

Hanson Australia, headquartered in Sydney, is a division of international heavy construction materials company Hanson PLC of London. The division maintains operations in over 300 locations from Australia.. To enforce its complex change management requirements effectively, Hanson needed to eliminate unchecked changes, prune hidden costs of finding and correcting transport errors, remove uncertainty about transport sequencing, and trim away error-prone manual processes. Revelation Software Concepts' Rev-Trac provided in a single package the business-efficient change management solution Hanson needed for its wide-ranging IT infrastructure.



Managing Change in a Complex System

When internal auditors at heavy building materials company Hanson

Australia announced in mid-2004 they would look closely at how the IT department managed changes in the company's SAP-based business systems, Information Planning Manager Wolfgang Kloger realized this would be a good opportunity to review his company's change control procedures. At the time, these procedures were largely email-based, and relied heavily on users remembering to attach all required documentation to messages. Users had to send the messages to all relevant people for approval, and getting together the paperwork to establish an audit trail for every change was sometimes difficult.

At the same time, Hanson's strong presence in the US meant even his own arm of the company was now subject to



Customer story

the demanding auditing requirements of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

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Solution Manager Considered

As one outcome, Kloger was tasked to investigate alternative change control solutions for SAP solution-based business infrastructures.

In the search for a better change control solution, one obvious candidate was the Change Request Management application recently included in SAP Solution Manager.

"We seriously considered Solution Manager," says Kloger of his search. "It seemed to have the potential to be a one-stop shop - and of course it does come free, in a manner of speaking - at least free of capital cost."

Kloger says he believes Solution Manager contains some other attractive applications and will probably improve over time. However, he was not convinced that its change management features were sufficiently mature and flexible to address his own company's extensive requirements.

"I wasn't confident we would be able to enforce the reasonably complex

"I feel comfortable with Rev-Trac... I found Rev-Trac quite straightforward and logical. It was quite easy to understand, to my way of thinking."

Wolfgang Kloger,
Information Planning Manager,
Hanson Australia

procedures we had already set up, and which we actually wanted to extend and fine-tune a little further, following the internal audit," Kloger recalls.

The Rev-Trac Solution

Kloger had known of Revelation Software Concepts' change control application Rev-Trac for some years, having first seen the product in use at multinational chemicals and explosives company Orica.

While Rev-Trac does carry a price tag - unlike Solution Manager, whose costs, though untagged, are wholly implementational - Kloger was soon pressuring his manager, CIO Rob Downing, to select Rev-Trac.

"We always understood that Rev-Trac had a significant technical edge over Solution Manager,

with Rev-Trac's automatic monitoring of transport movements even after refreshes, and of course with its overtake and overwrite protection," recalls Downing. "The real question was how much these should influence our decision."

"Sometimes people didn't attach all the things that they should attach, sometimes they did not include all the right people... At audit time, it was difficult to provide the full trail of changes we had made in an easy way, even if we followed the correct procedure. It was quite difficult and time-consuming to pull it all together."

According to Downing, around the time they were finalizing their choice, an inadequately controlled change was migrated into production. The incident nearly brought down the system.

"I won't say that event actually decided the issue for us," Downing says. "However, it certainly focused our minds on the technical differences between the two products. We were satisfied that error would not have occurred with Rev-Trac in control."

A further factor influencing the final decision to go with Rev-Trac was RSC's strong and longstanding focus on SAP change control. "We felt confident in RSC's expertise in SAP change control,

given that they have worked in this one area for so many years," Downing says.

The Rev-Trac Experience

Having decided to go with Rev-Trac, the Hanson IT staff members found themselves pleasantly surprised by both the speed and ease of installation and configuration.

"I was really impressed with the documentation I got even before this thing started," Kloger recalls. "I received documents which gave me everything I needed to know, from the overview of the installation and details of what I need to do, through to a User Guide and an Administrator Guide. It was great. I was really impressed."

Following technical installation, Rev-Trac was quickly configured to implement Hanson's demanding change control processes.

"I come from a technical - mainly programming and relational database - background, and I found configuring Rev-Trac was quite straightforward and logical," notes Kloger. "It's an easy process to understand."

He adds, "Overtakers and overwriters should now be a thing of the past. And we'll have no difficulty showing auditors that we can trace the full history of every change."

Kloger says the most immediate and obvious benefit following implementation has been a boost in morale for all those involved in the change management process.

"It's much easier for us to handle the process now with Rev-Trac, compared with our previous approach," Kloger says. "We've been able to design exactly the process we want. Even for a minor change, for example, we can automatically inform the responsible business person when the change has gone through."



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"It's certainly easier for us to handle the process now with Rev-Trac, partly because it's just easier for people to deal with it."

Wolfgang Kloger,
Information Planning Manager,
Hanson Australia

