

# Redwood Business Solutions

Making web-based report distribution a reality.

## At A Glance

### Industry

- Multiple conglomerate including Manufacturing, Utilities and Services

### Environment

- IBM MVS and AIX
- SAP® solutions including SAP R/3® and BW

### Key Challenges

- Aggregation and distribution of information from and to 37 remote business units
- Integration of report management with SAP landscape
- Production of period end reports for all businesses in good time for financial reporting

### The Solution

- Report2Web central repository for information from all applications
- Centralized management for security and report access

### Key Benefits

- Reduced need for SAP end user licensing
- Period end reports produced in reduced time
- Improved access to up-to-date information across the organization
- Reduced printing and paper costs

## ERGON®

### Simplifying SAP® Financial Report Management, Distribution and Utilization

Ergon utilizes SAP with Report2Web for SAP solutions to streamline month end financial reporting across 37 different business units.



Ergon, Inc. headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi is on the cutting edge of a wide variety of industries. Ergon operates 37 different business units with over 2,300 employees to deliver products and services including the processing, storage and transportation of crude oils; the design, development and management of commercial, residential and industrial properties; and the specialized development and fabrication of technological products for telephony, homeland security, medical and many other markets.

Supporting each of these organizations is an SAP R/3 solution implemented on IBM P Series servers to link each business unit and geographic location to the headquarters data center. Ergon also makes extensive use of SAP Financial Accounting and Business Warehouse (BW) modules. This SAP framework is combined with various legacy applications running on the IBM Mainframe, including order management and inventory control. SAP was brought in to centralize information, improve reporting and better integrate the business units. In doing so it exposed other underlying

issues pertaining to system usability, physical organization structure and resource availability.

### Period-End Financial Reporting Challenge

First and foremost was the challenge Ergon faced in coordinating period end closing and financial reporting across the numerous business units that operate under very different conditions and reporting cycles. This process is exceptionally complex with financial statements and reports being generated by accounting and management staff at each location using SAP Report Writer.

Some regional managers without access to SAP relied on HQ to produce reports and

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**Ron Washington**  
CIO, Ergon

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email them to the appropriate local staff. Complicating this was the need to ensure that only relevant data was delivered to each business unit in a timely manner.

"SAP is the nucleus of our business information system, but the operational and geographic diversity of our business requires a more effective and affordable way to collect, manage and share information," said Ron Washington, CIO of Ergon.

## Solution Evaluation

Understanding the inefficiencies and lack of controls in the current process, the Ergon IT team began searching for a solution to compliment SAP while meeting the three primary goals of:

- 1) Easily aggregating and distributing information from and to all of its global business units**
- 2) Seamlessly integrating with its existing SAP and non-SAP solutions without expensive modifications or implementations**
- 3) Allowing managers to utilize the system with minimal training**

Ron Washington and his team evaluated several web based products that offered the ability to collect and distribute information between each business unit. Ergon narrowed this list to include only those vendors that could demonstrate seamless connectivity with SAP, without requiring custom coding or system configuration.

The team further qualified vendors on their ability to provide a proven security model allowing Ergon to control access at both the user and network level. This would allow managers at the

headquarters to view a complete picture of the entire organization, while limiting unit-level managers to only their relevant information.

## Selection and Rollout

The decision to select Report2Web for SAP solutions was based on its ability to successfully meet each of Ergon's evaluation criteria and solution goals. As an added benefit, Report2Web required minimal support from Redwood to install and manage the solution, making it a long-term, affordable solution.

Report2Web implementation was completed within a few weeks. Reports generated in SAP are automatically sent to Report2Web for immediate access by users. Subsequently, reports from the mainframe and other systems from throughout the enterprise have been published in Report2Web. Report formats include Crystal Reports, Adobe, Text, and Excel.

The success of Report2Web was immediately evident in the reduction in time and operational costs required to publish month end financial reports. The statement distribution needs for the financial closing process was automated by publishing reports directly from SAP into the secure Report2Web server, and giving each unit level manager immediate access to their financial information without requiring them to access SAP.

Report2Web streamlined user access to information by automatically bursting, categorizing and securing content based on each user's role and responsibility. Appropriate users are now immediately notified when new or updated reports are produced.

Report2Web also maintains a secure archive of each document version that is produced. All versions remain accessible online, and every access to each document can be audited. Ergon uses this capability to understand which reports are being used and, perhaps more importantly, what reports are not being used so that unnecessary reports can be eliminated. Further, Ergon has a secure record of who is accessing what information, which can be utilized for compliance or regulatory purposes.

During the first six months of use, Ergon measured a significant return-on-investment by: streamlining and automating manual processes, minimizing additional SAP user licensing and redundant processing, improving access to up-to-date information across the organization, reducing the need to print and distribute paper reports and providing an audit trail of each document accessed by users.

"With Report2Web in place, managers are doing what they are supposed to be doing - running their business." Ron Washington continues, "SAP is a powerful solution, but at times, it can be intimidating to business professionals who need to be concerned with dollars and cents rather than report generation. Report2Web is enabling them to do this."



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