

## ***RCG Information Technology Provides Business Intelligence for Parkway***

**P**arkway is a leading parking management and mixed-use real estate development firm. As an expanding and creative parking and real estate development company, we pride ourselves on consistently exceeding our clients' expectations and on enhancing the value of the real estate we develop. Nationally and internationally, we manage, design and develop parking facilities. We are continually challenging ourselves to improve operating efficiency using cost-effective solutions and cutting-edge technology.

Parkway's migration to an Oracle ERM system created efficiencies in the back office which could be viewed by the entire enterprise. However, by itself, the Oracle ERM system did not serve the needs of the rest of the corporation, which required a holistic view of many different aspects of the enterprise. Whenever such data was required, it was extracted from disparate, non-Oracle-based systems. Though ad hoc data aggregation efforts provided valuable insight, they were costly and resource-intensive to generate and, by definition, had to be produced repeatedly by the data analysts at different times and for different needs across the organization.

A core team of individuals from IT, field operations, accounting and other stakeholder departments was assembled to construct a data warehouse. Parkway selected RCG Information Technology (IT), a leading national provider of end-to-end IT professional services, as a development

partner. RCG IT's proof of concept approach was a low-risk, low-cost approach that allowed Parkway executive and ownership decision-makers to see firsthand the value of data warehousing by constructing several data marts, populating them with snapshots of real Parkway data and hands-on use of business intelligence (BI) tools. This was an effective means of gaining support for full development of a data warehouse.

Success of the strategy was measured by how closely the finished product met the original requirements expressed by the end users and the extent of savings in labor and overhead costs associated with gathering operational information. This approach permits a greater degree of customization than anticipated through use of bookmarked views.

The final solution was a data warehouse which provides coherent corporate-wide business intelligence such as revenue growth, profitability, operations and trends for individual and collective parking properties, staffing, expense management and claims. Standardized operational reports were created, as well as distinct data marts and customized reports for the different constituencies within Parkway.

Parkway selected an Oracle RDBMS, given the ease with which this could be integrated with our existing Oracle ERM database. Cognos Decision Stream was selected as the ETL tool due to its ease of use and power. In order to respond quickly to

changes in our business, we wanted a tool that permitted agility and speed of execution. End-user interaction with the data warehouse is typically via Cognos PowerPlay. The ability to bookmark custom views is especially valuable for beginning users.

A strong degree of ownership and executive sponsorship is the most critical factor for the success of a data warehouse or any other project. As with any development effort, time spent prior to development is particularly critical to the overall success of the project. Because new requirements are expected to emerge as business conditions and organizations change, the selection of tools which are scalable, match resident skill sets and provide the necessary ease of use can avert problems over time. The business intelligence and data warehousing provider that a company selects performs a critical role in changing the fundamental form and function of the company's information infrastructure. Therefore, find a provider who is flexible, understands your needs, has a business and return-on-investment focus, and communicates clearly. Make sure your organization is ready to undertake the cultural shifts necessary to change the decision-making process to take advantage of the improvements brought about by the data warehouse.

These business intelligence tools have improved our decision-support and operational processes. They have allowed Parkway executives, ownership and management to look at the same just-in-time data and answer business questions without need of ad hoc assistance from reporting/data analysts. In addition, facts that help us understand the less obvious attributes of our organization continue to reveal themselves through continued use of this data warehouse.

**RCG Information Technology** provided application design, development, testing and implementation services for the data warehouse. It is fully Web-enabled to reduce Parkway's administrative efforts; and it runs on a Microsoft NT platform with Oracle RDBMS, Cognos Decision Stream for NT, PowerPlay Enterprise Server, PowerPlay Transformation Server, Impromptu Administrator and PowerPlay User.