

## Case Study: RB Verwaltung

### Highlights

- More flexible processes for forecasting and monitoring personnel costs
- Simple tools for analysing and explaining deviations from plan
- Faster production of personnel cost plans
- The ability to decentralise planning processes and involve 100 managers, to improve efficiency
- Strong integration with SAP systems
- Reasonably priced and easy to implement

## Transforming static processes

**Newsworthy local, national and global events occur every minute of every day, and large teams of people are needed to investigate, write, present and distribute the stories as they unfold. At Mediengruppe RP, 4,000 people work in a variety of roles in the production of daily newspapers, free-ads papers, radio stations and television channels.**

**Controlling the cost of this large and diverse workforce is the responsibility of RB Verwaltung. Part of the Mediengruppe RP group, RB Verwaltung forecasts all personnel costs for this successful media organisation – and has to explain any deviations from plan. Previously, the firm’s work was hampered by the rigidity of its systems. However, following the deployment of 4Plan HR from Software4You, its once static processes are now flexible and efficient.**

### Challenges

Mediengruppe RP is one of the largest media companies in Germany. As well as producing a range of papers, radio channels and TV stations, it publishes the Rheinische Post, the second largest regional daily newspaper in Germany, which is read by over 1.2 million people. RB Verwaltung delivers personnel, financial, auditing and purchasing services for its parent company. It has 38 employees itself, but manages the remuneration and benefits for up to 4,000 people who work in all aspects of the media business from presenting the news on radio to delivering newspapers.

Every year, RB Verwaltung needs to forecast total personnel expenses for the group, including salaries, benefits and social security. Then, throughout the year, it has to closely monitor actual costs against these forecasts. When the firm was first established, it found this task very difficult, due to the inadequacy of its cost controlling systems.

Torsten Langhoff, HR Controlling Consultant at RB Verwaltung, describes the company’s previous systems as “relatively static” and, indeed, “schematic”. Certainly, the company needed greater flexibility in its planning systems to help it forecast the personnel costs relating to such a large and constantly changing workforce.

### Solution

RB Verwaltung uses SAP’s HR module, and the company knew that SAP offered a personnel cost planning tool. It evaluated this solution, but discovered that it didn’t offer the flexibility that the business needed. “It was also quite expensive to deploy,” says Langhoff. Soon after this, Langhoff visited a trade show, where he had the opportunity to view Software4You’s products.

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Torsten Langhoff,  
HR Controlling  
Consultant,  
RB Verwaltung

Software4You offers a personnel cost controlling application called 4Plan HR. This solution allows HR managers to easily forecast and monitor all personnel-related expenses, analyse cost variances and present information in clear reports. “4Plan HR was very flexible and could be implemented quickly,” says Langhoff. “It was also very reasonably priced and could be closely integrated with our SAP systems.”

RB Verwaltung deployed 4Plan HR with support from Software4You and an IT company that is part of the Mediengruppe RP group. The team configured 4Plan HR to import cost data directly from the SAP systems and use this data for analysis and forecasting. “We were up and running with 4Plan HR in less than two months,” says Langhoff. “The solution was easy to implement and integrate with SAP.”

#### **Benefits**

Between July and September, during the planning phase, Langhoff and his team work with 4Plan HR daily. They use it to prepare a very detailed cost plan for all employees across the entire media group. Then, at other times of the year, they use it several times each month to conduct analysis. “For our planning process, 4Plan HR is extremely important,” says Langhoff. “I can now analyse and explain deviations from plan – which is something that I couldn’t do easily before.”

He adds: “Our system is no longer static and schematic. Rather, it is very flexible. Planning processes have been simplified and we can get results much quicker.”

At present, RB Verwaltung handles all of the planning for personnel costs centrally. However, in the future, the firm intends to change this by implementing 4Plan Web from Software4You. This browser-based solution allows relevant managers throughout a business to contribute to the development of plans, while ensuring that the whole process is still centrally controlled.

Use of 4Plan Web will make real-time information about personnel costs accessible to as many as one hundred managers throughout Mediengruppe RP. As a result of this decentralisation, RB Verwaltung expects to further improve the flexibility and efficiency of its planning workflows and complete its plans more quickly, in fewer steps.