



California Natural Products

# California Natural Products accelerates reporting by 3 weeks and cuts costs by 50 percent

*With help from IBM Cognos and Locus Solutions*

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## Overview

### Business challenge

CNP was experiencing trouble generating the robust financial reporting needed to identify and resolve issues in a timely manner. Employees found themselves spending most of their time collecting data and providing numbers, without a clear understanding of what they meant.

### Solution

CNP leveraged Locus Solutions' expertise and product recommendations, and deployed IBM® Cognos® Express software. The solution centralizes data onto one platform so that employees can access consistent information directly from one location.

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Founded in 1980, California Natural Products (CNP) has been an innovator at the leading edge of developmental trends in foods and food ingredients. CNP invented and patented the natural processes for rice syrup, rice syrup solids and rice milk in the early 80s. In the mid-90s, CNP pioneered the packaging of natural and organic aseptic beverages. CNP has recently introduced branded products: CalNaturale Svelte, a protein shake, and CalNaturale Wine, which is made from organically grown grapes.

Today, the organization is staffed with some of the industry's most experienced professionals. CNP is a world-class manufacturer, producing a broad range of nutritional, natural and organic certified food ingredients. In addition, CNP is a contract manufacturer of rice and soy beverages, nutritional drinks, soups, broths, teas, and wine in a variety of flexible packaging.

## Challenges

CNP was experiencing trouble generating the robust financial reporting needed to identify and resolve issues in a timely manner. Its old reporting systems made it difficult to access data, which needed to be pulled from various sources and merged from multiple applications. Employees found themselves spending most of their time collecting data and providing numbers, without a clear understanding of what they meant.

Also, as a smaller company, CNP needed to create a system that would optimize its use of resources and staff. The company wanted a collaborative reporting system among various departments, which would enable the company and its customers to access the data for analysis, and help them to make efficient and cost-effective decisions.



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## Business Benefits

- Generates financial analysis reports comparing actual to budget and prior year, for full P&L's, operating expense, SKU level reports, product segmentation reports and other new reports.
- Saves 50 percent on reporting costs, cuts reporting time by up to 20 days and significantly reduces error by eliminating the need to extract data from an ERP system and merge it with Excel-based budgets.
- Promotes collaboration between departments on data analysis reports and empowers internal and external customers with the information to make cost-effective decisions.
- Centralizes data using IBM Cognos Express, making it consistent for all users, as well as easy and effective to manage.
- Worked with Locus Solutions to create a solution that will be self-sufficient and easy to use after implementation, in order to focus on the next phases of extending the project to other departments.

## Approach

- Leverage Locus Solutions' expertise and product recommendations to create an implementation plan that is cost-effective and self-sufficient.
- Deploy IBM Cognos Express software.
- Centralize data onto one platform through IBM Cognos, so that employees can access consistent information directly from one location.

## Impact

- Reduces financial reporting time by 20 days and reporting costs by 50 percent.
- Increases employee productivity and promote collaborative efforts between departments and customers on reporting projects.
- Gives employees more time to analyze data, understand its implications, and create business solutions.
- Empowers CNP staff to be self-sufficient after implementation, thanks to Locus Solutions' customized solutions and training for IBM Cognos Express.
- Provides a scalable, extendable solution that can be adopted by other departments, such as production and lab, in the next phases of the Locus Solutions and IBM Cognos Express project.

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*“We’ve quickly experienced the benefit of implementing innovative software like IBM Cognos Express... We were fortunate to have the knowledgeable consultants at Locus Solutions, a company that understands the needs of smaller companies like us.”*

— Casey Razma, Vice President of Finance,  
Purchasing, I.S. and Accounting, California  
Natural Products

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## Solution Components

### Software

- IBM® Cognos® Express Xcelerator, Advisor and Reporter

### IBM Business Partner

- Locus Solutions
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## About Locus Solutions

Locus is a strategy and technology consultancy that helps leading companies use performance management solutions to achieve competitive advantage and operational excellence. Locus' goal is to help companies deploy and manage a complete range of information requirements, ranging from budgeting and forecasting, through enterprise reporting, to the use of innovative business analytics technologies like mobile and search across the whole organization.

# locussolutions

## About IBM Business Analytics

IBM Business Analytics software delivers complete, consistent and accurate information that decision-makers trust to improve business performance. A comprehensive portfolio of business intelligence, predictive analytics, financial performance and strategy management, and analytic applications provides clear, immediate and actionable insights into current performance and the ability to predict future outcomes.

Combined with rich industry solutions, proven practices and professional services, organisations of every size can drive the highest productivity, confidently automate decisions and deliver better results.

## For more information

To learn more about IBM Cognos software, contact your IBM sales representative or visit: [ibm.com/cognos](http://ibm.com/cognos)

To learn more about products, services and solutions from Locus Solutions, visit: [locussolution.com](http://locussolution.com)



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March 2011  
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