



Manufacturing/Operations/Production

Customer Success Story

Itron relies on Insight Software Suite for Oracle® E-Business Suite for rapid, flexible financial inquiries and project reporting

About Itron, Inc:

- World's leading provider of metering, data collection/communications systems, and a range of utility software solutions for the energy and water industries
- Itron Inc. includes Itron in North America, and Actaris outside of North America
- More than 80 locations globally with headquarters in Liberty Lake, Washington; and Actaris in Luxemburg
- Customers include nearly 8,000 utilities in 130 countries
- More than 8,500 employees
- www.Itron.com

“ *Insight for Oracle EBS is a vital tool for our analytics that we rely on across the company in our monthly closing efforts. We had used Insight for JD Edwards for years when we migrated to Oracle EBS. Our users were adamant that they needed the same access to information they were used to, so we also implemented Insight Reporting™ for Oracle EBS.* **”**

Jerry Reed

Internal Reporting Manager

Itron, Inc.

Business Challenge: Retaining reporting agility after an ERP migration

Since 1977, Itron, Inc. has helped energy and water utilities collect and analyze detailed, timely data to guide informed decisions. As the increasingly complex and vital worldwide energy industry has grown, Itron has expanded as well. Itron continues to grow through acquisition, enhancing its uniquely comprehensive portfolio of products and services.

Itron had relied on JD Edwards World for many years, and members of Itron's financial, accounting, and reporting groups were heavy users of Insight from InsightSoftware.com for JD Edwards. As Itron grew by acquisition, the rapid, easy ad-hoc reporting provided by Insight was particularly valuable to the company, according to Mike Eldred, Business Applications Manager, Itron.

“During intense periods of corporate re-organization, Insight brought a lot of efficiency to tasks that would otherwise be manual,” says Eldred. “For example, using Insight (Reporting), we could drag and drop columns and drill down into subledgers directly from a single inquiry screen,” he noted.



Benefits:

- The familiar format of Insight helped enable smooth reporting processes after the migration to Oracle EBS
- Accelerates financial reporting response time and enables users to answer specific questions about financial data more easily
- During intense periods of corporate reorganization, Insight helps speed and simplify a wide range of inquiries and integrity checking
- Users can sort by descriptive flex fields (DFFs) and other classifications to rapidly access nearly any piece of information in the Oracle system
- Projects module provides details on project profitability at any point during a project, giving upper management information on project performance and projections

Solution:

Oracle® E-Business Suite (Oracle EBS) version 11i

Insight Software Suite for Oracle EBS

- Insight Reporting™



As the company continued to grow by acquisition, Itron also acquired multiple ERP systems. JD Edwards, Oracle, and QAD, among others, were used by various Itron divisions. With an eye on coordinating effort across the expanding company, a group was formed within Itron to evaluate current and future ERP requirements. After an exhaustive review process, Itron chose to consolidate on Oracle E-Business Suite (Oracle EBS).

The timeline for the Oracle implementation was aggressive, and the core Itron financial and accounting teams had no experience with Oracle EBS. This raised the potential for difficult “reporting crunches” after the migration.

Solution: Insight’s Reporting™ for Oracle E-Business Suite

In 2007, Itron migrated from JD Edwards to Oracle EBS and also implemented Insight Reporting™ for Oracle EBS. “Our teams were already comfortable with the easy interface and overall environment of Insight, and we saw that transferring this familiarity over to Oracle EBS would be very useful,” Eldred says.

InsightSoftware.com’s solution served as an effective bridge solution during the migration, and Insight remains a significant inquiry and reporting solution for Itron now that Oracle EBS is in place. “Without question, Insight for Oracle EBS provides access to information that would otherwise be difficult to retrieve,” says Jerry Reed, Internal Reporting Manager, Itron, Inc.

Lisa Briner, Senior Accountant, Itron, agrees: “There were reporting and inquiry challenges in JD Edwards, and Oracle has its own challenges that Insight [Reporting] helps us solve,” she says.

“During the transition, we used Insight heavily to help with variance analysis,” Briner states. “For example, we might look at a balance sheet and someone might ask ‘what makes up that particular line?’. Insight is ideal for doing these types of analyses quickly, and we continue to use it a lot for this type of reporting. If you need to drill down to the actual account level, you can do it easily with Insight [Reporting],” Briner explains.

Initially, Itron implemented Insight Reporting™. When Insight’s Projects [Smartset] was developed, Itron worked in conjunction with InsightSoftware.com’s team, offering feedback that became core to the final Smartset.

“With Projects [Smartset], Itron can easily view project profitability at any point during a project, giving upper management information on project performance and projections. Based on this, management can make decisions - for example, to alleviate anticipated issues if the forecast is not what was expected.”

Julie Schmidt

Projects Accounting Manager **Itron, Inc.**

Julie Schmidt, Projects Accounting Manager in the Operations Group at Itron, explains that Itron was looking for greater reporting flexibility on the projects side. “When we set up Oracle Projects, we put in a lot of good information. But the standard Oracle reporting didn’t allow us to do inquiries using all of these filters, and that was a limitation,” says Schmidt.

“In developing Insight’s Project [Smartset], InsightSoftware.com added a lot of the classifications that we were tracking in Oracle Projects as well as DFFs (descriptive flex fields),” says Schmidt. “As a result, we can use Insight to get nearly any piece of information we have in Oracle Projects. That’s very valuable to us,” she notes.

Benefits: Rapid, Customized Financial and Projects Specifics

Briner emphasizes that Insight helps Itron teams improve reporting response time and enables them to answer specific questions about financial data more easily. “We use it a lot for ad-hoc reporting, and the real-time aspect is valuable because we have many immediate reporting needs,” Briner says. “Like at any company, when someone asks for information, they generally want it yesterday. With Insight, we can drill down from one screen, and it helps us keep pace,” she adds.

Ann Treffry, Senior Accountant, in Itron’s internal reporting group adds that Insight empowers people throughout the organization. “Insight makes it so much easier for everyone to get the information they need,” says Treffry. “The ability to filter on any segment and pull information using the DFF - that’s probably what we rely on most in Insight,” she adds.

Insight Reporting™ enhances productivity at Itron in a number of ways. “I’m in Insight [Reporting] all day long, and it has definitely improved reporting productivity,” Treffry says. Eldred notes that by enabling users to take control of some of their own reporting needs, Insight Reporting™ also saves time and enhances productivity for the IT team. In addition, the parameters for security and compliance in Insight mirror those in Oracle, so there is no need to duplicate effort to achieve the same levels of assurance.

Enabling Rapid Insight into Project Performance

“With the Projects Smartset, Itron can easily view project profitability at any point during a project, giving upper management insight into project performance and projections,” Schmidt says. “Based on this, management can make decisions - for example, to alleviate anticipated issues if the forecast is not what was expected. The upper management never had this level of project detail before, and they are very pleased,” she notes.

“Using the Projects [Smartset], I create a month-end reporting package for upper management, showing project profitability, budget information, and projections,” Schmidt says. “I can run this report in Insight [Reporting] in a matter of minutes, and it could have taken days to do otherwise,” she notes.

“We also use the Projects [Smartset] heavily for reconciliations to the General Ledger,” Schmidt says. “We have classifications set up in Oracle, and Insight allows us to slice and dice costs being incurred by projects into various components for reporting purposes. We couldn’t do that in the past, and it’s a big win for us,” Schmidt emphasizes.

Fast, Easy Integrity Checks and Responses to Auditors

For analysis, “digging down and researching variances, for example,” Insight Reporting™ is used more than Oracle standard reporting at Itron, according to Briner. “We have a number of integrity reports that we’ve written and can run quickly in Insight,” Briner notes.



InsightSoftware.com’s Solution

Insight Software Suite for Oracle E-Business Suite empowers users to create simple, real-time inquiries to answer business questions. This improves productivity for reporting, analysis and reconciliations.

Companies using Insight gain quick access to information to increase efficiencies, enhance revenues, reduce costs and optimize cash flows.

The Bottom Line:

For Itron, Insight Software Suite for Oracle EBS enables smooth reporting processes since the migration to a new ERP system. Insight Reporting™ accelerates financial reporting response time and enables users to answer specific questions about financial data more easily.

During intense periods of corporate reorganization, Insight continues to help speed and simplify a wide range of inquiries and integrity checking. Using Insight Reporting™, Itron teams can access details on project profitability at any point during a project, giving upper management information on project performance and projections to guide key business decisions.

At any company, a reorganization after an acquisition brings reporting challenges. Eldred emphasizes that there are likely more reorganizations in the future for Itron, and Insight Reporting™ will continue to help resolve any variances in financial reports that result in these circumstances. “We have rewritten our Oracle financial statements after reorganizations and used Insight [Reporting] to fine-tune and check those reports when something needs to be resolved. Maybe the balance sheet doesn’t balance, or one report doesn’t tie to another one: Insight [Reporting] helps us figure out what’s making up those numbers,” Eldred explains.

A standard request from auditors is a trial balance that ties financial statement line items to the financial statement. Running a standard trial balance and exporting it to Excel takes a few minutes in Insight, according to Briner. “It could take a half hour or forty-five minutes in Oracle EBS to run the same thing and get it into the format we’re used to,” she notes.

“In JD Edwards, it was very quick for us to run a trail balance by category codes and give that to the auditors,” Briner states. “When we transitioned to Oracle, we used DFFs to store the financial statement line item information, but Oracle standard reporting does not enable full DFF analysis. With Insight, we can produce exactly the same trial balance format for the auditors in the same amount of time that we had been able to give them that information before,” she explains.

“If an auditor wants to know the balance in our cash account, for example, we can pull a trial balance using Insight and just select that range of accounts for cash. Or, we can just pull one DFF for cash,” Treffry explains. “You know you are getting all the accounts, and you have good control with Insight. By running the whole trial balance and sorting it by DFF, you get all the information you need in a very summarized form,” she adds.

Itron uses a DFF for balance sheet reviews to help track Sarbanes-Oxley requirements. “All of the codes we use to try to make it easier and more efficient to get information don’t really help unless we can get to the DFF,” says Briner. “Our main way to get these details, the most user-friendly and rapid way, is by using Insight [Reporting],” Briner concludes.

Flexible Support from InsightSoftware.com’s Team

The Itron team has worked with InsightSoftware.com for several years, and this positive relationship deepened with the migration to Insight Software Suite for Oracle EBS. “InsightSoftware.com’s solutions have been stable and it’s easy to do business with their team,” says Eldred. “We were especially pleased at their flexibility in allowing hands-on demonstrations with Insight for Oracle EBS solution before we made our decision,” Eldred emphasizes.

For more information please visit www.InsightSoftware.com

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