

Ventura Since 1924

Transporting Ventura Bus Lines to planning utopia

“Workday Adaptive Planning has been able to deal with our complicated financial model impressively. It works seamlessly and fast. I love it.”

– Dora Borg, Senior Financial Accountant, Ventura Bus Lines





Since its first engine started running in 1924, Ventura Bus Lines has grown to become the largest privately owned bus company in Australia. Their services include daily bus routes, charters, school buses and rail replacements. Ventura has over 1,600 employees and 950 buses carrying more than 32 million customers across Victoria every year.

Challenge

Ventura traditionally pulled data from various ERP systems into Excel spreadsheets for financial planning. There would be 20 – 30 sheets at any one time – an error prone and unstable way of budgeting and planning.

They needed a system to consolidate and chose to work with Workday Adaptive Planning (formerly known as Adaptive Insights). While they had assistance with the basic model, most of it was built in-house.

Unfortunately, over time it came to resemble the same Excel spreadsheet mess. Calculations and data refreshes were taking up to 10 minutes. It was very frustrating and hard to use.

At that time, two key things came into play.

Ventura's biggest contract is with the [Department of Transport](#). Key terms of the contract were completely restructured, leading to the need to remodel.

At the same time, Ventura had refinanced their debt with the big 4 banks in Australia. They had to provide quarterly reports and frequently, the bank would come back saying the data needed changing.

Ventura could not continue running the software in the same way.

They needed:

- To rebuild complex models in Workday Adaptive Planning to meet government and bank requirements
- A partner who had the necessary business and technical skills to do this quickly and effectively
- To transform an underperforming system so it would actually be usable

Solution

For the urgent project to meet government and bank requirements, Ventura engaged QMetrix. This phase took 6 weeks and involved:

- A complete rebuild of the contracts model to meet major changes required for the government's Metro Bus Service Contract
- Remodelling of debt and covenant models
- Developing a new complex financing model, taking into consideration hedge components, bank swaps and different types of capital structures eg, senior, mezzanine debts etc.

The new models enabled Ventura to provide accurate quarterly reports and rolling 12-month quarterly results.

Dora says, “[Workday Adaptive Planning has been able to deal with the complex model impressively](#) and QMetrix’s work exceeded our expectations. So we decided to engage them further to rebuild everything financial.”

Along with the rebuild, Ventura wanted to provide confidence back to the stakeholders who so far had disregarded Workday Adaptive Planning altogether because of its earlier underperformance.

Setting the foundation

Auditing the old setup, QMetrix realised there were foundation and structural issues from the way data was being loaded, through to the way the entire model was architected and designed. This resulted in a sluggish underperforming solution that required a lot of manual intervention.

QMetrix started from the ground up by improving the data integration with source systems to make it 100% automatic and a lot faster.

The integration now works seamlessly, is hassle free and importantly can be relied upon during month end where having access to up-to-date information is critical.

QMetrix then focused on creating the 3 foundational financial statements: Profit and Loss, Balance Sheet and Cashflow.



Ventura Bus Lines’ solution

Budgeting and Planning consulting
[Learn more](#)



Labour model

The next phase consisted of looking at the government contract labour. Like many organisations, operational labour makes up a large portion of expenses and is therefore crucial to get right.

Ventura’s labour model is especially complex as most of their employees work in shifts.

This was remodelled from the ground up, considering staff type (such as drivers and workshop staff), calendar (such as seasons and holidays), days/night shift, kilometres driven, route type and penalty rates.

From there, the partnership with QMetrix and Workday Adaptive Planning has continued with several additional phases including:

- Planned and Unplanned Rail models for when trains break down and require bus replacements
- Revenue models such as private school charters
- Operational Cost models such as fuel and materials

Integrated 3-way model

Instead of a budget and forecast that was static, slow and unreliable, Ventura now has a true integrated planning model outputting to a Profit and Loss, Balance Sheet and Cashflow for complete financial performance management.

Dora says, “What I really like about QMetrix is they take on your business as if it’s their own. That is the difference they bring.

They don’t build something just because you ask them to; they provide thought leadership and bring in their recommendations to make things better”.

Looking forward

After the upgrade to what Ventura calls the “New Workday Adaptive Planning”, other teams are starting to talk about the system and ask for logins so they can have a look.

While it is currently used by the finance team, the next step is to build dashboards for the corporate, operation, workshop, yard, charter and rail replacement business lines.

This means each department head can refer to their own dashboard reflecting the latest figures from labour to sales, material costs and overheads, and be more involved in the planning process.



Impact

For Ventura Bus Lines

Significant performance improvement from an underperforming sluggish system to one that is fast and reliable

Automatic, seamless integration to data sources, removing manual processes

A system which focuses on financial information and financial scenario planning, with all models integrated and built according to best practice

Accurate and easy reporting, both internally as well as externally for the big 4 banks, government and other major contracts

Rebuilt confidence in stakeholders who are now eager to access Workday Adaptive Planning for their own insights and analysis

A system the finance team can maintain themselves going forward

“*I struck gold when I found QMetrix. They really look after their customers and transformed our software into something usable and high functioning.*”

– Dora Borg, Senior Financial Accountant, Ventura Bus Lines

QMetrix

QMetrix provides professional advisory services that empower our clients to operate with the agility needed in today's business environment. Our corporate Budgeting and Planning, Master Data Management, and Business Intelligence and Analytics solutions help to drive better business performance.

We work together with clients to achieve the right outcome for their unique business, providing end-to-end solutions from analysis to design and delivery. We serve clients across Australia and have offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

Learn about QMetrix's
Budgeting and Planning
solutions →

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