

## Using Alight for Rapid Model Building

### The Organization

**Open Learning Exchange (OLE)** is a social benefit organization that is developing a global network of grassroots organizations in the most needy countries around the world that focus on achieving Universal Basic Education by 2015.



**Open Learning Exchange**  
Universal Basic Education 2015

**The Voice** Jim Krzywicki, Chief Operating Officer

### The Problem

One of my jobs is to facilitate the business planning for private organizations called OLE Centers in countries such as Ghana, Nepal, Rwanda and Namibia. OLE Centers establish organization and manage resources for education of school children in these countries. My organization, the Open Learning Exchange (OLE), is the umbrella organization.

The challenge for me is to quickly build and manipulate financial models for the many OLE Centers across the globe. Our Ghana plan was a classic case. It included an initiative for training hundreds of teachers where there were many decisions about allocating funds between fixed administrative costs and "feet on the ground". The Ghana funder had requirements for how monies could be spent. My job was to build a financial model that showed the Ghana OLE team and the funder the impact of alternate resource allocations.

With many OLE Centers around the world, each essentially a different financial model, I needed a tool with lots of modeling power that already incorporated structures for financial statements, dimensions and "what if" analysis. And I needed to be able to move fast!

### Implementation

OLE is my second Alight Planning experience. I'd previously implemented Alight at Treeno, a web based soft-

ware company I started. Back then, I went straight from the Alight bootcamp to modeling on my own.

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***"I'm motivated to keep going because I see results right away."***

***"The people who built Alight have put a lot of domain experience into the software. They understand planning."***

The Alight modeling environment is amazing! You start with a mental model of what you want, then things happen. No matter what the complexity, everything is easily connected, especially with the unit/rate/amount architecture that gives me direct visibility into underlying activity drivers.

Unlike spreadsheets, you don't have to remember where everything is or stare at obscure formulas. With Alight's flexible line item detail, it's all in my own language that I create from my mental model of how the pieces should fit together.

### The Result

When I get rolling with a new OLE Center model—e.g. a new program in Namibia—development is fast. I put a driver relationship in place; everything ripples through; nothing breaks. I'm motivated to keep going because I'm seeing results right away.

When the executive team gets together to review projects, it's not a stack of PowerPoints. We review directly in Alight, talking through allocation scenarios in real time and making adjustments on-the-fly.

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