



OSEG

Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group

Ottawa-based sports and entertainment company improves its financial forecasting, reporting and scenario planning with the help of CRGroup and the implementation of **Board**.

CRGROUP CLIENT:

Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG)

INDUSTRY:

Sports & Entertainment

IN THIS CASE STUDY:

- Financial Forecasting & Reporting
- Operational Analysis
- Scenario Planning
- Board

Improved Financial Forecasting, Reporting, & Scenario Planning for the Ottawa Sports & Entertainment Group

Overview:

The Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group (OSEG) embarked on a journey to replace its **manual Excel-based budgeting and reporting** process with a sophisticated and flexible financial and operational analysis and reporting solution. With the help of Corporate Renaissance Group (CRGroup), a Premier Board® Partner, OSEG implemented the [Board decision-making platform](#) and has since realized **significant time savings, better quality, and timeliness of reporting, and improved scenario planning for decision-making**. Board now supports OSEG’s complex budget allocations and operational budget forecasts and has allowed OSEG to **cut the time needed for budgeting and reporting by 50%**.

Ottawa’s Destination for Sports, Entertainment, Shopping & Dining

OSEG was founded in 2008 to re-establish Canadian Football League (CFL) football in Canada’s Capital Region. OSEG partnered with the City of Ottawa to develop the plan and oversee the transformation of Lansdowne into a destination of choice for live events, cultural activities, shopping, dining, and recreational activities.

Lansdowne has transformed into Ottawa’s premier venue for concerts and major sporting events with over **100 games and events each year**. Today’s Lansdowne is a live-work-play district featuring the TD Place stadium and arena complex, which hosts two sports teams: The REDBLACKS (Canadian Football League) and 67’s (Ontario Hockey League). The complex seats 24,000 for stadium sports and concerts, and up to 9,000 guests for arena sports and entertainment. Lansdowne also hosts two condominium towers and townhomes with a combined 280 units, a 360,000 sq. ft. shopping/entertainment district, an office tower, 1,300 underground parking spaces, and an 18-acre urban park. OSEG is comprised of 10 companies and 34 departments to manage this complex enterprise.



The Challenge: Manual & Time-Consuming Budgeting & Reporting

After launching in 2008, OSEG implemented key business systems to help with ticket sales and resources planning. Microsoft Dynamics™ was used to manage accounting functions, and a third-party solution was put in place to manage and track ticket sales. To track financial trends and provide leadership reporting, the finance team had to manually export and compile data from those systems into Excel. The process was time-consuming and posed several challenges for OSEG, including:

CHALLENGES:

- Outdated data being used in budgets and reports
- Different versions of the same reports being shared
- Difficulty verifying the data being extracted from other systems
- A lot of time spent cleaning and consolidating data and spreadsheets from multiple sources and departments
- Lack of scenario analysis and forecasting capabilities
- No dashboards or visuals for quick analysis
- Difficulty incorporating ticket sales data into operational reports
- Inability to generate multi-year budgets needed for planning

SOLUTIONS:

- Board
- Microsoft Dynamics

In 2017, **David Porter** joined OSEG as Senior Vice President of Finance & Technology to manage finance, information technology, and box office operations for all the legal entities within OSEG's corporate structure. Having more than twenty years of experience as a CFO and a background in financial technology, David set out to simplify and improve financial planning at OSEG.

"It used to take our finance team days to prepare monthly and quarterly financial reports for executives. Our budgeting process took even longer, and we didn't have an easy way to do effective scenario planning," said David.

The Solution:

Versatile & Robust Financial Analysis & Reporting

Having worked with CRGroup and the Board platform at a previous organization, David knew how Board could be used as a transformational solution for OSEG and deliver financial reporting, integration with Dynamics ERP, allocations, audit trails, versatility, budgeting templates, administrative control, security, and workflows.

"I knew that Board could deliver a flexible and powerful solution that would handle complex budgeting templates, calculations, and allocations, as well as game and event budgeting. I was also aware that Board could integrate data from our existing systems and would offer a lot of features and potential to expand its use into other areas of the organization," said David.

OSEG made the decision to implement Board and contracted Corporate Renaissance Group (CRGroup) to help lead the project. Being a Board and Microsoft Partner and having more than 31 years in the technology and Dynamics space, CRGroup helped to plan, implement and shape how Board was used at OSEG.

"CRGroup was very professional, responsive, and hands-on at every stage of our Board implementation and demonstrated a high level of expertise not only with Board but also with corporate performance management processes and principals. They offered best-practice suggestions and guidance and were incredibly flexible – which is rare for a solution provider," said David.

OSEG and CRGroup knew that a successful launch of Board would require thorough planning. "Multiple discovery sessions were held with OSEG to make sure that the scope and deliverables of the project were well defined, understood, and documented by both parties," said Quang Dinh, Lead Solution Designer at CRGroup. "It was important to us that David and his team were active in every step so that together, we could design their perfect system that could scale and create value."

Working together, OSEG and CRGroup were able to launch Board in **less than 180 days**. "We were able to implement the first iteration within 2 months from start to finish to meet our budget cycle," said David.

The Benefits: Automated & Timely Budgeting & Planning

One of the biggest advantages to OSEG is Board's ability to create a centralized and automated process for timely budgeting and planning and to deliver granular real-time dashboards for instant insights.

Using Board, OSEG has been able to:

- Provide one integrated solution for financial, operational, sales, and resource reporting for better decision-making
- Enhance budget agility, financial analysis, and scenario planning
- Reduce the time spent cleaning & consolidating data and preparing reports **by half**
- Improve staff utilization by reducing the people-hours needed in the reporting process
- Improve the timeliness and accuracy of budgets and reports for better decision-making

One Integrated System

Integrating all its ticket sales, ERP, and financial data into one system has enabled OSEG to save weeks of time, centralize financial reporting, and establish data confidence so that leaders can trust the data being displayed and use it to make better, faster decisions regarding the business.

"Board allows us to take all ticket sales, financials, and resource data into one place so it's ready at our fingertips in real-time for analysis. Our users can easily drill-down and drill-through to the transactional level and even review digital copies of supplier invoices right within Board. Board offers a level of granular analysis that we need to for proper planning across the enterprise. We can even budget food and beverage and consider the impact of occupancy at games and events."

Board provides the flexibility and adaptability required to meet OSEG's specific needs, enabling the organization to keep all critical data tied together in one system and produce in-depth reports with detailed variance analysis.

Enhanced Budget Agility, Analysis & Scenario Planning

Using Board, OSEG can now update and reference budgets and forecasts very quickly, produce scenario and variance analysis and analyze data from multiple sources with ease. This was particularly helpful in 2020 when the global pandemic and related public lockdowns created massive uncertainty for businesses like OSEG.

"Board has definitely helped to improve the accuracy of our budgets and provide decision-makers with various scenario analyses. When COVID-19 hit, we were able to issue our revised forecasts in a very short period, helping executives to weather through very difficult times. We had more time to review, analyze, and make sound financial decisions. Board gave us that agility and insight," said David.

Thanks to CRGroup's team and Board's flexibility, OSEG now has one active budget, one active forecast, and two other detailed future year budget versions in place at the same time, with data seamlessly flowing amongst the four.

Timely Reporting and Drill-Down

The finance team at OSEG now enjoys fast, timely reporting and the organizational decision-makers are experiencing the benefits of real-time reporting and drill-down into core financial insights.

"Our users are very happy with the ability to access various reports and dashboards anytime and from anywhere," noted David. "Our executive team particularly enjoys the dashboards that are available at their fingertips where they can drill-down and drill-through to the transactional level and can even review digital copies of supplier invoices right within Board. **Everything is right there in Board all the time!**"

The ability of Board to offer such granular visibility has been a huge advantage for the organization.

Reduce Budgeting Time & Improve Staff Utilization

Since implementing Board, OSEG has cut their time spent on budgeting and reporting **by half**, saving weeks of time. In addition, because users enter budget data directly into Board, all financial reports are available immediately, eliminating the need for data consolidation and cleaning, and giving decision-makers uninterrupted real-time access to financial information.

“We used to have multiple Excel budget workbooks being distributed, edited, and compiled. It was a lengthy and difficult process especially when there were different versions of the workbooks. Now, users enter budget data directly in Board and financial reports are immediately available.”

“Board has helped us save an incredible amount of time that used to be spent on gathering and compiling data. Our finance team can now spend that time on the quality of our budgets and forecast and analyzing the data to produce business results,” said David.



The Future of OSEG with the Board Decision-Making Platform

OSEG is in the process of integrating even more data from other business systems into Board, making Board its one-stop-shop for all company and user reporting needs, including drill-down into ticket sales at a more granular level. OSEG is also in the process of leveraging Board’s powerful workflow automation capabilities for enabling monthly financial reviews across decision-makers. Going forward, all department directors will be able to confirm and comment on monthly budgets, with automated reminders and notices making it easy to get approvals in on time. Having fast access to monthly financial data alongside collaborative comments will be a big win for the OSEG finance team and will help decision-makers keep a close eye on their respective departments.

OSEG plans to continue to expand the use of Board for balance sheet and cash flow analysis and will work with CRGroup to extend the use of Board to other areas of the organization.

“Board is an incredibly flexible platform and we have been able to work with CRGroup to implement modules and functions gradually as we need. This flexibility allows us to save costs and roll out enterprise-wide corporate performance management on our schedule.”
David Porter – Senior Vice President of Finance & Technology

Get started with Board – the all-in-one decision-making platform for transformative budgeting, planning & analytics.

Contact us to learn more. crg@crgroup.com

The logo for 'board' features the word 'board' in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter 'b' is a dark blue color, while the letters 'o', 'a', 'r', and 'd' are a lighter blue. A small, multi-colored square icon is positioned above the letter 'o'.