

## ALLEN VANGUARD PROTECTS BOTTOM LINE WITH ADAPTIVE PLANNING



Allen Vanguard  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
Manufacturing

### Challenges

- Improve accuracy, turnaround time, and collaboration in the annual budget process
- Implement a monthly forecasting process to enhance business performance
- Gain insight into spending without interrupting day-to-day business processes

### Why Adaptive Planning

- Provides functionality to help control spending, not just manage budgets
- SaaS delivery allows finance department to manage the budget process without requiring IT support
- Cost-effective

### Results

- Decreased time spent completing the strategic planning and budgeting models by approximately 67%
- Streamlined budget update process from days to hours
- Freed controller from managing the budget process, allowing more time for analysis
- Enabled managers to maintain monthly forecasts in as little as 1 hour per month
- Implemented a monthly forecast process with full P&L visibility

### Introduction

All around the world, whenever people face threats from blasts and related hazards, Allen Vanguard is there protecting them. This fast-growing company is a world leader in providing advanced electronics, cooling solutions, and personal protective equipment to keep people safe—including military and law enforcement personnel. Allen Vanguard prides itself on customizing its products to meet evolving customer needs.

### The Challenges

Until recently, Allen Vanguard lacked a fully distributed monthly forecast process, relying heavily on an annual budget to control its finances. But creating timely, accurate budgets in Excel proved difficult.

“It was quite an undertaking to build a budget template in Excel, distribute it to 35 cost centers, and then pull all their numbers together,” says Chris Dickson, Director of IT, Allen Vanguard. “We couldn’t run the re-forecast process as often as we wanted, and we had to stay very high level, without involvement from key stakeholders.”

Allen Vanguard needed to improve the accuracy, turnaround time, and overall collaboration of its budget process. The company also hoped to establish a monthly financial process that would deliver insight into spending without interrupting day-to-day business operations. With these goals in mind, Allen Vanguard began to evaluate potential budget solutions.

“Whatever we chose had to be easy to distribute—ideally, web-based, because of our multiple locations and desire to minimize maintenance,” says Dickson. “We wanted to be able to control the solution centrally, so that our finance department could manage the budget model by itself. And we needed to get up and running quickly and cost-effectively, without involving IT and development.”

### The Solution

After evaluating a host of potential solutions, Allen Vanguard chose Adaptive Planning because of its support for better control of spending as well as its software-as-a-service (SaaS) delivery model.

“By building our plans simultaneously with Adaptive Planning, we probably cut our turnaround time by two-thirds—and we ended up with a high-quality plan to present to our Board.”

—Chris Dickson, Director of IT

"In the past, we had to spend considerable time manually checking our model and correcting errors. With Adaptive Planning, all input goes right into the budget model, and changes are visible in real time."

—Chris Dickson, Director of IT

"Adaptive Planning stood out because it goes beyond simple budgeting and forecasting functionality to meet our specific needs," says Dickson. "It was obvious to me that the creators of the system had experienced the same business performance management issues we're facing."

Today, about 35 Allen Vanguard employees in two locations use Adaptive Planning. Users include personnel in the sales, marketing, finance, operations, facilities, and manufacturing departments. For 15 employees in the finance department, Adaptive Planning has dramatically simplified the task of managing the budgeting process. Previously, when Allen Vanguard tried to consolidate 35 cost centers in Excel, a change to the budget could take days to complete. With Adaptive Planning, a single financial analyst manages the budget model, and changes can be made in hours.

"In the past, we had to spend considerable time manually checking our model and correcting errors," says Dickson. "With Adaptive Planning, all input goes right into the budget model, and changes are visible in real time. Our controllers have taken a much more analytical role, rather than focusing on trying to get the model to work."

## The Results

Allen Vanguard recently used Adaptive Planning to build a one-year operating plan and a three-year strategic plan simultaneously—using a single financial model—in just eight weeks. An Adaptive Planning dashboard lets Allen Vanguard employees see the models they have created and monitor automatically-calculated KPIs such as revenue per employee, days sales outstanding, inventory turnover, and the cash-to-cash cycle.

"By building our plans simultaneously with Adaptive Planning, we probably cut our turnaround time by two-thirds—and we ended up with a high-quality plan to present to our Board," says Dickson. "We can now give our Board a clearer picture of our projected bottom line, including not just revenue and margin forecasts but detailed information about spending as well."

Allen Vanguard's managers proactively use Adaptive Planning to access monthly forecasting information. Rather than asking the finance department to run a report, they can retrieve detailed cost center information as needed on a self-service basis. Executives can see income statements and forecasted revenues by business unit.

"With Adaptive Planning, our managers have more than a budget tool—they can manage and guide business performance through monthly forecasts," says Dickson. "But they only have to spend as little as 1 hour per month managing the monthly forecast."

Because Adaptive Planning has empowered Allen Vanguard's managers to take a greater role in budgeting and forecasting, Allen Vanguard's finance department can now focus on analytical work—rather than calculations and consolidations.

"The Adaptive Planning investment has been of great value," says Dickson. "They continue to increase value by adding product features and providing excellent support. And their client services team is extremely responsive."



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