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Case Study

PBEL Implements SAP B1

*The up and coming real estate developer deployed SAP Business One in order to streamline its financial and customer engagement processes. By **Rajendra Chaudhary***

Hyderabad-headquartered PBEL Property Development is a realty firm with a difference. Formed as a result of a JV between Israel-based Property and Building Corporation (PBC) and Electra Real Estate (ERE) and INCOR Infrastructure from India, the firm claims to be a true blue property developer. Unlike many of its counterparts, it does not own any engineering and construction capabilities in-house. Rather, it outsources these activities to third parties. This is all a part of its plan to maintain a lean organizational structure.



With a combined land bank of 110 acres spread across Hyderabad, Chennai and Mysore, the firm plans on establishing itself as a key player in the regional realty space during the course of the next couple of years. Focused on residential projects, office spaces, commercial centers, high-tech industrial parks and cargo facilities, PBEL has already developed 11 million sq. ft of land in the region and it is due to announce some more high-profile projects across the three cities.

PBEL first commenced its operations in 2007. Right from the beginning, the senior management at the company knew that, in order to run a lean organization, it needed to clearly identify its key business processes and automate the same so as to prevent inefficiencies from entering the system and causing a lag. They viewed IT as a key ingredient to this end.

Anand Reddy, Executive Director, PBEL, explained, "Realty companies, especially smaller ones don't always realize the value of IT in their operations. Most of them rely on rudimentary systems and their IT efforts don't go beyond some perfunctory initiatives. However, we always knew that if we were to distinguish ourselves and lend ourselves a competitive edge in the market, we had to invest in systems."

"The extensive financial reporting capabilities provided in the system have allowed The PBEL management to run a clean house., senior business managers can stay on top of things at all times."

Anand Reddy
Executive Director, PBEL



Key focus areas

The PBEL management identified two areas that it felt were crucial to its operations namely finance and customer management. Since PBEL was already clear on outsourcing its engineering and construction to a third party, it knew that it didn't need systems that automated those aspects of its operations. As opposed to this, finance was something that mattered greatly to PBEL's operations.

"We wanted operational transparency and, of all the processes, finance needs to maintain absolute transparency. Responsible as we are for protecting the interests of all of our stakeholders, we wanted an efficient system to facilitate the accurate, timely exchange of relevant financial data throughout the organization. Not only did we have interests here in India but we were also accountable to our partners in Europe," said Reddy.

PBEL also needed to put in place an efficient reporting mechanism related to its financial activities. "Things like Inflow and Outflow reports, Budgeting, Profit and Loss statement, Sales, Business Dashboards etc. were crucial for PBEL's business managers and directors and they wanted a system that could provide such functionality in a seamless manner.

Another functionality which the company deemed crucial to its operations was efficient customer relationship management. Reddy said, "This was equally crucial to us if not more. As a young company, we wanted to give ourselves every chance to make the most of each and every opportunity that we got to interact and win over

new customers. Since our sales and service representatives interacted with customers on a daily basis, we felt that we needed to equip them with appropriate tools and timely information in order to address customer queries and issues quickly and effectively. There are so many touch points that one comes across

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when dealing with a prospective customer. We wanted to ensure that we leveraged all of this customer information to sell and service their needs better.”

Besides this, Reddy also wanted the system to allow them to perform historical analysis of all of the customer data so as to strategize better on future customer engagements.

After evaluating relevant offerings from vendors including Microsoft, Oracle and SAP, the company decided to deploy the Finance and CRM modules from SAP Business One. One of the key factors that led the company to choose SAP over the competition was the fact that its European partners were also running SAP at the backend. Deployed within a short span of five to six months, PBEL went live with the package in early 2009.

The company purchased 30 user licenses and hired a SAP admin post implementation to look after the system.

Superior financial management

Nearly two years on, the Business One deployment has lived up to PBEL's expectations. On the finance side the solution has provided PBEL with excellent financial management features to help its executives become more efficient and productive while at the same time it has also streamlined the process and lent greater visibility. Talking about some of the specific advantages Reddy said that the solution has offered them real-time accounting capabilities. This essentially meant that all completed transactions were immediately reflected in the financial reports. He also said that the solution allowed users to drill down from financial summary numbers to specific transactions in detail for in-depth analysis and even allocate costs and transactions between multiple departments seamlessly.



In addition to this, the extensive financial reporting capabilities provided in the system allowed PBEL management to run a 'clean house' and senior business managers could stay on top of things, at all times.

As per Reddy, the CRM module has led to several benefits too. He said, “The CRM tools provided in SAP Business One application allow our sales reps to close sales faster and better serve our customers. These tools automate key processes and efficiently manage activities throughout the entire sales cycle, including initial contact, proposal, closing of sales and after-sales service and support. In addition to this, tightly integrated features across marketing, sales, and service provide us with a 360-degree view of our prospective customers enabling us to better understand and meet their needs.”

Reddy also informed that the solution let them document all the customer service calls efficiently and maintain a solutions knowledge base that provided service reps with possible solutions to reported problems, allowing them to respond more quickly and more effectively to customer calls.

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