

# ALCAR HOLDING GMBH



“Cognos is an ideal and integrated tool for practically all areas of reporting, budgeting, and consolidation—a user-friendly application that has been easily rolled out to our subsidiaries.”

*Dr. Bruno Lässer, Managing Director, ALCAR HOLDING GMBH*



Based in Hirtenberg in Lower Austria, ALCAR HOLDING GMBH is the European leader in the automotive retrofit market for steel and light alloy wheels. Selling 6.7 million wheels a year, the company recorded a consolidated turnover of 241 million euros in 2005-06.

The group comprises over 30 companies and more than 800 employees located in 13 countries throughout Europe, operating in wholesale trade, sales, technology, design, and production. It markets light alloy car wheels under the AEZ, DOTZ, DEZENT, and ENZO brand names, as well as KFZ Stahlrad steel wheels. The Hirtenberg production plant also manufactures steel furniture systems and cabinets that are marketed in Germany and Austria under the KROMAG brand name.

## Challenges faced

Like many other organisations, ALCAR previously relied on Microsoft® Excel to prepare its group consolidation figures. When the spreadsheet's limits were reached in terms of manageability, the company decided to implement a professional consolidation solution that would deliver an integrated, enterprise-wide tool—one that also offered optimal data security. ALCAR also planned to create a database to streamline and accelerate time-consuming period comparisons, variance analyses, and other management evaluations.

## Strategy followed

After assessing various suppliers, ALCAR selected Cognos Controller, at the time a Frango solution. The Cognos solution was seamlessly integrated in ALCAR's existing IT mainframe environment. Following this initial implementation, the next stage was the successful roll-out of the new solution to all subsidiaries.

ALCAR also implemented Intenia's Movex solution to improve its analysis and reporting capabilities. The solution included Cognos PowerPlay as an OEM product, providing an efficient multi-dimensional analysis tool for the various departments within the company.

### Industry:

- Automotive manufacturing

### Geography:

- 13 countries across Europe

### Information Needs:

- Integrated, company-wide consolidation tool to replace existing spreadsheet-based system
- Create database to streamline and accelerate time-consuming period comparisons, variance analyses and other management evaluations
- Enhanced analysis and reporting
- Improved planning functionality integrated into existing software infrastructure.

### Solution:

- Cognos Controller
- Movex/Cognos PowerPlay
- Cognos Planning

### Benefits:

- Faster and more reliable consolidation process
- More accurate profit forecasting
- Seamless integration of Cognos software into existing IT mainframe environment
- Improved analysis
- Streamlined preparation of sales and marketing figures
- Enhanced enterprise-wide planning capabilities.

The project also included replacing the Excel-based monthly management reporting and planning package. An in-depth analysis of potential suppliers was again carried out to identify the most appropriate planning solution. In addition to scalability, another important consideration was the ability to easily run various scenario calculations.



THE NEXT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE™

Cognos Planning was eventually selected, offering an effective solution that would improved transparency and functionality and seamlessly integrate in the existing software infrastructure. ALCAR was equally impressed with its comprehensive modelling functions, practical data-capture tools for the individual group companies, and its ability to easily produce aggregations in line with the applicable organisational and legal hierarchy criteria.

### Benefits realized

Cognos Controller immediately made the consolidation process much quicker and more reliable. Consolidation now takes place during the fiscal year, significantly increasing the accuracy of final profit forecasts, and the onerous task of manually converting numerous formulae at the end of each fiscal year has finally become a thing of the past.

In terms of Cognos PowerPlay, the practical drill-down ability was particularly appreciated, and has been instrumental in streamlining ALCAR's preparation of its sales and marketing figures and improving their accuracy. The benefits have been felt particularly strongly in the area of sales controlling, with the introduction of a range of detailed analyses of turnover, sales and profit contribution by customer and product.

ALCAR is delighted with the improvement in all areas of reporting, budgeting, and consolidation. In fact, a detailed appraisal of the new Cognos 8 Business Intelligence platform is currently being conducted with a view to updating and expanding the existing solution. In future, each ALCAR manager will increasingly rely on the Cognos advanced analysis options in his or her day-to-day work. The solution will also help to reduce paper-based flows in controlling, with access to results in electronic format, including the famous 'traffic light function' for costs and revenue.

Overall, ALCAR's company-wide performance management solution has created the ideal conditions to boost its performance and increase its competitiveness in the tough European automotive wheel market.

### About Cognos

Cognos, the world leader in business intelligence and performance management solutions, provides world-class enterprise planning and BI software and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance.

Cognos brings together technology, analytical applications, best practices, and a broad network of partners to give customers a complete performance system. The Cognos performance system is an open and adaptive solution that leverages an organization's ERP, packaged applications, and database investments. It gives customers the ability to answer the questions—*How are we doing? Why are we on or off track? What should we do about it?*—and enables them to understand and monitor current performance while planning future business strategies.

Cognos serves more than 23,000 customers in more than 135 countries, and its top 100 enterprise customers consistently outperform market indexes. Cognos performance management solutions and services are also available from more than 3,000 worldwide partners and resellers. For more information, visit the Cognos Web site at <http://www.cognos.com>.

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