

Using Alight for Complex Scenario Analysis

The Company

Iroquois Gas Transmission System owns and operates a 411-mile interstate natural gas pipeline extending from the US-Canadian border through New York and Connecticut.



The Voice Connie Johnson, Senior Financial Analyst

The Problem

I have an ongoing job of forecasting revenues, expenses, capital spending and debt structures by capital project across a fifteen year time horizon—fundamental business planning, but also for presentation to bond rating agencies and our corporate partners. My Excel spreadsheet models just weren't working for me anymore because of the complexities involved. I couldn't control the circular references and cell based formulas made it difficult to audit and trace impacts. Most important, I couldn't manage multiple scenarios across the Excel workbooks.

We looked at higher end planning systems—too expensive, too much setup and too long to implement. Alight Planning was the only alternative that could give me the modeling power I needed within a reasonable budget.

Implementation

The Alight implementation consultant was great! With only 25 hours of Alight's help, together we built an extremely sophisticated model of our business with a focus on project revenues, expenses and capital spending. The key was "triggers" for "in" projects and "in" service dates—the probability and timing for specific projects such as new compressors or pipeline extensions could vary substantially across our planning horizon. Using triggers, I can create and maintain alternate scenarios representing different project timing, pricing and fi-

nancing strategies—something I just couldn't handle very well in my Excel spreadsheets.

Alight's modeling tab interfaces and integration of the P&L with balance sheet impacts was critical. In Alight, I can create and audit complex data relationships using real words for the linking rather than Excel-like cell references which was a problem with my old models. As well, I can apply unique formulas to actuals data to get apples-to-apples trend analyses—again something very difficult to manage in Excel.

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The Result

What used to take days in Excel, I can now update in Alight in a fraction of the time. I have much greater visibility into the numbers because of Alight's special analysis features such as Key Measures and Named Filters. The greatest benefit, however, is scenario analysis. Because everything is in one file, I can now quickly move *between* scenarios and make maintenance changes *across* scenarios in a single operation, all very critical for handling presentations to the rating agencies and corporate partners.

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It may sound strange, but I'm actually having more fun in Alight than I did in Excel. It's because everything is at my finger tips and I have more confidence in the numbers.