

# Changepoint helps high-flying software house keep to timetable

## CUSTOMER



Datalex  
[www.datalex.com](http://www.datalex.com)

## INDUSTRY

Travel distribution software

## BUSINESS PROBLEM

Needed improved management information to enable co-ordination of a large and complex project portfolio

## SOLUTIONS

Compuware  
**Changepoint**<sup>®</sup>

[Compuware Changepoint](#)

## RESULTS

- Management sees portfolio-wide progress, issues and risks at a glance
- Proactive management of projects ensures that commitments to customers, and internal deadlines, are met
- Transparency of costs has increased, improving accountability

## BUSINESS PROBLEM

Datalex is a leading provider of travel distribution software and solutions that enable global travel industry suppliers and distributors to deliver increased content and choice to their customers across multiple sales channels, while enabling record reductions in distribution costs. Datalex, which has been serving the travel industry for over 20 years, has a worldwide customer base including major airlines, travel distributors and hotel groups.

Like any major software house, Datalex has sophisticated management information needs. Senior managers must be able to look across the entire portfolio of projects, see quickly how each is progressing, and identify any issues and risks. The company must be able to see how much money it is spending and on what, foresee any future resource shortfalls, and track work as it progresses through the organisation, making sure that relevant Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are met.

Datalex is looking to achieve proactive status management: in other words, managers need to be able to spot where a project is falling behind and requires intervention to bring it back on schedule. That means being able to see the amount of work outstanding on each project, as Karen O'Mahony, the company's Business Process Manager, explains. "It's not enough to say that 3,000 hours' work has been logged against a 6,000-hour project: you need to be able to see whether the remainder of the work can be completed in 3,000 hours or not."

That requirement in turn implies task-level integration, in which actual time spent on a task is clearly mapped to the estimate for that task. This approach makes it possible not only to keep current projects on track but also to improve the accuracy of future estimates.

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— Karen O'Mahony, Business Process Manager

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## SOLUTION

In 2006 the company evaluated Changepoint and other leading products, and decided to go forward with Changepoint. Although the Compuware solution had already been in place for several years, Karen O'Mahony, who had recently joined the company, felt that



its full potential had yet to be exploited. “We were getting benefits from Changepoint – for example we were capturing a lot of data about faults logged and hours worked – but it was clear that we could do much more in terms of using the system to generate management information,” she recalls.

What made Datalex decide to stay with the Compuware product? “Changepoint has a number of great features. For example, we didn’t find many other products offering MSP [Microsoft Project] integration, which was important to our plans for proactive status management.

**RESULTS**

Datalex is now well on the way to realising its portfolio reporting plans. For example, it has recently developed a project status report that will tell senior management about portfolio-wide progress, issues and risks at a glance. Datalex believes that this more detailed task information will improve predictability and help with proactive management. When its work in the portfolio reporting area is complete, Datalex will have achieved a level of transparency that every IT operation would love but that very few have yet achieved.

“Changepoint is providing us with a single source of cost information,” adds Karen O’Mahony. “We know how much we’re spending on each project because the system contains all our rates. That is a powerful feature and it works well.”

Other current areas of benefit include transparency in invoicing. “The *pro forma* invoicing gives us total accountability, right from services through to accounts. Before we implemented this aspect of Changepoint, there was no consistent or minable source of information available for write offs and write ups. Now other managers can see exactly where the invoice figures have come from.”

In the near future, the company intends to use the product’s workflow capabilities to track tasks and help ensure that work for specific customers is completed in accordance with SLAs. It also has plans to exploit more Changepoint features, including resource management and management of inter-project dependencies.

Since 2006, Compuware partner Blue Ball Europe has carried out all Datalex’s Changepoint-related implementation, customisation and enhancement work. “Blue Ball staff have consistently provided a fantastic service, plus in-depth knowledge of the Changepoint application,” says Karen O’Mahony. “It’s with their support and guidance that we have been continuously increasing our use of Changepoint and gaining more benefit from it.”

Karen O’Mahony also has nothing but praise for the support Datalex has received from Compuware. Software houses expect others to measure up to their own high standards in this area, and so it really means something when she says, “Compuware’s support team is fabulous, one of the best I’ve come across. Because we’re using the product in a sophisticated way we work closely with the team, and they are very responsive and knowledgeable.”

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**Compuware Corporation** Corporate Headquarters  
 One Campus Martius  
 Detroit, MI 48226-5099

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