

Case Study:
PUBLIC SERVICES

DART ON TRACK TO IMPROVED DECISION SUPPORT USING CLIENT/SERVER TECHNOLOGY

DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT

Providing transportation services around Dallas and 12 suburban cities to more than 300,000 passengers daily, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) is fast becoming a national model for the effective management of traffic congestion and air pollution. DART offers a wide range of customer facilities and transit services, including light rail, commuter rail, paratransit and bus services, and high-occupancy vehicle lanes.

The ability to monitor this diversity of activity and forecast future requirements is key to the agency's ongoing success, which is why DART recently migrated its information systems from a mainframe to a client/server environment. But doing so was no easy task—it required a three-and-a-half-year effort that involved a phased imple-

mentation of multiple client/server application packages, massive data conversion and business process reengineering. The migration was a huge success and is providing the foundation for implementation of an executive information system that will improve the agency's ability to make decisions and manage itself smarter.

A PHASED APPROACH

The move to client/server was driven by DART's need for Year 2000 compliance as well as an open systems architecture that would allow the agency to take advantage of Web-based technology—thus simplifying access to information and increasing

functionality. With Lawson software already running on the mainframe, DART chose to upgrade to the Lawson enterprise resource planning suite and issued a request for proposal for an implementation partner.

The selection of BearingPoint as that partner, says DART's Assistant Vice President of Information Systems, Richard Jarrett, was "based on [BearingPoint's] experience in the transit industry, as well as who they were bringing to the table and their overall approach to the project."

Beyond managing the software vendor during implementation, remarks Jarrett, "[BearingPoint] helped with the tremendous task of developing the phases in which we implemented the new system."



Business and Systems Aligned. Business Empowered.™

“The selection of [BearingPoint] as implementation partner was based on [BearingPoint’s] experience in the transit industry, as well as who they were bringing to the table and their overall approach to the project.”

RICHARD JARRETT,

Assistant Vice President of DART Information Systems

RESULTS

- BearingPoint and DART leverage and build on legacy systems, implementing an open systems architecture that allows the agency to take advantage of new, Web-based technologies.
- DART enjoys streamlined business processes with quicker access to information and improved reporting capabilities.
- DART teams can produce more online reports and use available data to develop extended modeling forecasts for the build-out of a light rail system, tying into databases and forecasting tools to develop a sound financial model.
- The BearingPoint team delivers excellent people management skills, helping the DART team work through the implementation and adjust to the ensuing changes in business processes.

“We started with the financial systems, and from there, [BearingPoint] recommended the next three phases based on data conversion and interface requirements,” continues Jarrett. “The real bang for our buck came from our consultant’s work on analyzing the timing and applications for each phase and designing interfaces so the old system could talk to the new system. There was a lot of ‘throw-away’ code, but it still had to be there as we brought up each new phase. [BearingPoint] was vital in keeping this whole thing glued together, bringing key staff members aboard to help us manage change control and providing a ton of technical support for software implementation and data conversion.”

In fact, BearingPoint converted three to five years of DART’s enterprise mainframe data as part of the migration process. As Jarrett puts it, “The data conversion was an enormous job—[BearingPoint] helped us make sense of all that mainframe data and find a pigeon hole for it in our new client/server environment.”

CHANGE CONTROL

One of the decisions that BearingPoint and DART made together was to do an “out-of-the-box” implementation of the Lawson software—i.e., with no modification of code. “That in itself made the implementation easier,” says Jarrett, “but in the same respect it was much harder because we had to change processes to fit the new code requirements. [BearingPoint] did a tremendous job in reengineering our business processes to meet the requirements of the new system.”

As the migration progressed, it became clear to DART that additional software packages beyond the Lawson enterprise resource planning suite were required. BearingPoint responded by implementing six modules of the Trapeze dispatch and scheduling system as well as two modules of Spear Technologies’ maintenance and materials software—all the while continuing to provide outstanding project management and technical support.

RAPID ACCESS TO LIVE DATA

With the migration to client/server completed in 1999, DART has been enjoying streamlined business processes through quicker access to information and improved reporting capabilities. The agency is also looking forward to transitioning to a data warehouse environment.

“Because we now have an open systems architecture,” Jarrett explains, “we can use more application tools to analyze our financial data, which helps us in decision making. The whole goal of this migration is to allow us to move to an executive information system that uses a data warehouse, which in turn will help us manage our key performance indicators so we can be more proactive rather than reactive.”

Jarrett says that the migration “lets us produce more online reports and use the data that’s available now to develop 20-year modeling forecasts for the build-out of our light rail system. That’s a biggie—being able to tie into these databases and use these forecasting tools to develop our financial model.”

“Before,” recalls Jarrett, “we had to use massive spreadsheets. Now, we can build true expense models because we can get to the data quicker and it’s live. We can integrate these expense models into other financial models and do a lot of what-if scenarios, so we can easily forecast what our additional funding requirements are going to be.”

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS A CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR

Beyond BearingPoint’s technical expertise, Jarrett says, “the key to success was having project management people who know and understand how to take a software implementation—which is absolute hell to begin with—and make sense of it all. They were very good at finding work-arounds and making the systems work together. In addition, the [BearingPoint] team had excellent people management skills. Their ability and willingness to work with everybody helped us work through the implementation and adjust to the necessary changes in our business processes.”

BUSINESS AND SYSTEMS ALIGNED. BUSINESS EMPOWERED.

BearingPoint provides business consulting and systems integration to Global 2000, government, and education organizations. Our approximately 17,000 professionals in 39 countries leverage extensive industry and technology domain experience and flexible tools and methodologies to successfully deliver on time and on budget. We get the job done for our clients because we do whatever it takes to deliver on our promises with speed and purpose.

As our name implies, at BearingPoint we help our clients set the direction to reach their goals. As business systems integrators, we align our clients’ business processes and information systems to enable them to access the right information at the right time, empowering them to achieve their desired business results and create enterprise value. To learn more about BearingPoint, please contact us at 1.866.BRNGPNT (+1.703.747.6748 from outside the United States and Canada) or visit our Web site at www.bearingpoint.com.



Business and Systems Aligned. Business Empowered.™

BearingPoint | 1676 International Drive | McLean, VA 22102 | 1.866.BRNGPNT | www.bearingpoint.com

©2003 BearingPoint, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S. BearingPoint, Inc. was formerly known as KPMG Consulting, Inc. The local KPMG Consulting affiliate in each country is undergoing a name change and will continue doing business under its current name until its name change has been completed and confirmed. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. C1110M-PS-0103-03-MSRD010