



Stay Agile & Overcome Disruption

| Gain Financial Insight During Uncertainty

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Introduction

As we have learned from the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, global economic disruption can arrive quickly, with little to no advance warning. The resulting uncertainty leaves many companies wondering what the future holds and what their next steps should be. To maintain corporate agility during unexpected external disruptions, it is important to have an easily accessible method for all employees to enter and view financial data – and to have one single source of truth for all financial data in the company.

Enter the cloud-based Corporate Performance Management solution.

In this white paper, we will discuss:

- What is a Corporate Performance Management (CPM) solution?
- How to set up your company's CPM for lasting success and agility
- How cloud-based CPM solutions help businesses
- A sadly pervasive myth about cloud CPM and on-premises ERP interoperability
- What a data warehouse is and why companies are increasingly turning to them to streamline operations
- Specific tips on which reports and forecasts you should run to stay up to date on your rapidly shifting financial data during sudden economic disruption
- A checklist that will help you determine whether your organization is ready to leap into cloud CPM

Of course, when you have specific questions or want personalized advice, all you have to do is reach out to the budgeting and planning experts at Solver. We are always happy to give you a well-reasoned, thorough answer that fits your needs and situation exactly.

We look forward to speaking with you,

The Solver Team

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Company Summary

Solver, Inc. is redefining the category of cloud-based reporting and planning. The Solver solution is built to enable faster and better business decisions across the entire organization.

Solver combines financial and other key data into a single tool, powered by the most flexible report and planning form designer on the market. Organizations use this solution to automate and streamline financial and operational reports, consolidations, and budgeting and forecasting processes.

Solver empowers users with complete insight that drives intelligent decisions and competitive advantages. Headquartered in the United States, Solver, Inc. has more than a dozen offices and hundreds of partners globally that provide local and industry expertise.

To learn more, visit www.solverglobal.com.

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CHAPTER 1

What Is Corporate Performance Management Software?

This chapter introduces the idea of a CPM and clarifies the uses of CPM, which are critical during “business as usual,” as well as during a disruption such as the coronavirus or a recession.

Corporate Performance Management (CPM) software covers the following basic business processes:

- **Consolidation**
Close management and consolidation of an organization’s finances
- **Planning**
Major areas of financial planning, including budgeting and forecasting
- **Analytics and reporting**
Gathering and reporting data from all applicable areas in an organization

CPM software’s ultimate goal is to help organizations strategize and execute informed plans to reach their financial goals. CPM offers advanced applications designed to drive the organization’s goal of increasing profits for itself and its shareholders.

With CPM’s more financially focused approach to managing a business’s performance, organizations can more efficiently track financial progress and perform tasks related to strategic financial planning at all times. Corporate Performance Management enables business leaders to make more informed, data-based decisions to reach their organization’s financial goals and objectives, even during a business disruption.

Uses of CPM Software

CPM software is best used for performance management in the following scenarios:

- **Specialized performance management processes**

With CPM software, you can apply more specialized performance management tactics to your financial planning strategies. CPM software is designed to focus specifically on driving a business’s financial goals and increasing shareholders’ profits.

- **Financial performance data management**

CPM software tracks key performance indicators (KPIs) like an organization's operational costs and other expenditures, revenue, return on investment (ROI), and other applicable data sources. With CPM software, accessing and analyzing an organization's financial performance is easier than ever.

- **In-depth analytics**

CPM software allows business leaders and financial departments to accurately analyze past and current data to make more informed decisions about the direction of their organization. Detailed analytic information is key in financial strategy and planning, and CPM software consolidates financial data into one easily accessible place.

- **Convenient and efficient financial management**

With all of your financial data in a central location, managing your business's financial performance can be done with extreme precision and efficiency with CPM software.

As you can see, the wide range of capabilities in a Corporate Performance Management solution far surpass that of typical included reports in your ERP and can offer much deeper and timelier financial data that will help in times of unexpected economic uncertainty.

CHAPTER 2

How to Set Up a Corporate Performance Management (CPM) Solution for Success at All Times

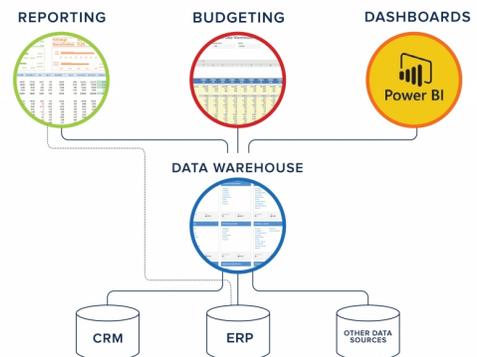
This chapter explains the basics of setting up a CPM for insight success, so you can be sure you have the right information at your fingertips, precisely when you need it. As you will see, building your Corporate Performance Management setup is pretty easy to do.

Let's talk about strategy and goals. There are many reasons for communicating strategy, but very few organizations include strategy as part of the planning process. The managers and employees who handle the budgeting and forecasting process should know the strategy and goals prior to planning. It should also be front and center while entering the data. A goal of the company should be to provide the strategy and goals prior, during, and after entering data.

Corporate

The first step is to define the organization. This includes the organization's purpose, core values, and the company goal. Some of these may not change over time, but you will want to review them annually, as well as often during a disruption, to ensure that they remain true.

Other areas, such as SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), industry trends, and key initiatives will change regularly and can be altered quarterly or as needed during rapidly evolving situations.



Departmental

The departmental strategy and goals are very similar to corporate, but many of the sections are unnecessary. The organization's purpose, core values, trends, threats, and goals are not necessary. These come from the corporate strategy and are pushed down to the departments. However, each department must know its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This information should be documented as it can gradually change during "business as usual," and suddenly change during a disruption.

Entering goals is extremely important, not just at the corporate level but at a departmental level as well. The departmental goals should align with the corporate goals because departmental strategies and goals can help you understand how weaknesses are improved upon, strengths are magnified, opportunities are taken advantage of, and threats are minimized at a corporate level.

Strategic Initiatives

Initiatives are internal projects that help strategies to be successful. Strategies without specific and detailed plans and persons responsible for their success will fail. Organizations should not have more than a few initiatives a year (fewer during a crisis event), as it is crucial that employees across the company understand and can act on them. However, within each initiative, there will be many projects and tasks that need to be completed in order to finish the initiative and hit the goals.

Setting up a culture of completing the initiatives in a timely manner is key. A manager or executive should be responsible to complete each initiative project. It is extremely important that the executives and project managers meet on a regular basis, whether weekly or bi-monthly, for status updates.

Accountability

Along with initiatives, an organization can track the successes and failures of employees. They can also track the significance of each task to the organization. This way, an employee who finishes multiple tasks may seem more valuable than an employee who only completes a few tasks but, by tracking this, it may be viewed that the latter is much more valuable.

Here is an example:

Bob is an employee who completes 10 mundane tasks that each take a couple of hours to complete. They are still crucial, but many employees could have finished these same tasks that Bob did. A different employee, Jane, worked on tasks that required planning and dedication, and which are vital to the growth of the company. These tasks required multiple hours of work.

To track this information, you will want to create several reports or a dashboard to analyze the data. A dashboard that first has a table showing tasks started, completed, and an accountability score will be of great help. To craft that dashboard, start by designing a pie chart on the accountability score and a bottom graph displaying total tasks started versus completed by month.

Detailed information of which tasks and employees are critical to your company can help you better plan your staffing strategies during economic disruptions such as a pandemic or a recession.

CHAPTER 3

The Top Benefits of Using Cloud CPM Software

This chapter clearly explains the benefits of using a cloud CPM. You will learn how cloud CPM brings all the benefits of CPM into a convenient, easy-to-access format accessible by all your financial team members all the time, no matter where they're working from.

Selecting the correct implementation strategy for a particular new application you are considering can be daunting. Many organizations today are adopting a “cloud first” strategy when deploying new applications, but what makes sense for your business – and what makes sense if many of your employees are working outside of a standard office setting?

When thinking about the answer, questions about approach and security will arise. Answering these questions will help set a strategy for your company.

What Is the Cloud?

First, what is the cloud and how do you move your organization to the cloud? In its most generic definition, the cloud translates to an offsite service provided by a specialized expert organization. The product or service must be:

- Geographically agnostic
- Resilient to infrastructure and software failures
- Delivered as a rented service

Defining the key aspects of cloud-based software will establish what implementation strategy best fits your business strategy.

The “cloud,” in general, represents an ever-changing ecosystem of services and service providers. Given its transformative nature, the consensus about cloud software's chief benefit is the convenience it offers. Cloud-based software readily allows businesses to change the way they create, develop, and organize. While use of the cloud will vary between industries, it always significantly affects businesses.

How Does the Cloud Help Your Business?

The answer starts with how a cloud-based software functionally differs from on-premises software. Primarily in service delivery, the end-user's experience does not rely upon data being in one place at one time. Companies will offer cloud services but only have one or two data centers. Without being truly geographically agnostic and

having real-time site failure resiliency, the software in question cannot be considered cloud software. Moreover, this has become a standard in the business world.

Cloud software also enables collaboration across different locations. Using a cloud platform also allows a business to deploy updates in service or a product faster. With seamless communication and updates, cloud inherently supports expansion and growth.

Who Uses Cloud Software?

Perhaps you have heard other business leaders say of the cloud, *“We don’t really need it,”* or *“We’re already set up and trained with on-premise.”*

These are a few common objections about using the cloud. Namely, that the benefits of using cloud-based software sound nice but are not necessary for certain businesses.

Accordingly, the information technology (IT) landscape has experienced a significant trend in migrating from on-premises software to cloud software. One of the results of this trend is a variety of industries. Cloud companies range from transportation such as Uber and Lyft to telecommunications companies like Vonage and Ring Central.

From eCommerce (Amazon) to enterprise software (Salesforce), the kinds of businesses using cloud software shatters expectations.

What Do You Need to Switch to Cloud?

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, any significant change in an application your business is considering is daunting. To help you get started, these are the first items that should be addressed:

- Current service catalog of your organization’s applications
- Road map for the life cycle of each application in your service catalog
- Defined strategy for cloud adoption
- Discussion of the challenges that each application owner experiences, which addresses how they could be addressed by thoughtful system placement

Overall, using cloud-based software offers companies flexibility and ability to scale. Even for companies that do not envision scaling, migrating to “the cloud” still allows them to improve upon current processes. In this way, transferring to cloud computing is an opportunity to reassess and re-organize your business.

Re-organization can easily be accomplished even if employees are working remotely during a disruption. Best of all, new advancements in cloud-based CPM make it possible to seamlessly connect with on-premises ERP.

CHAPTER 4

Good News: You Can Connect Cloud CPM to On-Premises ERP!

New advancements in cloud-based Corporate Performance Management technology frees your company to finally connect a cloud CPM with your on-premises ERP. This chapter explains how you can quickly connect Solver's Hybrid Cloud CPM straight to your on-premises Microsoft Dynamics GP, SL, or NAV solution, or Dynamics 365 Business Central (more on-premises ERP connectors will be coming very soon). This easy-to-use integration saves you the headache of a time-consuming, slow VPN connection.

There are more than 100,000 Microsoft Dynamics customers worldwide and many are not planning to move to the cloud yet. However, if you are one of them, this does not mean that your company can't start taking advantage of modern cloud-based reporting solutions today to drive better and faster decisions for yourself and your management team!

Hasn't Cloud-Based Reporting for On-Premises ERPs Been Available for a Long Time?

Yes, various Corporate Performance Management vendors, such as Solver and others, have offered both cloud-based financial reporting and budgeting for years. However, all of these vendors have typical Corporate Performance Management (CPM) architectures that require data to be loaded from the on-premises ERP and into the cloud CPM tool before the user can run reports.

The process requires a "refresh" of data from the ERP database into the CPM database, which means that the data users see in reports is not real-time. This also means that the drill-down on any number is only as detailed as the lowest level data that was loaded into the cloud CPM database.

Your executives are often OK with this because they want to wait with their report analysis until the accounting team has closed the books. However, the accounting team that is posting transactions in the ERP system almost always prefers live ERP reporting because they want to immediately see the impact of journal entries in their reports. They don't want to refresh data into a CPM reporting database first, and then wait one minute, ten minutes, or significantly longer to run reports after the data has been transferred to the CPM tool.

How Do I Get True Live Reporting for My On-Premises Dynamics ERP Data?

The obvious answer is that you use an on-premises report writer like the default Management Reporter tool, native ERP report writer, Smartlist, or SQL Reporting Services (SSRS). However, while none of these tools are inferior to what is offered by other ERP systems and they have aged “gracefully,” they are just not comparable to many modern cloud reporting tools.

Key weaknesses of on-premises reporting tools include:

- Not particularly user-friendly for accounting staff to design reports
- Lack of easy and professional formatting
- Typically requires VPN or Terminal Server to connect to ERP in order to run reports from outside the office network (slow!)
- Maintaining multiple report writers for different data (e.g. Management Reporter for GL reports, and native ERP report writer and SSRS for sub-ledger reports)

In order to overcome these weaknesses and help Dynamics customers maximize the value of their data with modern, cloud-based reporting tools, Solver has now launched what they refer to as “Hybrid Cloud Reporting.”

This unique integration technology enables you to:

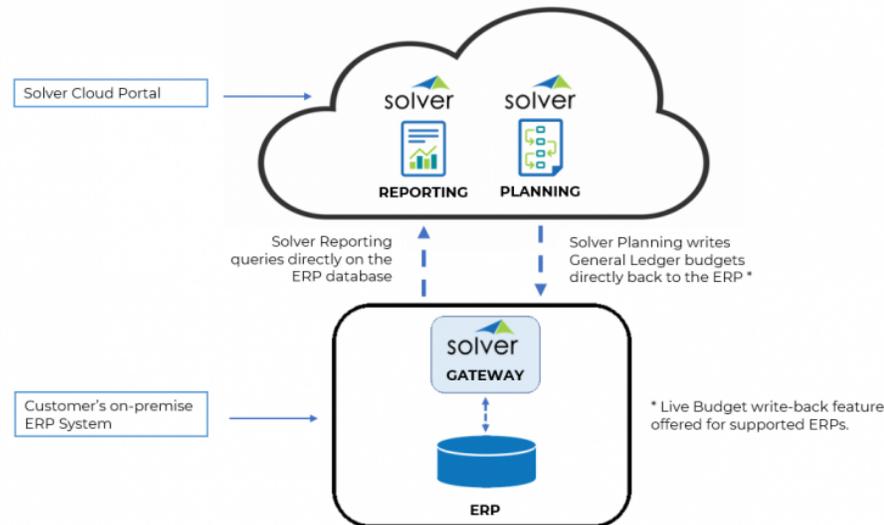
- Use your web-browser to run beautifully formatted reports (looks like Excel formatting)
- Benefit from true real-time reports on your ERP data without any data transfer to a separate reporting database
- Drill-down from any number in the report directly into your underlying ERP transactional data
- Securely access browser-based reports through the internet, with no need for VPN or software like Terminal Server
- Enter budgets from user-friendly forms (looks like Excel) in the cloud and have the transactions stored directly into your budget table in Dynamics
- Rely on the ease of automatic upgrades (it's cloud!)

In other words, now your accountants and reporting end-users get the best of two worlds by only needing a web browser to run live reports on Dynamics and drill-down.

On the next page, we have included a simple architecture diagram to explain how it works:

Solver Hybrid Cloud Connector

Cloud to On-premise ERP Architecture



What About Budgeting and Forecasting?

Like many other cloud-based CPM solutions, Solver also offers budgeting and forecasting. With the new Hybrid Cloud technology and Solver's cloud-based Planning Module, users can store budget data directly back from Solver's budget forms in the cloud, into the General Ledger budget table in Dynamics.

So, if you struggle with manual Excel-based spreadsheets for your budgets, you can save a lot of time by eliminating emailing files between users, linking between spreadsheets, and put better controls in place for the entire budget process with workflow and approvals.

As an example, users can access budget forms with their browser and instantly, until you close the budget process, update their department's budget in Microsoft Dynamics. Since Solver's Hybrid Cloud updates are real-time, reports can immediately be run to see the impact of these changes on the budget.

Enjoy Faster and Better Decisions During and Beyond Economic Disruption

Today's modern Corporate Performance Management solutions are driving the next generation cloud-based reporting and planning technology. However, with the lack of live reporting and live budget write-back to on-premises ERP systems like Microsoft

Dynamics, accountants and very active ERP users have been left with their legacy tools for their real-time reporting needs.

With the release of Solver Hybrid Cloud for Microsoft Dynamics, these users now get the best of both worlds. Remote workers and leaders can achieve true agility during and beyond times of economic uncertainty by leveraging accurate, real-time insight into budgets, forecasts, reports, and data, from anywhere and at any time.

CHAPTER 5

Where Does the CPM Data Come From?

This chapter discusses the ins and outs of data warehouses, explaining how a robust data warehouse, built on a rock-solid cloud platform, keeps all your data in one place for a “single source of truth.” With an effective data warehouse, your team can be assured of full, accurate insight anywhere and anytime – even when all your team members are working from different offices, or from home.

Having a clear view of your company or organization’s performance enables strategic decisions in the best of times... and the worst of times. However, having access to a clear view of your company’s performance to begin with, can be a major obstacle.

As a company’s performance combines different types of data, simply gathering and uploading data into one place can be difficult. High-maintenance processes slow down operations and make it hard to understand whether or not goals are met. Modern Corporate Performance Management (CPM) tools ease many essential budgeting and reporting processes, especially on via cloud-deployment. However, a crucial factor into how the best tools have that functionality is linked to how they collect and organize data.

Overall, how and where you keep your data can make a significant difference in day-to-day operations.

What Is a Data Warehouse and What Does It Do?

A data warehouse enables immediate access to financial and operational reporting capabilities, such as customized budgeting, forecasting, and data entry. A top-tier data warehouse will have both pre-built integrations for Enterprise Resource Management (ERP) systems and custom modules.

Pre-configured modules can include:

- General Ledger
- General Ledger Detail
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Capital
- Payroll
- Projects
- Revenues

Pre-defined fields for the modules eliminate the need for customization, making implementation straightforward. However, when it comes to budgeting and forecasting, customization can be a critical feature. Namely, the ability to add new accounts and dimensions, or edit labels based on organization requirements.

The features of a data warehouse will make importing and exporting data a stress-free process. Both technical features and user-friendly aesthetics enable users to modify data without having to run reports or SQL queries.

Data warehouses with advanced functionality can organize data with even further automation. For example, a data warehouse can calculate foreign currency exchange. For multi-national companies, features like Exchange Rate Administration can save time.

Custom rules come in handy when dealing with currency conversion, data aggregation, entity eliminations, allocations, data movement, and other transformations. Essentially, a data warehouse can provide much more than simple data storage for an organization.

What Are the Benefits of Using a Data Warehouse?

On a technical level, a data warehouse can make a significant difference for an organization. Especially with applications like a data warehouse, ease of use enables the user. First, importing and exporting information to and from dimensions and data modules should be seamless. Another technical element that factors into data warehouse usability is a data viewer. A data viewer can filter, group and display data for each module, without having to run any reports. Finally, customizing modules and dimensions with simple name changes allows users to easily adjust the CPM tool to their specific needs.

Overall, a powerful, configurable data warehouse makes reporting and budgeting with a CPM tool even easier. Ideally, a data warehouse that has both pre-configured and custom modules can save time, money, and more than a few headaches – and can help you keep all your data safe and sound during disruptive times.

CHAPTER 6

How Can a Corporate Performance Management Solution Help During Times of Economic Uncertainty?

Global economic uncertainty results in business leaders across all nations needing urgent answers to urgent questions. This chapter shows you how you can answer queries about staffing strategies, cash flow predictions, expense cuts, A/R issues, and best (and worst) case scenarios, so you can plan your disruption response with greater confidence and faster decision-making.

During unexpected business disruption and periods of global economic uncertainty such as pandemic or recession, everyone's expectations for the future can change day-by-day, if not hour-by-hour.

In extremely disruptive situations, it can be hard to tell what next week will be like for businesses across the world, much less what next month will look like – or six months from now. However, with a good Corporate Performance Management (CPM) solution, your company can gain insight into a range of possible future scenarios, so you can start executing meaningful action items right now.

With the right CPM in your toolbox, you can get fast answers to pressing disruption-related questions, such as:

- How will it impact my business if I let some employees go?
- What can I expect for cash flow, as things stand now?
- Which expenses should I cut – now and later?
- Who are the customers that are slow to pay?
- What is the best case scenario of this disruption on my business... and the worst?

If you are not sure how to find those answers with your CPM, or if you are not sure whether your current system provides this critical information, this chapter will help.

What Are the Two Essential Capabilities of Corporate Performance Management During Times of Economic Uncertainty?

If you already have and use a world-class Corporate Performance Management system such as Solver, you can breathe easy. You already have access to the tools you will need to answer your disruption-related questions.

Those tools are:

1. Forecasting

Due to the ever-changing nature of a global disruption such as the COVID-19 pandemic or a recession, nearly every company across the planet will have to throw out and replace their carefully-planned budgets. Forecasting on the fly can be difficult if you are working from spreadsheets but, with a highly effective CPM solution, you will have the freedom to run new forecasts for every twist and turn as the situation unfolds.

Some of the best forecasts to run include:

- **Payroll modelling / forecasting**

As a business leader, you already understand that it is possible you may have to let a few employees go before you return to "business as usual." This forecast helps you clearly identify the effect of your staff reductions, so you can be more confident that you are making the right choice.

- **Sales modelling / forecasting**

Perhaps you are not looking at staff reductions. Essential industries may experience a steep rise in sales as a result of a global disruption. However, whether your sales are on the rise or your company is facing a temporary slowdown, it is critical that you have accurate, timely insight into what you can expect for sales and revenues as the situation progresses.

- **P&L, Balance Sheet, and Cash Flow forecasting**

It is always a good business practice to keep a close watch on your P&Ls and Balance Sheets to make sure your financials are in order. Economic disruption can lead to abrupt market shifts, which make it more important than ever to closely oversee changes in your operating, investing, and financing cash flows as you update your strategy in response to disruption.

2. Reporting

In an emergency, it can be difficult to sort through the sea of reports available to you from a Corporate Performance Management solution, so here is your quick guide to the essential reports you will need.

- **Multiple forecast versions compared**

Gain insight into your organization's best-case scenarios, worst-case scenarios, and everything in between using this easy-to-understand comparison report that maximizes your forecasting vision.

- **Actual vs. forecast**

Actuals vs. Budgets are handy when your budget fits a predicted scenario, but during economic disruption, your budgets are not likely to match up with your reality. This report replaces your budgets with forecasts, so you can perform a more accurate actual vs. "budget" comparison that is based on the most up-to-date data.

- **Reports focused on vendor and payroll expenses**

Disruptions like pandemic or recession often require you to cut expenses, so knowing which of your expenses are "expendable" can be critical information to your company. This report gives you the numbers you need, so you are prepared to cut back, if and when that is required.

- **Customer aging receivables**

In times of economic uncertainty, every company across the world will likely be anxious about the future and rethinking their expenditures – including your clients. By using reports focused on customer aging receivables, you will get quick and accurate insight into which of your customers or clients are late to pay, so you can check in instantly.

Not Using a CPM Solution Yet? There Is Still Time.

If you are relying on unwieldy spreadsheets or the limited reporting options included with your ERP during a fast-moving disruptive situation like a recession or pandemic, you will probably be frustrated with your lack of insight.

In truth, lack of insight can be a big problem for companies during economic disruptions, considering how quickly the economic landscape can change. To get accurate, up-to-date financial and operational data at your fingertips, including easy-to-read KPI dashboards, planning tools, and a secure data warehouse to house all your data, it is a smart choice to get your Corporate Performance Management solution set up. Due to modern technological advances, this can be accomplished even during a social-distancing situation like the coronavirus pandemic.

Setting up a modern CPM is easier than ever, but you will still need to make sure you choose the right system for your needs. Though you have a wide range of strong CPM solutions available to your company, your ideal solution will depend on your unique business setup, size, industry, integration needs, and objectives.

To make sure your CPM system meets your precise needs, you will want to ensure you choose a CPM that fits these requirements:

- **Cloud-based solution**

If your workforce is working remotely during the disruption, such as during the coronavirus, it will be difficult to deploy or support an on-premises / in-office server solution. A cloud-based CPM will be more convenient to implement and support, and it will also be more convenient to access for consultants working away from the office or in their homes.

- **Rapid deployment**

A CPM that takes months to deploy will not help you solve a disruptive situation that is playing out in real-time, right in front of you. Cloud-based solutions are faster and easier to deploy than on-premises solutions, and CPMs that include pre-built vendor report and forecast templates will get you analyzing your evolving numbers the same day your solution goes live, so you can answer your critical questions instantly.

By ensuring that you have these two critical features and the functions listed above, you will have access to quick information that updates as rapidly as your situation does.

With instant, anywhere/anytime access to critical financial data, your company can not only stay afloat during times of uncertainty and disruption, you can even increase your agility and maintain your competitive edge! This is because you will have the data you need for fast, effective decision-making at all times.

CHAPTER 7

Is It Time for Your Company to Make the Move to Corporate Performance Management? (Checklist)

Is it time for your company to make the move to cloud or Hybrid Cloud CPM? Find out when you complete this checklist.

By pinpointing the current ability of your information workers today to make optimal decisions and measuring these against an ideal state, it is easier to establish where you should be looking for improvement opportunities, so you can document these in your master plan to achieve world-class decision-making across your organization. As you go through the self-assessment for your organization, it should become quite clear (if it wasn't already) that people and processes are just as important as technology when it comes to establishing the right foundation for world-class decision-making.

It is a well-known fact that every organization needs to get to know its strengths and weaknesses to evaluate its capabilities and potential. Usually this is done in conjunction with corporate strategy documents and by using a popular matrix format referred to as a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis.

However, because the focus of this chapter is to help enable world-class decision-making through the use of modern CPM technology, let's take a look at a more specific self-assessment format to help you determine the current status of decision-making capabilities in your organization.

Checklists for Cloud Readiness

You will find two tables below. The first one lists questions for each readiness area to help your thought process and insight when filling out the second table with answers for your own organization.

Readiness Area	Readiness Conversation Starters
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have a vision of how the organization will operate with everyone having full, online access to a centralized CPM solution? Are we able to see and verbalize the benefits of a CPM solution to internal decision-makers and key users?

Executive Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have, or will we be able to get, executive support for the purchase and implementation of a CPM solution? Any major obstacles (such as other top priorities, change in management, or upcoming mergers/acquisitions) to a CPM project?
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have the hardware/platform infrastructure to support a CPM project? Or... are we better off implementing a cloud-based CPM solution?
Availability of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have clean (or clean enough) data sources to feed to the CPM solution? Are our current data sources open/accessible so data can be extracted? Do any critical source systems need to be in place prior to a CPM solution?
Resources/Power Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have capable internal resources to implement and maintain the CPM solution? If not... do we need to hire resources prior to the CPM implementation? Are there any internal politics do deal with (such as "I don't want to learn another system")?
Funding Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have, or can we get, the required funding? Should we purchase or rent (SaaS – software as a service) the CPM solution?
Business Requirements Documented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have a structured business requirements document (BRD) that clearly lists and explains our requirements, both to assure internal agreement as well as to optimize communication with CPM vendors? If not... who will write it (internal resource or consultant)?
CPM Solution Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who will create a short list of CPM solutions to evaluate? Who will be on the internal selection committee? Have we documented how we are going to conduct the evaluation process? When is the best time to conduct the evaluation process?
Partner Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we need outside assistance to conduct the evaluation? Can we save time/money by finding, e.g., a local implementation partner? Who are the most skilled partners/consultants we can work with?

Based on the questions in the previous table, you can see some fictitious answers have been entered in the three columns to the right in the next table to provide an example.

Readiness Area	Urgency (Low/Mid/High)	Preparedness (Low/Mid/High)	Status (Note: The comments below are examples)
Vision	Mid	High	Completed Business Requirement doc with 5 year vision.

Executive Support	Low	Mid	CFO is sponsor.
Infrastructure	Low	High	Not needed. Will implement cloud solution.
Availability of Data	High	Mid	ERP and Payroll vendors have confirmed data export format/API. Data is clean.
Resources/Power Users	Mid	Mid	Hire CPM analyst prior to implementation.
Funding Available	High	Mid	Waiting for board approval.
Business Requirements Documented	Mid	Low	Will be one of the first tasks for the new analyst we will hire.
CPM Solution Selection	Mid	Mid	Have seen 1st round of demos and narrowed down to 2 solutions
Partner Selection	Low	High	Have list of certified partners to select from.

Few companies have both mature financial planning and analysis processes and a strong, unified CPM platform, and this presents a significant improvement opportunity for companies that want to drive their performance by using a modern CPM solution that helps enable employees to make world-class decisions.

Let's talk about a typical situation of a company versus what an ideal state may look like. The vast majority of organizations have added different systems over time, and often without looking at the bigger need of the organization to centralize key data and use fewer, more integrated and easier business intelligence tools. The result is sub-optimized decision-making, frustration, higher cost, more training requirements, and so on.

The "ideal situation" looks like integrated CPM technologies that, when carefully selected based on proper needs analysis and successfully implemented, can result in numerous benefits and ultimately act like a single solution that enables world-class decision-making across the company. And when you juxtapose that with what's common, you have an illustration of typical, core CPM technologies managed in an uncoordinated, non-strategic fashion and with the resulting lack of benefits versus a highly planned, strategic implementation of a CPM platform with major advantages achieved.

As you do your research and consult with your own leadership team about the potential benefits to your organization when it comes to deploying a modern CPM solution for reporting, planning, and analysis during and beyond an economic disruption, the answers you have provided in the two tables above should provide you with a high-level understanding of what CPM solutions offer and how your organization can benefit. CPM helps enable world-class decision-making for all your information workers, no matter where they are located or what decisions they must make.

Conclusion: For True Business Success, Think Beyond Economic Disruption to Your Next Steps

While many companies find that cloud-based Corporate Performance Management software is the right choice to overcome economic uncertainty resulting from external situations like the coronavirus or a recession, the benefits of cloud CPM extend far beyond the task of managing various business disruptions.

In fact, the time-saving, streamlining capabilities of cloud and Hybrid Cloud CPM help you flexibly enhance and improve financial analysis, forecasting, budgeting, and planning during “business as usual,” as well as when business is more... “unusual.”

With a CPM, you will have greater insight into your company’s current, historic, and predicted financial standing, providing you with the accurate information you need to plan each of your next steps with confidence.

Did Disruption Break Your Budget? Fix It with Solver!

In times of economic uncertainty, we would like to help your company and managers navigate the situation, so you feel more confident and in control.

Let's plan to come out of unexpected situations stronger than ever with the rapid implementation of Solver's powerful template-driven solution. Learn more about how you can get up and running quickly with Solver's essential reports and forecasting software.

Fix Your Budget