

# FASTER ANALYTICS

*a “no surprises” implementation*



## The Background

There were no surprises during the migration of the SAP®Business Warehouse (SAP BW) application to the SAP HANA® database at Briscoe Group. “The team at Realtech knew exactly what to do,” says Jeffrey Westcott, IT Manager at Briscoe Group. “This was a major system initiative for us, and we were a bit nervous about the process. But Realtech prepared a comprehensive strategic plan that specified the required resources, estimated person-hours and anticipated results. And when we went live, SAP HANA performed as promised. That’s what we like - no surprises.”

Briscoe Group, which owns and operates 80 Briscoes Homeware, Rebel Sports and Living and Giving retail outlets throughout New Zealand, wanted to speed up reporting processes and had been planning for a major upgrade when the timing was right. But only recently, with the maturation of SAP HANA, did they decide to take action.

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## THE CHALLENGE

We knew we needed faster reporting and more powerful analytics,” explains Westcott. “We value our data. Every day we load large volumes of data into our data warehouse that is used to support merchandising, marketing and financial decision making. Any delay in report generation is discouraging. People don’t like to wait.

“When we started to get serious about the upgrade,” continues Westcott, “we looked at a number of solutions. We liked the in-memory architecture of SAP HANA but, at the time, it was still a relatively new solution. That changed as the technology matured and SAP HANA became more mainstream. We spoke to other organisations that had successfully implemented SAP HANA and decided it was time to move forward.”

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Jeffrey Westcott, IT Manager, Briscoe Group

## The Solution

Realtech and Briscoe Group have had a long and successful relationship. "Realtech has been providing technical support for SAP solutions since 2007," says Westcott, "and has provided routine maintenance and patching services as well.

In addition, the Realtech team has helped with the implementation of our SAP solutions SAP Business Warehouse, SAP Process Integration and SAP Enterprise Portal. And they had helped other companies implement SAP HANA. We especially like the fact that when Realtech commits to a project, they do it right the first time and on time. So when we made the decision to implement SAP HANA, there was really no discussion. Realtech was our preferred partner.

"Forward planning was an essential step in the specification process. "SAP HANA runs on a 'black box' appliance which is pre-configured with the CPU and memory at the factory," continues Westcott. "We had to make accurate predictions on how much capacity we would need, not just for the present but for the future as well. In addition, we had to allow for both compressed and uncompressed data. REALTECH helped us identify the key metrics so we could specify the most appropriate configuration."

Realtech's hands-on experience with SAP HANA facilitated the implementation process. "This is a fast-moving technology," notes Westcott. "When the box was delivered, it was configured correctly in respect to OS, CPU and RAM. But the team at Realtech had to get inside and update the software.

They had anticipated issues such as this, however, so there was no slippage in the delivery schedule. Indeed, Realtech's initial strategic plan, including estimated hours, turned out to be quite accurate.

## The Outcome

"There are a lot of inter-related variables that have to be accounted for," says Andrew Spicer, Managing Director of Realtech. "We carefully mapped out each step and calculated exactly what resources would be required, including any resources from our partner Sentio. We added enough flexibility into the project so that when any additional tasks popped up -such as updating the pre-loaded version of SAP HANA -we could take care of it without any drama.

The impact was immediate. "On the Monday after going live with SAP BW on SAP HANA, many of our reports ran significantly faster," says Westcott. "Now that we've seen the results, we are going to continue with Phase Two to further optimise reports and data loads. SAP HANA has taken us a step closer to real-time analytics."

"Realtech helped us specify the most appropriate configuration by predicting how much capacity we would need, not just now but for the future as well. This was especially challenging as we had to allow for both compressed and uncompressed data." Jeffrey Westcott, IT Manager, Briscoe Group

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