

## Enterprise strength Information Architecture delivers significant competitive advantage

*How Sydney Water aligned business priorities and IT to drive real efficiencies*

### Problem

**Disparate data sources and manual processes meant inefficiencies and a lack of quality**

Sydney Water had no central business system and getting accurate, quality information for analysis was inefficient, unwieldy and error-prone. Management was reliant on disparate data sources in a range of formats, which meant often taking manual feeds from source systems, and manipulating and merging these with other information to provide a consolidated set of figures. Additionally, quality assurance was cumbersome and manually intensive, making the task of maintaining data integrity an extremely difficult task. Mistakes were not only common and accountability was almost impossible to manage.

### Approach

**A business intelligence strategy driven by an information architecture**

Based on analysis and interviews, Oakton identified key processes for redesign and established performance benchmarks and improvement targets linked to the company's existing Business Intelligence Strategy as the cornerstone of an enterprise strength Information Architecture program.

### Recommendations

**A phased approach using a rightshoring development model**

Oakton recommended the technically oriented program and supporting infrastructure including, Information Inventory Establishment, BI Infrastructure Establishment and Bulk Data Integration Establishment be developed and built using Oakton's rightshoring model. To help achieve acceptance a phased, project-based approach for Sydney Water's three business communities was also implemented including:

- the development of communications strategies for training and transition
- the early involvement of key business users to ensure the right people were engaged in the design, acceptance and testing
- flexible training to suit each business user community, reducing risk while increasing success and acceptance rates
- the use of real data in all training delivered immediate gains as it was factually pertinent.

### Results

**An enterprise strength architecture to meet future information management needs**

The \$15 million program, that today impacts ten divisions and hundreds of users, delivered immediate cost savings and increased flexibility gains for the client. Data was consolidated to allow an integrated and organisation-wide view of the business. Data management and data flow was restructured to optimise the benefits of automation to increase dynamic and timely analysis, and the skills of teams and business units were upgraded to manage continuous improvement. Today, Sydney Water is highly competitive in the water utility marketplace.

*Sydney Water is Australia's largest water utility and supplies water, wastewater, recycled water and some stormwater services in Sydney, the Illawarra and Blue Mountains.*

*We're an Australian consulting and technology firm founded in 1988. Our business is helping create lasting value by uniquely blending business insights and technology solutions to give our clients a significant advantage in today's rapidly changing world.*

*At Oakton, we think differently: instead of jumping in we step back and invest time and effort to improve our understanding of the problem you're trying to solve. We focus on examining the problem from different perspectives to master what we believe is the most important step, clearly defining the problem in the first place!*

*For a more in-depth look at our research and expertise with some of Australia's most successful companies, visit [www.oakton.com.au](http://www.oakton.com.au)*