

Rev-Trac underpins Hanson's SAP change management transformation

Company snapshot

HQ Parramatta, Australia

Industry Building and construction materials

Business 226 ready mix concrete plants
and 75 aggregate operations

Subsidiaries Hymix Concrete



Managing change in complex system

In mid-2004, Hanson Australia conducted a review of its SAP change management processes. This followed an announcement from internal auditors that they would examine closely how the IT department managed SAP changes.

At the time, procedures were largely email-based, prone to error and resulted in masses of paperwork to establish an audit trail for SAP changes. While Hanson's strong presence in the US meant the Australian division was subject to the stringent auditing obligations of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

To enforce its complex SAP change management requirements effectively, Hanson needed to eliminate unchecked changes, have transparency into its transport migrations and remove error-prone manual processes.

Search for the ideal SAP change control solution

To meet the challenge, Hanson investigated the change control solutions available on the market for SAP-based business infrastructures.

Wolfgang Kloger, Hanson Australia information planning manager, said it seriously considered SAP Solution Manager which included the Change Request Management application. However, he didn't believe that its change management features were sufficiently mature and flexible to address the company's extensive requirements.

"I wasn't confident we could enforce the reasonably complex procedures we had already set up, and which we wanted to extend and fine-tune following the internal audit," Mr Kloger said.

Rev-Trac vs Solution Manager

Revelation Software Concepts' SAP change management automation platform, Rev-Trac, had been on Mr Kloger's radar for years. He had first seen Rev-Trac in use at Orica, a multinational chemicals and explosives company.

Rev-Trac bears a price tag, unlike Solution Manager whose costs – though not stated – are based wholly on individual implementations of the solution. Mr. Kloger recognized the value in Rev-Trac and delivered his assessment to Rob Downing, Hanson Australia CIO.

"I feel comfortable with Rev-Trac... I found Rev-Trac quite straightforward and logical. It was quite easy to understand, to my way of thinking."

Wolfgang Kloger,
Information Planning Manager, Hanson Australia

Automation and repeatable processes reduce risk

Rev-Trac's automatic monitoring of transport movements – even after refreshes – and its overwrite and overwrite protection capabilities gave it a significant technical edge over Solution Manager.

At the time of the evaluation, an inadequately controlled SAP change was migrated into production, nearly bringing down the system. The incident highlighted the technical differences between the two products, with Hanson satisfied the error would not have occurred with Rev-Trac in control of the SAP change management processes.

RSC focuses exclusively on SAP change management, a factor which influenced the decision to purchase Rev-Trac. Hanson was confident in RSC's expertise in automating SAP change management procedures and processes, given the many years the company has worked in this one area.

The Rev-Trac experience

Hanson's IT team were surprised with the speed and ease of installation and configuration of Rev-Trac, once the decision had been made to implement the solution.

Mr Kloger said he was impressed with the documentation the company received prior to the implementation.

"I received documents which gave me everything I needed to know from the overview of the installation and details through to a User and an Administrator Guide. It was great – I was really impressed," he said.

With the technical installation complete, Hanson's IT team quickly configured the solution to meet the company's demanding change control processes.

"I come from a technical – mainly programming and relational databases – background," Mr Kloger said. "I found configuring Rev-Trac was quite straightforward and logical. It's easy to process and understand.

"Overtakes and overwrites should now be a thing of the past. And we'll have no difficulty showing auditors that we can trace the full history of every change."

A benefit of implementing Rev-Trac has been a boost in morale for all Hanson staff involved in the change management process.

Mr Kloger said it was much easier for the team to handle SAP change management with Rev-Trac than its previous approach.

"We've been able to design exactly the process we want," he said. "Even for a minor change, for example, we can automatically inform the business person responsible when the change has gone through."

Business Results

- More efficient SAP change management processes to meet business demands
- A comprehensive audit trail of all changes for proof of compliance and operational integrity
- Automated error-prone, manual processes and tightened controls to avoid systems outages
- Confidently meet stringent compliance requirements with less audit effort and more consistent processes