



iOCO streamlines Invicta's financial reporting and consolidation processes

iOCO's implementation of Certent CDM and IBM Cognos Controller at Invicta Holdings Limited ('Invicta') has helped to automate and streamline the entire financial reporting process from the consolidation of results to the statutory reporting thereof.



About Invicta

Invicta Holdings Limited is an investment holding and management company for a group of companies which are leaders in the distribution of engineering consumable products, technical services and solutions in Southern Africa. Invicta also occupies a leading position in the distribution of agricultural, construction and forklift equipment.

The Business Challenge

Invicta faced two challenges within its financial reporting processes; firstly, the company needed to streamline its report production process, and, secondly, it needed to improve its financial consolidation process.

"When it came to the preparation of reports, the entire process was frustrating and time-consuming as all external reporting was done through third party service providers. This meant relying on external designers and printing houses to print our glossy group financial statements, with hours spent sourcing and copying data and images and sending changes back and forth between the designers and ourselves while trying to meet stakeholder and board deadlines. Ultimately, we needed a more efficient system to reduce reliance on external service providers and reduce the turnaround time and cost," explains Miguel Teixeira, Group Financial Manager at Invicta Holdings.

"For Invicta's financial consolidation process, we had an existing controller environment where we combined IBM Cognos Controller with IBM TM1, but we were not operating on best practice from a consolidation point of view," says Teixeira. "Invicta has a complex group structure with a number of foreign subsidiaries, and we needed to apply standardised and functional consolidation processes and controls to ensure the consistent application of the consolidation principles across all subsidiaries and consolidation levels."

A Transformative Solution

"Invicta appointed iOCO in October 2017 to assist with the reporting challenges after liking what we saw at an iOCO seminar on using Certent CDM ("CDM") for XBRL reporting," explains Teixeira. iOCO then completed the rebuild and redesign of the existing CDM reports which resulted in the production of Invicta's annual financial statements, booklet and advertisement directly from CDM.

"CDM is a collaborative report production platform that is secure and tailored to transform manual processes, enabling companies to produce reports using a single environment without having to rely on insecure channels, such as email, to transfer data. It allows users to collect data from multiple sources and integrate it in a controlled, auditable environment, with multiple users being able to edit reports at the same time. The reports also update automatically when numbers change in underlying data sources," explains Dean Conde, Data & Analytics Account Executive at iOCO.

“Implementing this system changed the way Invicta manages its reporting process, through the interfacing of the controller and TM1 environments into CDM, and it ultimately streamlined the reporting process by providing multiple benefits such as less manual intervention, less checking and improved efficiency,” he adds. As a result, Invicta was able to take full control of the reporting process and move the annual financial statement (glossy) and booklet production in-house, saving on external costs and manual work.

To resolve Invicta’s financial consolidation challenges, iOCO streamlined and redirected the company’s existing IBM Cognos Controller programme to reflect a single, best practice solution. IBM Cognos Controller offers a full, self-service application by directing the extended financial process - from close and consolidate to report and file. The solution is stable, reliable and eliminates control risks by allowing Invicta to avoid problems caused when carrying out the consolidations in different systems.

“IBM Cognos Controller enabled Invicta to remove manual intervention during the financial consolidation process and allowed multi-currency translation for the entire group. Invicta opted to undergo training and conduct the change themselves to ensure all knowledge remains with them,” says Conde.

“Although we were already using the programme, we needed direction on how the controller environment should be set up and what is best practice. iOCO assisted us in maximising the full functionality of the IBM Cognos Controller environment, which we were then able to rebuild and apply for our own purposes. Thanks to the training, we are now able to run our own IBM Cognos Controller platform, while iOCO remains on board for technical advice,” says Teixeira.

Seeing Results

Certent CDM provided Invicta with the following benefits:

- Invicta was able to bring report production in-house, reducing reliance on external service providers, such as designers and printers, and simplifying the process, thereby saving time and money.
- Integration of different reports so that reports can be linked together, giving one version of the truth in a single, secure environment.
- Multiple users can view and edit reports at the same time without resulting in versioning issues.
- Quicker turn-around times to present printed results to stakeholders and board.

The IBM Cognos Controller solution provided valuable results across the consolidation and reporting process for Invicta:

- One tool to produce a standardised set of consolidation controls and methodology.
- The quality and reliability of information is better, with no questioning of consolidation logic across the complex group structure.
- Invicta is no longer reliant on external consultants, and now has a complete, structured formula that the company can manage itself.

“We chose iOCO as their Certent CDM offering differentiated them from other service providers and their solution resonated with us. Due to this relationship, we also engaged iOCO to assist us with the IBM Cognos Controller rebuild as the advice provided made sense and complemented our understanding of an integrated consolidation system. We continue to work closely with iOCO as our Controller and CDM partners, as we look for further improvements and efficiencies in our reporting processes,” says Teixeira.

“The implementation of Certent CDM and IBM Cognos Controller at Invicta indicates how effective these solutions are in an environment where there are multiple subsidiaries within a large group, as they have helped to automate and streamline the whole financial reporting process from gathering information to final consolidation reporting,” concludes Conde.