

SAP Customer Success Story Banking – Corporate Lending



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Chris Cullen, Group Software Services Executive, Corporate Property Finance IT, Nedbank Group Ltd.

AT A GLANCE

Company

- Name: Nedbank Group Ltd. (Corporate Property Finance division)
- Location: Durban, South Africa
- Industry: Banking
- Products and services: Corporate lending
- Revenue: US\$450 million (group)
- Employees: 22,000 (group)
- Web site: www.nedbank.co.za
- Implementation partner: SAP® Consulting

Challenges and Opportunities

- Smooth upgrade to mySAP™ ERP application to take advantage of new functionality and platform
- Web access for customers

Objectives

- Upgrade with no business disruption
- Ensure swift issue resolution if needed

SAP Solutions and Services

- SAP Ramp-Up program
- mySAP ERP
- SAP NetWeaver® platform
- SAP Solution Manager application management solution

Implementation Highlights

- Immediate attention to issues
- Error-free go-live, thanks to SAP Ramp-Up services and support
- Direct link to SAP through SAP Ramp-Up coach

Why SAP

- Better functionality of new version
- Easy integration of customers and partners
- Assurance of a smooth upgrade via SAP Ramp-Up

Benefits

- On time, 20% under budget
- No interruption to business users whatsoever
- Enhanced employee productivity via simpler interfaces, faster processes
- Better management reporting, resulting in more effective decision making
- Enhanced customer service

Existing Environment

SAP R/3® software

Third-Party Integration

- Database: IBM DB
- Hardware: IBM
- Operating system: UNIX

NEDBANK GROUP

Bank Uses SAP® Ramp-Up Program to Upgrade SAP Software Risk-Free, on Time, 20% Under Budget

Nedbank Group Ltd. is one of the four largest banking groups in South Africa. Its Corporate Property Finance division has the largest market share among the groups and aims to maintain that leadership position. This was the primary reason why the division used the SAP® Ramp-Up program to upgrade to the mySAP™ ERP application.

“The ability of our IT team to deliver solutions has always been key to the success of our business unit,” says Chris Cullen, group software services executive with Nedbank’s Corporate Property Finance IT department. “Through SAP Ramp-Up, we were able to get new functionality up and running smoothly and showcase our operation as a strategic role model within the Nedbank Group.”

The SAP Ramp-Up program enabled Nedbank to implement the newest version of the SAP enterprise business software as soon as it became available. Like all SAP Ramp-Up customers, Nedbank benefited from accelerated support channels and dedicated coaches who have direct access to SAP product development.

Cullen says that the decision to go with SAP Ramp-Up was an easy one. “SAP asked if we would like to be an SAP Ramp-Up customer,” says the Nedbank executive. “I asked, ‘How much does it cost and what’s in it for us?’ SAP said it would cost us absolutely nothing and that it would provide the best service possible and ensure we got exactly what we wanted.”

The benefits were delivered as promised. “We’ve had enormous support from SAP,” Cullen says. “SAP wanted our upgrade to work just as much as we wanted it to work. We met our timeline and came in 20% under budget. The value that SAP Ramp-Up gave us was that it assured us of success.”

It also allowed Nedbank Corporate Property Finance to benefit quickly from the new functions. Cullen explains that the SAP NetWeaver® Portal component will enable the bank to build a dashboard for top-level managers so that they have ready access to critical information on the state of the business.

He continues, “We also want to let our clients transact with us via the Web – this will be far easier to do on the SAP NetWeaver platform. The knowledge management component will help us modernize the way we train and support users and share our experience and expertise. We upgraded to mySAP ERP to take full advantage of the functional enhancements for our current and future business requirements.”

No-Risk Upgrade

During the upgrade, all Nedbank communications with SAP were given priority handling. Says Cullen, “When we logged messages, it was almost as though the people in Germany were just waiting for them, because sometimes they’d respond literally within seconds. We had our own project manager driving the process and an SAP Ramp-Up coach managing all issues that required assistance from SAP. Our SAP Ramp-Up coach knew our business inside out. We had meetings every Tuesday morning, and every time he came to a meeting he came armed with answers and proactive lists. He was superb.”

As the first bank in South Africa to implement mySAP ERP, Nedbank sought competitive advantage without the pitfalls associated with being a pioneer. SAP Ramp-Up enabled it to get the first-mover benefits of deploying SAP software before general shipment, without risk.

“One of the benefits of SAP Ramp-Up was that even though we were the first bank in South Africa – if not the first company – to upgrade to the new platform, we didn’t have to worry about battling through uncharted territory because we had the backing

of SAP,” Cullen says. “As an SAP Ramp-Up client, we effectively enjoyed production quality support, even though we were working in a new version environment.”

The Nedbank Corporate Property Finance division can now confidently leverage the new application. “We use the full functionality of the mySAP ERP Financials solution,” Cullen says. “We also use the SAP NetWeaver Business Intelligence component to generate reports on earnings, interest accrued, statutory requirements, risk, budget, and returns.”

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Around 500 Nedbank personnel use mySAP ERP for a variety of business functions. Role-based access ensures they have everything they need to do their jobs. Cullen says that user response has been highly positive. “They rave about it,” he says. “The value of the management information that they get from mySAP ERP far exceeds the amount of effort they expend putting data into it.”

That’s the key to successful IT – serving the business user, who can then better serve the customer. “As a business, we provide excellent service to our clients,” Cullen says. “As an IT group, we are agile enough to turn around business process enhancements and new development extremely quickly. With mySAP ERP, we have an application that can handle any type of financial process that the business requires of us.”

Thanks to SAP Ramp-Up, the rollout of that application went extremely well. “When the crunch came on the final weekend, I couldn’t believe nothing had gone wrong,” Cullen says. “It was a huge success. We succeeded in making the upgrade a nonevent in the lives of the business users. I would absolutely recommend the SAP Ramp-Up program and its related services to anyone planning a similar exercise.”