

*Male:* Welcome to an IBM and Locus Solutions mid-sized business analytics success story video.

Today, we'll learn how California Natural Products, or CNP, a world class manufacturer producing a broad range of nutritional, natural, and organic-certified food ingredients, recently implemented an IBM Cognos Express business analytics solution and reduced monthly and annually reporting costs by 50 percent, leading to improved market analysis. We had a chance to speak to Casey Razma, Vice President of Finance, Purchasing, I.S., and Accounting for CNP. Let's listen as Casey candidly describes the situation.

*Casey Razma:* Our ERP system could only get us so far, so by leveraging our ARP system, you know, we've got a lot of transactional data and things like that, but we're not really able, prior to Cognos, to really generate the level of analytics needed to really identify and resolve issues in a timely manner. So, there are probably a lot of things that we're getting, really, not answered or not reviewed because just the amount of data and being a smaller company – not that we're tiny, but, you know, we're not a big multinational company. We don't have a lot of resources to, you know, have a lot of people looking at and creating our own in house systems.

*Male:* CNP was also previously running several antiquated platforms that proved to be inefficient and costly.

*Casey Razma:* But, what we wanted to do with this project in itself is really create an annual planning process, but also a financial reporting process that really brought our customers into the process, that brought in, you know, the marketing person, the salespeople, the production people, and to create a collaborative annual plan; where, prior to this, you know, finance would get in the room. The finance people put together a plan and then kind of measure ourselves against it. Not a lot of buy in within the company. Not a lot of understanding of how the numbers were being generated. So, the impact of that financial plan within the organization was somewhat diminished. By bringing the plan and process into a more collaborative approach, you know, people now have a better understanding of how the costs, how the revenue is generated within the organization, and we're seeing a lot more interaction with these groups in driving cost-saving projects and identifying ways to change our processes to save the company money.

*Male:* With help from Locus Solutions, CNP purchased IBM Cognos Express software. Let's hear why.

*Casey Razma:* You know, people are not spending time and effort going from multiple locations, pulling data from one – you know, from the ERP system, from an Excel spreadsheet, from another application, and trying to, you know, merge that data together using a B lookup or some other tool within Excel. We've got everything in a standard format there, so, you know, if one analyst pulls the data from the system, they're going to theoretically get the same answer as another analyst because the data has been, you know, put together and that value add piece is being done by Cognos.

*Male:* IBM Cognos Express has also led to other business improvements, including the ability to analyze and resolve business problems, as well as promote collaboration between departments, as with internal and external customers.

*Casey Razma:* So, now we're able to spend time looking at that data, drilling in the data, and understanding what it means to us and providing a business solution or a central solution to a problem, whereas before, we might have been just providing a number, which was seen as a problem only without any real results to that. No.

*Male:* In fact, CNP has already noticed the significant savings in upgrading their platform to IBM Cognos Express.

*Casey Razma:* We cut the costs down by about 50 percent in the amount of effort that we're spending on reporting and analyzing data. Now, we've reallocated that information to really analyzing business and identifying and driving business solutions.

*Male:* The story gets particularly interesting here as Casey Razma describes CNP's positive relationship with Locus Solutions, including their wealth of technology knowledge, their careful consideration of CNP's needs, and their method of empowering CNP at the end of the implementation process.

*Casey Razma:* So, from a technical expertise perspective, you know, they – Jeetu and Locus Solutions understood, really, how Cognos interacted with an ARP system and was able to pull that data out; were able to then also quickly design reports, but then I also think left us into a position where we weren't dependent on them to run the system. So, it was designed and people were trained in such a way that when they left, we had a system that was up and running. We were – felt very competent with it. Both Locus Solutions and Cognos, going forward, is, you know, getting into those next phases, so getting into and taking the baseline we have now and getting into

more detail and expanding it to other parts of the business, getting into the production side of the business, getting into our lab and lab analytics, getting into also our yield and other analysis that we would like to, you know, continue to drive and where Cognos really seems to fit well.

*Male:* Thank you for listening and thank you to Casey Razma, CNP, and Locus Solutions, a preferred IBM partner.

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