



Sensei

CASE STUDY

Beyond Bank
AUSTRALIA

BEYOND BANK: INVESTING IN THE FUTURE WITH ALTUS AND SENSEI

When Beyond Bank Australia set out to find a flexible and consolidated project and portfolio management solution to take better control of companywide initiatives, it couldn't look past Altus from Sensei Project Solutions.

With the implementation of the locally-developed, internationally-delivered solution, Beyond Bank has put powerful tools in the hands of every project manager, enjoys a clear view of every initiative within the organisation, and executives are benefiting from precise and up-to-date reporting across the full projects portfolio.

Beyond Bank is one of the largest 100% customer-owned banks in Australia operating in South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales.

Beyond Bank provides financial services to its members including savings and business accounts, term deposits, loans, insurance, and financial planning, and has total assets under management of more than \$5 billion. It is a certified B Corp, operating with a focus on the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit.

COMPANY NAME

Beyond Bank

INDUSTRY

Financial Services

LOCATION(S)

Australia

HEADQUARTERS

Adelaide, Australia

SIZE

650+

SITUATION

Like many organisations which have grown rapidly in a relatively short space of time, Beyond Bank started the search for a suitable project and portfolio management solution when the number of initiatives running across the organisation became unwieldy.

The bank's PMO&CI Manager Steve McEwin says resource management and executive reporting were rising challenges for project managers. "With limited visibility using manual tools for project management, we'd have situations where people were too busy, but on closer inspection this was somewhat unevenly spread. We wanted to find where the constraints were in the resource pool. Then, preparing reporting was becoming a bit of a nightmare, taking up too much time, with the potential for mistakes which comes with manual data assembly."



Among the objectives the bank sought included the ability to track projects from their inception as an idea, through to prioritisation, resourcing, execution and close. It wanted tracking of high level and one-off work packet 'Business as Usual' activity, forecasting of change activity and work volume for teams (reflecting tasks in projects and one off BAU activity, and to give project leads simple projects plans while keeping them up to date. Streamlined monthly reporting and easy to use dash boards for project sponsors, along with forecasts of enterprise resourcing constraints and budget tracking for complex projects rounded out the desired features.

McEwin explains that in the absence of any formal PPM solution, the bank essentially started from scratch. "That's a good thing. A brownfields environment often comes with challenges like migration, and the necessity for workarounds and integrations. We were in a position where we could do a clean install of a suitable solution."

SOLUTION

With Sensei known to the bank as a competent provider of project management solutions, McEwin knew where to look. "We always knew of Sensei's expertise in building solutions on the Microsoft Power Platform; on exploring the Altus version, we found it made for easier integration, and I'm a big believer that integration trumps even functionality. An approach resting on tools that don't talk to one another just makes for different problems."

Designed to take control of projects of all sizes, Altus is a full-featured solution providing visibility into all work for teams and individuals in the organisation, across multiple tools and systems. Features include collaborative work management, Portfolio, Program and Project Leadership for prioritising organisational objectives, Business Insights and Decision Support, Enterprise Resource Management, Strategic Planning & Benefits Realisation, and more. With projects being run using a range of methodologies

including Prince2, waterfall and Agile, McEwin adds that Altus is a flexible solution which allows project managers to use their preferred solution. "You can't use the same methodology for every project and should instead be in a position to use the one which is fit for purpose," notes McEwin. "If you're fitting out a new branch, waterfall works well. If you're designing software, Agile is usually best, and if you're innovating, a design centred approach might be suitable. Altus provides that flexibility."

Furthermore, he says the bank wanted software which allows flexibility in governance. While that may appear odd for a bank, it is for good reason. "A small project – like fitting out a branch – doesn't need excessive governance because it becomes an obstacle to delivery. At the same time, you want rigorous governance on the bigger initiatives, for example consumer data legislation compliance. The important factor is having the ability to scale governance accordingly – and we get that with Altus."

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"It's really helping with achieving better outcomes. It's made life easier for me and our project managers, and as for our executives, they like their reports on time and accurate.

With Altus, that's what they get."

*Steve McEwin, PMO&CI Manager,
Beyond Bank*

BENEFITS REALISED

With Altus and Sensei, Beyond Bank has put intuitive, powerful tools in the hands of every project manager while giving executives precise and up-to-date information and reporting across the full projects portfolio.



REDUCED COMPLEXITY

Project Managers are realising the value of the solution in doing their jobs easily and efficiently, giving them more time to manage their projects.



IMPROVED VISIBILITY

All programs of work and strategic initiatives are now tracked individually and rolled up to a detailed portfolio view.



RESOURCE PLANNING

The Project Management Office can now confidently plan capacity 3 to 6 months ahead to support effective project planning and preparation.



STREAMLINED REPORTING

The time required from Project Managers to produce accurate monthly reporting has reduced by 90% - from a week of pain to an easy half day.

In combination with a preference for a greenfields implementation, McEwin says the bank also opted for a largely 'out of the box' approach, with minimal customisation as Altus delivered against almost every requirement. This made for a rapid deployment of just six weeks. "Apart from minor adjustments it was very straightforward. And unlike most vendors, Sensei provided a timeline and then stuck to it."

That's not all. Deploying software on time and within budget is just one measure of success. Quite another is user acceptance, and McEwin is impressed with Sensei's contribution to upskilling the bank's some-20 project managers. "The training is some of the best I've seen from a vendor. That's meant the new solution has been very well received by the people who use it."

RESULTS

Having brought project managers along on the change journey to Altus the quick answer to how things have changed is this: "It's made life simple."

McEwin says project managers have rapidly appreciated the value of a solution which helps them do their jobs better. "It has streamlined monthly reporting from a week of pain and suffering to an easy morning. That means project managers spend more time managing projects," he says. "And our people have quickly realised that using the tools daily makes things easy. A bit like cleaning the house; if you stay on top of it, no big deal. If you leave it to the last day of the month, it's going to be harder."

With improved visibility across its programs of work – McEwin says there are around a dozen strategic initiatives at any time – Altus also provides a portfolio view in which all activities can be viewed. This includes 'non-project' activities for broader context of operational realities. The ability to project three to six months into the future allows assessment of organisational capacity, which McEwin notes is essential for project planning and preparation. "You want to understand your resources and your constraints before kicking anything off. And you want to complete one thing before starting another," he comments.

The reporting capabilities within Altus have proven invaluable, as it helps form an improved understanding of risks and lessons learned; "You can look back at decisions made and how they impacted projects over time. This is helping the business make better decisions," McEwin says.

He credits Altus with streamlining reporting, improving project control and contributing to the better resource management the bank sought. "It's really helping with achieving better outcomes. It's made life easier for me and our project managers, and as for our executives, they like their reports on time and accurate. With Altus, that's what they get."

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