



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT ENABLED

PART 8 OF A MULTI-PART SERIES

WRITTEN BY JON PAUSE

After an implementation is complete, you've reached the finish line and there is no need for improvement or expansion, right? WRONG! Does your business stop changing, expanding and developing after your projects are completed? Of course not, so why should your planning software?

If your maintenance strategy does not include a path to improve continuously, you aren't planning for success -- you are planning for replacement. Organizations evolve continuously. Therefore, you need a platform that enables your company to transform with your changing needs.

Easiest Examples of Continuous Change

If the need for continuous improvement is not readily apparent to you, let me take a moment to outline various examples I have seen time and time again while implementing planning solutions.

1. Mergers and Acquisitions: Mergers have an instant effect of increasing data sets and grappling with different planning methodologies. Historically, companies have had two options: Undertake an expensive big bang or deal with it by manually consolidating in excel. Anaplan offers a better solution that can absorb completely new data sets into a process pre-defined in Anaplan. If that new entity requires a modified of the existing process it is easy to do.
2. New system, new data: Rolling out a new CRM, ERP, etc.? Anaplan can make quick use of these insights to add more color to your planning process.
3. New complimentary product, different market: As companies look to expand, they can find themselves looking into complimentary products in slightly different markets. It is possible the revenue planning previously undertaken does not have the same drivers as the new product. Thusly, the ability to adjust the revenue architecture or to create a new model related to the new product is appropriate to drive the most accurate forecast possible.

4. Re-organization: Team realignment, geographical realignment, and supplier chain realignment can have a large impact on how you roll up data and how you look at numbers. Being able to adjust on the fly is extremely important. Anaplan's scalable architecture can re-align in hours, in what would have taken excel jockeys weeks to accomplish.

5. Achieving true connected planning: As a planning culture is expanded, new ideas are generated and new connected planning opportunities will emerge. This is my favorite continuous improvement bucket because it 's tied to breaking the mold on past planning processes. With access to new levels of detail and the ability to connect plans, organizations large and small are finding that connected planning maximizes the ROI on their Anaplan investment.

Continuous Improvement as a Budget Lever

Many companies don't start using Anaplan as an enterprise wide tool. They have a sales, HR, or finance initiative with an approved budget set to fix an isolated planning issue. This is a logical path to using a new tool and a great way to show case successes throughout your organization.

I always like pointing to OPEX planning as an excellent example. Anaplan can typically stand up an OPEX module in a handful of days to get a project started. The accounts or line items within the module typically represent important costs to the company that require tracking or detailed reporting based on historical or ongoing initiatives. We have seen many clients successfully limit the scope of an OPEX roll out on phase 1, only to take various line items into full blown use cases as time and budget permits. Most customers ultimately tack on both headcount planning by employee and CAPEX by asset ID to drive more detailed estimates on the related OPEX items. This microcosm of continuous improvement illustrates the ability to take a higher level line item plan and break it down into models that better represent the ability for growth and thus improve an organizations ability to plan.



SAP's Continuous Continuing

Almost all of the SAP implementations have an initial scope of Financial statements, OPEX, headcount and CAPEX. And we come back time and time again to upgrade at little functional value or look to a new major undertaking to bring additional data into the system. There is no redesigning or tweaking functionality in SAP.

I have seen projects cost millions upon millions of dollars to execute. I have seen disparate systems ignored for complexity or cost. I have seen SME and financial teams limited to updating what they could see in excel. I have watched organizations capitalize a projects expense only to see their competitive advantage dwindle year over year as they sit stagnant.

Anaplan is different. Their training is a better enablement platform. Their Hyperblock technology is more nimble and can be applied across an enterprise with ease. As I have said before, **Anaplan does more, costs less and is easier to maintain.**

So again, if your maintenance strategy does not include a path to improve continuously, you aren't planning for success; you are planning for replacement.

Further Questions? Ready to Begin Your Connected Planning Journey?

TALK TO US

www.allitix.com
all-in@allitix.com

About the Author

Jon has been working on advancing connected planning for over 15 years. Previously a solution architect in the SAP EPM space, Jon brought both industry insights and delivery experience to the Anaplan platform.

He is a connected planning specialist who has demonstrated the ability to adapt software tools to multiple industries, technology platforms, and business needs. Using a combination of technical knowhow, creativity in adapting cutting edge software capabilities, and the understanding that business process is a key ingredient to success Jon consistently delivers "value-add" projects for his clients.

