

Customer Success Story

Chevron Upstream Europe



Bespoke SAP® maintenance planning tool development

Improving process effectiveness via an innovative planning tool

Early in 2007, Chevron issued new worldwide corporate standards for maintenance planning. Impetus for change was already growing in Chevron, and the new standards gave further cause for action.

Chevron's previous system involved the use of various spreadsheets complementing SAP®'s maintenance planning functionality. Its output was essentially a list of tasks. The safety critical tasks were under control, but otherwise technicians could choose tasks off the list. Scheduling decisions were not being driven enough by operational and commercial factors, so there was huge room for improvement.

It was against this background that Absoft carried out a comprehensive process optimisation service reviewing the SAP maintenance planning processes within Chevron. The output of the process optimisation service was a report focusing on Absoft's recommendations for planning improvements relating to the issues prioritised by Chevron as 'Top 5'. The report also outlined a business case for each recommendation.

Shortly after this, motivated partly by the report's recommendations and partly by a global Chevron business initiative known as SERIP (Surface Equipment Reliability Improvement Process), Chevron decided that a formal specification should be developed for a new maintenance planning tool in SAP. Improving the reliability of facilities and equipment is a key theme of SERIP, and standards and processes for maintenance planning fall within its umbrella.

Refining and fulfilling requirements

By way of inviting advice on how best to address its requirements, Chevron produced a white paper for Absoft, who by this point had been selected to develop the specification for the maintenance planning tool and convert it into a live project. As well as reviewing this in detail, Absoft set about refining the requirements by interviewing all of the key stakeholders in Chevron and referring back to its recommendations from the process optimisation report. The result was a functional specification for a new maintenance planning tool, plus a set of 'look and feel' guidelines. After some small changes had been requested and made, this was accepted by Chevron.

Don Valentine, Absoft's Operations Director, recollects: "What Chevron wanted from the tool was a weekly maintenance plan - specifying, prioritising and scheduling tasks. The 7 day cycle was a requirement of the SERIP initiative, along with clear and simple reporting on maintenance order status, compliance status, accessibility of materials, and availability of external vendors' maintenance staff where required. Chevron specified the use of a simple 'traffic light' system to provide the user with direct visual feedback on these aspects, and so we designed the tool around that idea."

Customer background



Chevron is one of the world's largest integrated energy companies. Its activities include oil and gas exploration and production, chemicals manufacturing, geothermal energy and power generation. Chevron also invests in renewables and advanced technologies.

In the UK, Chevron covers a broad spectrum of business – from finding and extracting oil and gas, to refinery operations and selling refined products. Chevron Upstream Europe (CUE) in particular, has interests in eleven fields producing oil and gas on the continental shelf.

Approximately 20 Aberdeen based staff and contractors use Chevron's global SAP system in support of the maintenance planning function for CUE.



Throughout the development and implementation of the tool, Absoft's team met with Chevron once a week for a progress update. This ensured that the project ran on time, and also enabled detailed specification and other issues to be dispatched rapidly.

Completion, training and testing – on time

Absoft started in August 2007 with an analysis of Chevron's requirements.

Following comprehensive functional testing and user training by Absoft, and rigorous user acceptance testing by Chevron, the new tool went live in mid-April 2008.

A step up for both business and staff

Several months after go-live, Chevron successfully achieved SERIP Stage 1, and with the new tool it can spot issues such as under resourcing or over-resourcing. It can, for example, track the total number of hours spent by each maintenance discipline (electrical, mechanical and instrumentation) at the end of each 7 day period. Continuously feeding back this sort of information into the planning process makes planning more accurate and the tool acts as a business performance monitoring engine as well as a planning source, by measuring compliance with the plan at the end of the period.

One of the main benefits of the tool is that maintenance planners now have more time to focus on key aspects of the job, as well as monitoring the quality of data being entered and ensuring that reports are closed out properly by vendors. This is principally because the planning process now occupies only half a day per week rather than three days every two weeks.

A catalyst for change

Chevron's maintenance technicians have also gained improved focus from the new tool, and now think and work in terms of a seven day plan. Whereas tasks were often 'cherry picked' in the past, the technicians have fully embraced the need to perform tasks in a specified sequence and according to strategically driven priorities. Thanks to their training on the tool, they have also bought in to the need for accurate and thorough end of task reporting.



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