



Our customers speak for us



For **ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation**, Episode-Level Budgeting becomes a TV reality, thanks to a **PowerOLAP enterprise-wide implementation** solution for planning and budgeting.

A PowerOLAP case study with comments from

**Randolph T. Estrellado, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation**

ABS-CBN, the Philippines media giant, has found its financial planning “bible”—now, budget figures generated with the help of PowerOLAP guide the company to success. **“PowerOLAP contributes to the company’s vision towards an effective and efficient budgeting process. Each budget unit—wherever they are on the globe, whatever time they work—can take full control, ownership and accountability of their respective budget figures,”** says Randolph Estrellado, Vice President and Chief Finance Officer.

The company arrived at this happy conclusion after experiencing “add-on module” issues and the well-known limitations of working only in Excel. After a deliberative process, ABS-CBN selected PowerOLAP in part precisely because it embraces “Excel smarts”, while raising their processes to a far higher level of productivity, speed and functionality. Another huge advantage ABS-CBN found is PowerOLAP’s ability to integrate data from a new SAP roll-out. PowerOLAP likewise offered the highest ROI in terms of ownership and maintenance.

Finally, their PowerOLAP implementation allows ABS-CBN to budget down to the episode level of their broadcast programs, which they had long wished to do.

Now in its 50th year, ABS-CBN is the largest broadcasting, entertainment and multimedia enterprise in the Philippines. As one of the ways to maintain this unparalleled service, ABS-CBN Finance Group turned to PowerOLAP to provide a detailed, enterprise-wide planning and budgeting solution.

How to Overcome Budgeting and Planning the Hard Way

To appreciate the scope of ABS-CBN’s business operations, one needs only to look at Mr. Estrellado’s responsibilities: he is in charge of the budgeting and planning processes for various operating business units like entertainment, TV and News productions plus other local and international subsidiaries. This translates to hundreds of cost centers and thousands of program episodes. For him and his staff, the speed, accuracy, strength, and all-around “intelligent capabilities” of their software systems are vital to ensure that the most precise, up-to-date data is available for them for budgeting and planning.

Over the past few years ABS-CBN attempted different solutions to meet its tight deadlines and reach an “episode-level budgeting” solution, but all fell far short of the company’s goal: **“From customization to the implementation of a packaged module that goes together with our previous ERP system, all initiatives to implement an effective and efficient budget process to drive the corporate visions proved to be complicated.”**

Mr. Estrellado recalls that for ABS-CBN, like so many firms in the same predicament, their default choice very often was to work in Excel, with all the consequent difficulties of proliferating and impossible-to-maintain linked spreadsheets.

Finally—“The Fastest and Easiest to Deploy”

The first steps toward replacing painful, outdated processes began when several vendors were invited to simulate the envisioned budget process. Three responded and provided standard presentations (often, budgeting products compel users to budget according to a fixed schema, with little or no room to individualize according to a company’s needs).



**Benefits derived from
ABS-CBN’s
PowerOLAP planning
and budgeting
solution:**

Enterprise-wide access
**“Each budget unit
wherever they are on
the globe, whatever
time they work, can
take full control,
ownership, and
accountability of their
respective budget
figures.”**

Cost Effective
**“PowerOLAP likewise
offered the highest ROI
in terms of ownership
and maintenance.”**

Clarity of Information
**“Because we can
clearly see where we
can improve our budget
assumptions, we will
revisit or fine-tune
budget assumptions
used to facilitate budget
reviews in the
succeeding years.”**

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PowerOLAP's local solution provider, Forecasting and Planning Technologies, Inc., employed a potent educative approach to demonstrate the impressive flexibility and customization potential of the product.

The PowerOLAP "tutorial" given to ABS-CBN revealed how much quicker and easier data could be managed and processed, and, most pertinently, how a solution precisely framed to the company's needs could be built. Users learned how to slice and dice the data and even how to create their own "Cube" formulas—similar to working in Excel, but vastly more productive—in order to construct reports. At the end of the product evaluation period, ABS-CBN staff found that they could produce reports with great facility and ease, even while PowerOLAP accounted for changes in underlying data structures and updated, in real-time, new consolidated budget figures. "The decision to move the budget system within PowerOLAP was strengthened by the fact that PowerOLAP is the fastest and easiest deployable solution in terms of development and training, using the familiar MS Excel as the front end tool," says Mr. Estrellado.

ABS-CBN found the "time to deliverable" was excellent (PowerOLAP is known as a Rapid Application Development product)—a 2-month implementation of PowerOLAP resulted in a solution that delved deep into episode-level revenue and expense forecasting; automatic eliminations of inter-company entries; and total company consolidations in a matter of minutes!

User Friendly and SAP Compatible!

ABS-CBN discovered PowerOLAP at the height of its SAP roll-out. The company saw at the onset of the selection process that PowerOLAP would fully complement their SAP implementation. PowerOLAP thus revealed another dimension of its power—the ability to generate reports and analysis pulled from different sources. PowerOLAP adapts data and structure from SAP, allowing users to view and analyze the consolidated financial operations of ABS-CBN's enterprise-wide operations. In short time, the entire user community was able to create different scenarios and analyze "what-if" budget assumptions based on Management directions.

Providing a Valuable Service to People

ABS-CBN's business interests stretch far beyond television and radio, to motion picture production, publishing and music recording, not only spanning the Philippines, but also reaching out to Filipino viewers worldwide through the operations of ABS-CBN Global. The PowerOLAP planning system now provides users with up-to-the-instant capabilities to dynamically analyze the revenue and costs associated with, for example, TV program episodes, as well as individual units of other business centers.

Mr. Estrellado relies on PowerOLAP's capability to multitask at the touch of a button. PowerOLAP accepts data entered by over 100 users into the Excel interface, immediately gathering data into one platform; allocating centralized costs per program or business line profitability; then consolidating the parent company's and its subsidiaries' financial statements according to plan. The product's versatility allows budget users to instantaneously customize report formats or "slice and dice" data for further analysis at their convenience.

ABS-CBN is moving the PowerOLAP application forward: "We recently automated the consolidation process involving the elimination of inter-company transactions. Because we can clearly see where we can improve, we will revisit and fine-tune budget assumptions used to facilitate budget reviews in the succeeding years. "

ABS-CBN has succeeded in working in the "Service of the Filipino", as their motto affirms. In their view PowerOLAP is doing its part very ably to contribute to that worthy goal.

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Some of ABS-CBN's Favorite Features:

- Over 100 users can enter data into Excel, which is then updated dynamically in PowerOLAP
- The ability to create different scenarios and to analyze "what-if" budget assumptions
- Compatibility with numerous database systems, including SAP

For more information about ABS-CBN, see www.abs-cbn.com