

Intelligence frees up staff

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Human resources

COLES Myer has saved millions of dollars in the past three years using a business intelligence tool to link and analyse data in its human resources department.

The retailer has made a huge leap in the past few years, moving from a human resource system in which information was mainly collected manually, and occupational health and safety information was stored in an assortment of Microsoft Access databases and spreadsheets.

“We are now positioned where we have one version of the truth,” Coles Myer human resources manager George Theodoridis said.

Coles Myer originally introduced Cognos Business Intelligence Series 7 software in 2001 and has gradually been exploiting more of its capabilities.

The goal is to improve the capabilities of its core PeopleSoft human capital management system and build a system linked to Coles Myer’s SAP finance data.

In the time Cognos had been used the company had benefitted from direct and indirect savings of



Keeping track: Coles Myer intends to improve its human capital management system and link it to its finance data

millions of dollars, Mr Theodoridis said.

The introduction was staggered because human resource measurement had to be fixed first.

“Core HR information was manually collected at the time,” he said.

Six people were previously responsible for generating human resource reports at the company, and

the new system had “liberated” staff, Mr Theodoridis said.

“We only have 1.5 doing reports now and they focus on development work, as opposed to adminis-

tration,” he said. The other staff have moved into other areas of Coles Myer.

Late last year the Cognos system was extended into occupational health and safety.

“Before Cognos, every business unit ran its own show on an Access database and spreadsheets.”

Cognos marketing manager David Merchant said the company helped Coles Myer pull data from its human resource systems and build a data mart for analysis and reporting.

“We now report out of one portal,” Mr Theodoridis said.

More recently the system has been used to give managers visibility of leave.

“This is plugging a gap in our SAP system,” he said.

In future, Mr Theodoridis said, the plan was to provide more categories to “slice and dice” so the organisation could interrogate queries such as, “is a safe store a more profitable store”.

Coles Myer is also talking to Cognos about using the Metrics Manager tool for performance management.

Mr Theodoridis said a trial would be conducted next year.