

Serving up reliable and timely financial information

Transforming Finance with SAP® for Bloomin' Brands



Growing pains

Bloomin' Brands Inc. (BBI), with a portfolio of leading, differentiated restaurant concepts, is one of the largest casual dining restaurant companies in the world. As of June 29, 2014, the company owned and operated 1,341 restaurants and franchised 161 restaurants across 48 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, Guam and 21 countries. The company has five founder-inspired concepts—Outback Steakhouse, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Bonefish Grill and Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar—that make up more than 1,500 restaurants spread around the globe. In recent years, economic factors have increased pressure on the company's earnings; sales growth slowed as consumer spending declined and cost of sales increased with rising food prices. Executives needed timely, reliable financial information to make decisions that would help them meet their profitability and growth goals.

The challenge

Finance leaders were struggling with disparate systems that were not integrated into their current financial system. Multiple systems, custom applications, and minimal integration undermined data integrity. The result was a lengthy period close cycle, requiring many manual adjustments. In addition, financial data was inconsistent from the restaurant to corporate levels.

Without reliable data, producing a profit and loss statement reflecting consistently defined financial performance for each level of the organization was a challenge. Analyzing data year over year was also challenging because of a monthly financial calendar that reflected different numbers of high-traffic days (weekends).

Leaders from BBI asked Deloitte to help them develop and execute a Finance Transformation project to create efficient business processes, implement an accounting calendar consistent with industry standards, develop a platform that would further the goals of domestic and global growth, and reduce technology risk.

How we helped

Deloitte professionals partnered with BBI to improve Finance systems and data governance effectiveness, powered by SAP technology. First, the team engaged executive leadership to help define a future vision of Finance and Accounting that supports the company's strategy. Workshops were held with corporate and restaurant accounting departments to gain a clear understanding of their business requirements and challenges, which were incorporated into the design that would guide the team's work.

“Bloomin’ Brands Finance Transformation project enabled by SAP HANA technology allowed us to streamline processes, gain better visibility to financial data, and help develop a platform for domestic and international growth.”

Jill Stebbing - Senior Director, Corporate Accounting at Bloomin’ Brands, Inc.

BBI took on a Finance Implementation and Transformation initiative known as “Project FiT.” Throughout the project, the team leveraged Deloitte’s Finance Transformation Accelerator (FTA) to effectively accelerate design and build while serving as the basis for the SAP Development environment.

The FTA solution accelerated the implementation by providing not only preconfigured client content and documentation around business design workshops but also configuration documentation.

While the Deloitte-led team was working on the financial systems, several parallel technology projects were underway. Deloitte’s team worked closely with the parallel projects to help design and implement a full end-to-end solution.

Of course, people are a critical part of a smooth conversion. BBI began communications to the affected user communities early in the project and then delivered just-in-time training to the entire Finance organization on the new processes and systems. The Deloitte team followed through with support after the conversion to confirm that the performance of the organization’s people, systems, and processes was effective and efficient.

Results

The Deloitte team met the company’s financial transformation objective: management has access to reliable, timely reports, and Finance and Accounting personnel across the organization use more efficient systems and processes. BBI now has a single source of financial data across all its U.S. restaurants, including standardized financial statements. In addition, a financial consolidation tool effectively automates integration of restaurant financial data. A new 4-4-5 reporting schedule enables consistent, timely, and accurate financial information to support year-over-year analysis, executive decisions, and company growth goals.

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