

CT CONNECTIONS

A real-world analysis of how a leading national corporate travel supplier embraced a new technology from SolveXia that enabled it to gain a competitive advantage and win new business by providing its customers with huge cost savings.

INTRODUCTION

When an unexpected benefit of buying a business solution becomes central to the value it presents to its customers, that's a good thing.

Co-founder Nick Sutherland says of the definitive competitive edge SolveXia has given his Melbourne-based corporate travel management company, CT Connections, "Given how critical the new processes we needed were, the timing was right and ... SolveXia turned our brief around with the utmost professionalism and exactly to scope."



"SolveXia's reporting capabilities have simplified our business, massively. We are absolutely rapt with what we've now got to offer."

CT Connections' value proposition to its clients is simple and powerful: with its new business intelligence (BI) powers, it can save them money, big money, on their travel procurement. Most importantly, CT Connections can now map out a future in which its customers will repeatedly save more money, and how they will do it.

When a customer can save up to \$50,000 by shifting just 20 per cent of its travel buying in one fare class to another, it's easy to see how quickly the savings can grow. The trick is making sense of a large and complex data set so that you know which 20 per cent to shift - and doing this quickly enough so that you can respond to market and business changes overnight.

This is where SolveXia comes in: it is bringing simplicity to the ways in which both CT Connections consultants and clients can understand and act on complex data sets.

It is introducing unforeseen time savings in understanding and presenting that data.

Most importantly, SolveXia is revealing itself as a solution that brings productive change to the ways in which business can be conducted.

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AN URGENT NEED DEMANDS A FAST RESPONSE

In just over two years, CT Connections has jumped from one man at a Melbourne desk, Nick, to a business employing a staff of over 50 experts providing airline, hotel, car hire and visa travel solutions.

Companies expanding that quickly don't have much time to spare, but CT Connections made a breakthrough in freeing up more time for careful consideration of clients' problems when it decided to replace and improve upon the services of its incumbent BI provider.

As a condition of giving CT Connections its business, a large, prospective client demanded a different sort of reporting to the one the company had been providing. The customer's critical requirement was that it needed to be able to see how closely those making the company's decisions on travel expenditure were complying with its formal procurement policies.

"The client wanted visibility on compliance in reporting from a company and group level, in each of its businesses," Nick says. Given the potential cost savings this client could make through even modest changes to its travel undertakings, the issue was a deal-maker or breaker.

"Client demands of this nature led us to conclude that our own data management and reporting were not where they needed to be, and this created a sense of urgency for us to find an alternative."

"After being able to witness first-hand the ways not to do it, we needed a technology expert to provide an outcome for us, as we didn't have the expertise or the resources to manage it in-house."

Crucially, CT Connections recognised that what it really needed went beyond technology alone – it also needed to improve the way critical business intelligence-generating processes were managed. This required smarter ways of extracting, manipulating and reporting on client travel patterns – and then automating them. The realisation that its business processes needed to change helped guide CT Connections to the right technology vendor – and this is where SolveXia became involved.

INTRODUCING SOLVEXIA

SolveXia is a visionary tool in an emerging class set to transform whole industries. It is a hosted, enterprise-grade platform for automating mid and back office processes. It is targeted at organisations that need rapid adaptation of routine, time-consuming, data-intensive processes at a disruptively low price.

And it enables reporting on complex data sets in dramatically simplified and compelling ways.

As software-as-a-service, SolveXia sits in the cloud, is accessible via any modern browser and is provided at a low monthly cost, paid for by "the seat", or individual user, as an operational rather than capital expense.

"SolveXia has made the process seamless for us because they have taken the pain out of devising our reports."

Users can pay for as much or as little as they use, in line with the fortunes of their business.

The technology offers 24-7 uptime and eliminates the need for custom development at the client end, where available resources may be tied up on other undertakings.

SIMPLER AND SMARTER

SolveXia's model enabled CT Connections to detach from its previous supplier quickly and without pain to win the new client business.

“In short,” Nick says, “we needed a simple BI solution that was dynamic, transportable and easily interpreted, and SolveXia has made the process seamless for us because they have taken the pain out of both managing critical data intensive processes and devising our reports.”

“It’s been a real advantage that SolveXia managed to simplify our reporting and make information easy for us to understand and to act upon.”

“We have companies as clients who are spending in excess of \$10 million on travel. So, when you consider that airline inventory changes every second, you need access to the best air fares, and you need reliable, stable technology for your consultants to make sure they can access those fares for customers.

“It’s been a real advantage that SolveXia managed to simplify our reporting and make information easy for us to understand and to act

Given the criticality for such businesses to know that their purchasing behaviours will deliver optimal savings, Nick says, “SolveXia’s processing solution can spot breaches in policy compliance really quickly. Its dynamic reporting is fluent, so you can drill down from a cost level to a cost centre level to an individual manager, and instantaneously it gives you the picture you need.”

“You can get a great assessment at your fingertips, really quickly, of how a business is complying with its own procurement policies.”

For CT Connections, SolveXia is delivering a powerful competitive advantage. “Our niche positioning is increasingly based on creating intelligence and reports that are meaningful and relevant to each customer.”

INTELLIGENCE DELIVERS SAVINGS

Nick says that it is those customers most seriously assessing value and continuous improvement who are really getting the most from SolveXia and CT Connections’ new-found processes and reporting capabilities.

“At set levels of expenditure, customers qualify for certain savings from travel suppliers and not receiving them is evidence of a breakdown in communication. For example, if a client spends a million dollars on air travel, they would be entitled to an agreement [on discounts] with either Qantas or Virgin.”

“The power of our reporting ... is to be able to give forewarning to clients that they are not maximising the opportunities provided to them in their contracts, and to highlight the potential loss of savings, or worse, loss of the preferential deal with the airlines.”

“One of our key points of difference is now being able to take a customer’s pain point, and rapidly build or modify the business process that is required to deliver

“For a travel manager whose concern lies in visibility and in understanding the significance of savings and lost savings, [they know] there is significant money at stake. Without the necessary visibility or understanding, the deals established with the airlines can be taken from them or lowered.”

“Our tool and our services now allow our clients to ensure they remain in line with their own travel policies and not step over the line. Having established this capability, we can now manage our customers’ business proactively, not reactively, and this is a really important part of the tangible value we put forward.”

"In delivering this intelligence, SolveXia quickly interpreted our needs and enabled us to create these reports as a standard offering as well as giving us the flexibility to tailor information for each client."

"One of our key points of difference is now being able to take a customer's pain point, and rapidly build or modify the business process that is required to deliver exactly the right solution."

IMPROVE ECONOMY THROUGH FORESIGHT

Nick says, "Another of the great things we've done with SolveXia's reporting is to forecast the potential savings a client can gain from changing their behaviour in purchasing."

"Through smarter data management, we can concentrate our value to customers by saying that if you change the way you do things, this is the outcome you can achieve."

"The impact of this has been massive, as we are helping clients to manage their future and taking complexity out of the equation."

"We've worked with SolveXia to come up with reports that are really at the forefront of travel

"Since we introduced SolveXia's reports to our customers, there has been amazement at the reports we have developed, real excitement."

"We've been able to work collaboratively with our customers to understand their needs, and we've worked with SolveXia to come up with reports that are really at the forefront of travel management."

"This is only the first phase. Next, we want to build long-term relationships where we develop the processes on which we can evolve these reports further and further as customer needs change."

"As we learn more about how this really works, this knowledge will give us an even bigger advantage."

SHARE KNOWLEDGE TO CONFER POWER

SolveXia's value proposition doesn't end with reporting. It also lies, in large measure, in its highly flexible, service-based model of delivery over the web.

SolveXia's capacity to handle and disperse large volumes of data mean that CT Connections' investment in better information satisfies the need for scale. It also and enables information to be shared more effectively with customers, either by selling them reports or by allowing them to license direct access to the software.

Nick says, "The model is appealing because, essentially, we license access to the business processes configured in SolveXia for a number of people at CT Connections, who run reports, but we also have the flexibility to on-sell a licence to a customer so they can have total control over their data."

"Data is uploaded nightly, so we can automatically push the reports to them. But if we sell the licence to them, they can have control of the information whenever they want."

"Whatever the customer's preference, there is an opportunity for us there."

It is also a dramatic cost saver for CT Connections' clients, who can now match their budgets with their information requirements.

INSIGHT IS NEW VALUE GAINED

“One concern you have when engaging with a new supplier or product is the pain of change, but working with SolveXia has been absolutely seamless. We’ve developed a very strong relationship in a short period of time.”

“Previously, our focus had been on growth but it’s now about applying better standard processes. Now, we’re a national business and we need to get consistency so we can scale to the next phase of our growth plans.”

“We’ve been able to turn off completely a [previous] business reporting solution that wasn’t a solution, and turn on one that is more reliable and gives us better intelligence at every stage.”

“Our customers are finance directors, procurement directors, finance managers, CFOs – time-poor people who need things summarised and easily accessed – and their focus lies in assessing the return on investment they get from their travel management company.”

“SolveXia helps our clients to clearly quantify the value of their internal travel policies, to look at savings gained and lost. As we can now make best-practice recommendations to customers, we have much better informed conversations with them.”

“We quickly developed a very strong relationship with SolveXia who ensured that the move away from our previous supplier was painless.”

“With detailed data on the travel activities and habits of our clients easily accessed by using SolveXia, we can help to formulate a change of travel policy or perhaps recommend a hotel chain. Accurate, flexible data is very important to us to be able to provide that genuine value added service.”

UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

Nick is unequivocal about the unanticipated benefits SolveXia is bringing to CT Connections’ business.

“Whereas we used to spend so much time on trying to interpret the reports that were produced by our previous business intelligence supplier, with SolveXia, we’re very clear on what’s being determined, and it shows in the quality of the analysis and advice we’re able to offer our customers.”

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“As silly as it sounds, we previously spent more time interpreting what the previous supplier’s reports meant than acting on them ... you needed a double degree in how to construct them.”

When the time came to switch suppliers, Nick says, “We said to SolveXia, these are the reports we want, let’s get together, refine them and get them done. And they did.”

Now, he says, “It’s gone from one end of the spectrum to the other. With SolveXia, we’re able to do more of the analysis and giving of advice to customers, instead of working out whether the reports are legitimate or not.”

“The time-saving has been absolutely massive for us, and that’s a really pleasant surprise.”

ABOUT CT CONNECTIONS

Corporate Travel Connections is one of Australia’s fastest growing and privately owned independent travel management companies. We provide a full range of travel management services and product that is delivered by a highly professional and responsive team that appreciates each customer is different. At Corporate Travel Connections, we are all about adding value to our customer. www.ctconnections.com.au

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ABOUT SOLVEXIA

SolveXia delivers enterprise-grade process automation through the browser. It is a cross-industry solution – helping any business that has mid or back office processes with a focus on improving operational efficiency, increasing control, and reducing risk. It is currently being used by banks, insurance companies, logistics and travel-buying groups, as well as in heavy industry. You can find more information about SolveXia at www.solvexia.com or by emailing info@solvexia.com