Interconnected management reports such as P&L, Cash Flow and Balance Sheets can be generated.

OpenPlanning includes an OLAP reporting tool to create, run and schedule reports - from the simplest to the most sophisticated - across any data dimension. As well as running regular reports, the ad-hoc Excel-based Hotlink report writer can import Excel report templates for use within OpenPlanning and export data to Excel for further manipulation if users prefer.

Multi currency, language and organisation

Figures are available in any language and in any currency, while users always work in their local currency and language.

Thanks to the modelling capabilities within OpenPlanning, organisations can produce additional enterprise models such as production planning, merchandise planning, headcount analysis and activity-based costings, for example, without any programming and with minimal training.

The flexible modeller also makes it easy for group operations – whether the parent, subsidiary or partner – to produce a consistent, group consolidated plan, budget and forecast – and still take the individual financial processes of each entity in the group into account.

Fig 2. Worksheet example

OpenPlanning

Easy integration and support

OpenPlanning is a single platform for business planning, budget and forecasting with an advanced, scalable, robust, technology architecture.

Built on the Microsoft .NET Framework, it employs the Microsoft SQL Server database to hold all the organisation's financial data and is deployed under Microsoft Windows on the desktop.

OpenPlanning can be configured for networked or standalone use and is designed for easy integration with existing IT environments with no programming involvement.

Security can be applied via defaults, license type or by individual items using permissions.

Maintenance and upgrades are handled centrally via the server which then updates the client when users next log in.

A OpenPlanning installation is based on user licenses.

- **Modeller:** Primarily for the finance team and profit centre managers who create the financial model for their organisation or functional area within OpenPlanning
- **Planner:** For budget holders who need all reporting facilities plus the ability to input and manipulate data
- **Reporter:** Limited read-only access for users requiring access to completed data

The business revolution

If your organisation is struggling with an unwieldy Excel environment that's holding you back, our solution is a smart, affordable alternative for medium and large-sized organisations.

Suitable for both the public and private sectors, it replicates your planning, budgeting and forecasting processes and works the way you do. Data is entered once, avoiding errors and time-consuming checking and corrections. Annual budgeting cycles can be reduced to days and all budget holders have access to a single, accurate budgetary forecast for 18 months or more ahead – a virtual impossibility in Excel.

If you'd like to turn your organisation's planning, budgeting and forecasting into a powerful daily management tool, and be able to respond quickly and knowledgeably to changing organisational goals, new opportunities, changing legislation and fluctuating market conditions, OpenPlanning is the clear choice.

About Business Solutions

Advanced Business Solutions, an Advanced Computer Software Group plc company, provides leading integrated business applications and services that enable public, private and third sector organisations to retain control, improve visibility and gain efficiencies whilst continually improving corporate performance. It's award-winning software systems comprise core financial management, procurement, human resource and payroll systems, integrated with a range of collaborative, document management and business intelligence solutions. It also provides managed and bureau service options.

Advanced Computer Software Group plc is the UK's leading supplier of software and IT services to the health, care and commercial sectors. It comprises 3 main divisions and has 7000 customers and 800 staff worldwide.

For more information

Advanced Business Solutions is a brand name of Advanced Business Software and Solutions Limited, registered in England number 03214465. Registered office: Munro House | Portsmouth Road | Cobham | Surrey | KT11 1TF.

t: +44 (0) 08451 606 162 f: +44 (0) 1932 584 001 e: marketing@advancedcomputersoftware.com www.advancedcomputersoftware.com/abs

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