

## CASE STUDY

# Innovation in Managing Water

## How Microsoft PPM is Charting Melbourne Water's Future



### THE MELBOURNE WATER STORY

#### Charting Water's Future

Melbourne Water Corporation is responsible for providing affordable, world-class drinking water and safe sewage treatment for millions of Melbournians. Founded in 1992, Melbourne Water is the caretaker of river health for 8,400 kilometres of waterway in the Port Phillip and Westernport region and manages a capital investment program exceeding \$2.5 billion in any given five-year period.

The State Government-owned and not-for-profit body has a vision to enhance life and liveability for the community of Melbourne by providing services to help create healthy people, healthy places and a healthy environment. With increasing water stress due to accelerating climate change and unprecedented population growth, more than ever Melbourne Water is focused on evolving its business—and the wider industry—to deliver on its vision for future generations.

"It is fundamentally important for Melbourne Water to demonstrate to our regulators, stakeholders and customers that we invest public money across our water, sewerage, waterways and drainage infrastructure in a prudent and efficient manner."

- Anthony O'Shannessy, Chief Financial Officer of Melbourne Water

### INDUSTRIES

Water Services, Sewerage and Drainage Services

### SIZE

1,114 employees

### WHAT MICROSOFT PPM REPLACED

Primavera, EPM system, CMS system, Excel

### BENEFITS

- Consolidated 4 systems into 1
- Portfolio prioritisation capability
- Projects delivered on time and on budget
- Reduced time spent on administrative tasks

**THE CHALLENGE**

As water stress becomes the norm, the need for Melbourne Water to evolve its project management capability could not be greater

As water demand and environmental complexity increase, so do the number of projects and employees—and Melbourne Water found itself in a difficult position; for the first three years of its five-year regulatory period it had delivered one in three projects late and underspent on its capital program by 40%. The latter is an issue for Melbourne Water because “What the public gets charged for water services is based on the original budget. When you underspend your budget, you lose the confidence of your stakeholders,” said Michael Harding, PMO Manager of Melbourne Water.

Explaining how the issue arose, Harding said:

“We couldn’t effectively govern what is a very large and diverse program of work being managed across a number of unintegrated systems. We had 4,000 projects in various phases of delivery being managed across four separate corporate systems and thousands of spreadsheets.”

Melbourne Water quickly realised it needed a project portfolio management tool that did not involve switching between systems or manually inputting data into Excel spreadsheets. Much of the time, Melbourne Water wasn’t able to predict portfolio underspend until it was too late to react. “Using spreadsheets is not the right way for a publicly funded, billion-dollar business to operate”, said Anthony O’Shannessy, Chief Financial Officer of Melbourne Water.

**FROM THE SOURCE**

“Before Sensei our systems were dysfunctional and disaggregated.”

- Anthony O’Shannessy  
Chief Financial Officer of  
Melbourne Water



**THE SWITCH TO MICROSOFT PPM**

Sensei helps Melbourne Water realise the full benefits of its Microsoft PPM investment

Melbourne Water evaluated several systems before making the switch to Microsoft PPM. They were immediately attracted to Sensei's obvious focus on integration and reporting solutions. Michael Harding, PMO Manager of Melbourne Water explains,

"We went to the market seeking a delivery partner that could help us develop an integrated solution for the management of our capital portfolio, including an enhanced business intelligence capability. The solution needed to align to our boarder IT architecture principles of simplification, innovative solutions, information accessibility and cloud computing."

The Melbourne Water team used the implementation as an opportunity to evolve processes in their business, leveraging the best practices and innovative apps Sensei built into its Microsoft PPM solution.

**WHAT MICROSOFT PPM INTEGRATED WITH**

Maximo, FinanceOne, Active Directory, Opentext Content Server



THE SOLUTION

How Melbourne Water derives value from Sensei's solution:



Melbourne Water now successfully manages more than 4,000 projects, 600 resources, and 74,000 tasks across the portfolio using **Project Online**.



Using Sensei's **Integration Hub**, Melbourne Water integrates data from three line of business systems into the Reporting Hub and Project Online, to the tune of 72 individually defined integration flows.



Sensei's **Reporting Hub** helps Melbourne Water keep informed by executing 3,800 real-time reports every week on project related information via Excel, SSRS and Power BI.



Using Sensei's app - **Project Sync for Word** - Melbourne Water users automatically sync Word documents with the latest data from Project Online at a pace of over 400 documents per week.



Sensei's **Monte Carlo** app statistically simulates project cost and risk scenarios to predict Melbourne Water's project budgets to a 95% probability.



Sensei's **Finance Hub** app improves Melbourne Water's capability to effectively govern the financial performance of its projects by providing complete visibility over project financials.

FROM THE SOURCE

"Sensei's solution has been very well received by staff involved in the planning and execution of the capital portfolio; they see the value in what has been delivered and the efficiencies that it offers."

- Anthony O'Shannessy  
Chief Financial Officer of  
Melbourne Water

## THE RESULTS

### How Microsoft PPM is Charting Melbourne Water's Future

Chief Financial Officer, Anthony O'Shannessy was not shy when asked how important Sensei's solution is to Melbourne Water's overall success, "The implementation of a single project portfolio management system has elevated our discussions from siloed business unit discussions based around multiple individual systems, to whole of business discussions based on a single integrated system and a single source of truth."

#### Improved the number of projects delivered on time and on budget

Before the real-time visibility afforded by Microsoft PPM, Melbourne Water wasn't able to predict portfolio underspend until it was too late to react. Since the company began using Microsoft PPM, increased portfolio visibility has enabled Melbourne Water to utilise funds more effectively and enhance life and liveability for the community of Melbourne. "We used to have multiple individual solutions in the business. Now we have one overarching tool that gives us complete visibility across the organisation, enabling us to decide on where the best investments are and how to spend the public money wisely," said Anthony O'Shannessy, Chief Financial Officer of Melbourne Water.

#### Reduced time spent on administrative tasks

Project Managers no longer have to chase down employees, deep dive into multiple spreadsheets, or track down emails to know a project's status. Due to increased visibility through Microsoft PPM, Melbourne Water reduced the time spent on resource allocation and other administrative tasks. Today, Melbourne Water has the ability to view resources, tasks, and project specs at the push of a button.

#### Portfolio performance at their fingertips

Before Sensei's solution was implemented, employees at Melbourne were managing projects across four systems, which did not enable them to prioritise their portfolio of work. Today, they know at-a-glance where they should best invest capital resources in a manner aligned to the organisation's strategic direction and customer expectations.

## FROM THE SOURCE

"We have portfolio performance information at our finger tips and the ability to drill for the insights contained within our data. This will ensure we are well placed to adapt and respond to the challenges of population growth and climate change."

- Anthony O'Shannessy  
Chief Financial Officer of  
Melbourne Water

Now is the time to leverage all the information and technology at your fingertips for fast insights and optimised operations.

# Let's Chat.

## WHAT'S NEXT

I want a best practices Microsoft PPM solution and instant ROI!

To get more information, answers and advice contact your local Sensei rep for a chat — we'd love to hear from you.

### Melbourne

Level 6,  
170 Queen Street  
Melbourne  
VIC, 3000  
Australia

+61 (03) 9036 3423

### Sydney

Level 3,  
45 Murray Street  
Pyrmont  
NSW, 2009  
Australia

+61 (02) 8011 4226

### Brisbane

Level 20,  
300 Queen Street  
Brisbane  
QLD, 4000  
Australia

+61 (07) 3103 3800

### Perth

Level 18,  
197 St Georges Tce  
Perth  
WA, 6000  
Australia

+61 (02) 8011 4226

### Adelaide

Level 1,  
427 Pulteney Street  
Adelaide  
SA, 5000  
Australia

+61 (08) 7200 1648

### Phoenix

Level 9,  
45 West Jefferson  
Street  
Phoenix  
AZ, 85003  
US

## ABOUT CASE STUDY

This snapshot was captured in April 2018.

## WEBSITE

[www.sensei.cloud](http://www.sensei.cloud)

## EMAIL

[letschat@sensei.cloud](mailto:letschat@sensei.cloud)

## FROM THE SOURCE

"Microsoft PPM will really help—not just Melbourne Water—but the whole water industry."

- Anthony O'Shannessy  
Chief Financial Officer of  
Melbourne Water

