



STREAMLINED ADVERTISING AND MARCOM EXPENSE TRACKING

CHALLENGE

Advertising budgets at BellSouth were centralized; however, the teams responsible for the development and execution of marketing communications budgets were spread throughout the Atlanta area. Corporate headquarters was responsible for tracking and projecting expenditures, allocating expenses to meet regulatory requirements and paying vendors in a timely manner.

The marketing communications team for each division was charged with managing the process for their line of business. Each group had a different methodology for tracking and reporting budgets to corporate involving many databases and spreadsheets. The process for allocating expenses to meet regulatory requirements was an extremely cumbersome and time consuming process that required a great deal of paperwork. In addition, Marketing headcount was being reduced, so we needed to do more work with less people.

ACTIONS

- Developed plan to create web-based system for tracking Enterprise and Wholesale budgets.
- Met with Corporate Budget to discuss process for tracking budget for Enterprise and Wholesale divisions.
- Suggested that the corporate team investigate a web-based system to standardize the process across the various marketing communications teams and lines of business.
- Facilitated introduction to technology vendors.
- Assisted Corporate Budget group in the development of initial requirements document for web-based system to standardize regulatory expense reporting and facilitate budget reporting.
- Assisted Corporate Budget team in the promotion of the concept of a standard web-based system to peers.
- Led user acceptance testing with Marketing Communication teams across the lines of business.

RESULTS

- The system put the corporate advertising group in a position to calculate ROI of products and services based on the different marketing campaigns and projects of the business units.
- Each business group became more adept in defining their marketing projects and establishing a realistic budget during the lifecycle of a project.
- The corporate marketing group could easily compare budgeted dollars against actual expenditures and better plan for budget accruals.
- Reporting for meeting regulatory requirements was streamlined reducing the number of hours required for marketing team members and agencies to finalize documentation.