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*Male:* Welcome to an IBM Cognos Express midsize business analytics success story video. In this video IBM and Decision Resources, an IBM advanced business partner, speaks to Tira Jones, Finance Manager at AE Smith.

*Tira Jones:* AE Smith is the largest privately owned mechanical services contractor in Australia. Our team of 700+ people is organized into four separate, but complimentary, business units. Each is focused on its core competency, yet together delivering a partner of first choice single source solution around Australia for energy efficiency, building technologies, commercial air conditioning and mechanical services.

*Male:* AE Smith decided to upgrade their business reporting systems by implementing IBM Cognos Express and utilizing decision resources, consulting, training and implementation services. Let's listen as Tira candidly describes the situation.

*Tira Jones:* So, the product that we selected had to meet the following criteria. Firstly, it had to provide the business with a comprehensive set of reports and KPIs that the business could then use to make decisions going forward. Secondly, it had to be widely used, a mature product, and it wasn't ERP dependent, yet was well supported. It had to be easy to use for everyone, both in the development side and actual use once it was implemented, and we also wanted current in-house resources to be able to develop and maintain the system with minimal outside consulting. The system had to be flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of our business and finally, it had to be a solution that provided budgeting, forecasting, the board and bank reporting as well as having the **B line** capability.

The service provider had to meet the following criteria. We wanted them to have, obviously, excellent knowledge of the product. A head office based in Melbourne was important; a strong team that wasn't dependent on one or two people. They had to have worked with clients of a similar size to AE Smith previously and they could add value to the process and challenges when was required.

*Male:* AE Smith needed a reporting solution that would provide their managers with relevant data quickly and in a format that was useful.

*Tira Jones:* So, previously we used OutlookSoft for our budgeting and forecasting, but we found it difficult to maintain and it wasn't actually all that widely used, which was one of our key criteria in selecting the new product. We purchased the Xcelerator module which had 30 licenses. This was deemed to be the best solution for our business. Cognos Express is a mature product. It's highly reliable, widely used and constantly evolving.

*Male:* With help from Decision Resources, AE Smith purchased the IBM Cognos Express Accelerator module. Let's hear why.

*Tira Jones:* With the implementation of Cognos Express for our forecasting and budgeting, we've definitely seen an improvement in the time taken by our business managers to complete forecasts. In the previous system it was approximately two days to return their forecasts to us and we are confidently down to one day now.

*Interviewee:* The story gets particularly interesting here as Tira describes AE Smith's positive relationship with Decision Resources, including their wealth of technology knowledge and experience and their careful consideration of AE Smith's needs.

*Tira Jones:* Decision Resources was selected based on the criteria that I've already discussed. They've responded promptly to our requests and provided necessary resources whenever we required them. I'd summarize their customer service as being able to respond quickly to the needs of their customer. An example of this would be a report that one of our managers required quite urgently. It was more than an ad hoc report that we could generate ourselves already, and actually required some work in the back end. The request was made at about 4:30 in the afternoon and the report was available to us at 7:00 that night. Now, to me, that's good customer service and they definitely met our needs in this instance.

Well, the trust is building as we engage with them on new projects. We've had extensive discussions early on, on the framework for the BI piece. In the end they convinced us of the logic for their strategy and we went that way and it's proven to be the right decision. Decision Resources are a company that understand the needs of a business of our size and complexity and have assisted us with the start of our journey in using the BI to improve the quality of the information to the managers of our business.

*Male:* That wraps up today's video. Thank you to Tira Jones, AE Smith and Decision Resources, an IBM advanced business partner.

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