

# British Columbia Lottery Corporation



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— David Klotz, Manager, Enterprise Information Management, British Columbia Lottery Corporation

The British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC) has been entertaining British Columbians for 30 years with varied games of lottery, casino, and bingo. Since its inception, the BCLC has generated almost \$20 billion in government income.

The BCLC currently has 575 full-time employees and supports an additional 15,000 jobs in the gaming industry. The corporation is divided into three business units—lottery, casino, and bingo—and hosts 17 casinos and 27 commercial bingo halls.

The BCLC’s vision is to be a player-focused, publicly respected, performance-driven corporation. To help support these objectives, the BCLC decided to deploy a business intelligence (BI) solution to help employees make better informed decisions.

The BCLC also wanted to use BI to help manage its expansion objectives. In 2003, the gaming industry was entering the digital age, with online gaming and casinos popping up across Canada. Quickly adapting to this changing market, the BCLC was moving from a traditional lottery corporation into an overall gaming organization, offering casino locations and commercial bingo halls. Through the selection of the Cognos BI solution and services from Cognos Consulting, Training, and Support, the BCLC has been able to consolidate disparate data from its three divisions and easily derive value from this information, enhancing its overall corporate performance management.

## Challenges faced

“We faced many of the textbook challenges with our information,” explains David Klotz, Manager, Enterprise Information Management at the BCLC. “We had data all over the place, a mixture of solutions and tools, and a significant lack of consistency in our overall approach.”

### Industry:

- Gaming/Entertainment

### Geography:

- North America/Canada

### Information Needs:

- Easy-to-use solution
- User-friendliness
- Seamless integration across multiple data sources
- Ability to grow with business
- Consulting services and expertise

### Platforms:

- Multi-server Windows Server 2003 Environment.
- SQL Server 2000
- Oracle
- SAP ERP

### Users:

- 550 to 600

### Solutions:

- Cognos 8 BI
- Cognos PowerPlay
- Cognos DecisionStream
- Cognos Performance Applications
- Cognos Consulting, Training, and Support
- Cognos Solutions Implementation Methodology

### Benefits:

- Better decision-making due to increased access to information
- Standardized reporting
- Increased efficiency and integrity of data through the financial portal
- Speed of delivery
- Delivery of reports and key metrics through executive dashboards
- Tight integration with SAP
- Strong relationship with Cognos



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Equally important, the Enterprise Information Management team was stretched thin,” comments Klotz. “Employees needed access to information and consistent answers. My team was dealing with an enormous number of requests on a daily basis.”

### **Strategy followed**

Committed to restructuring the company internally to align with its external growth, the BCLC issued a formal request for proposals (RFP) for a BI solution. A proof-of-concept model was used to assess the competency of each vendor. The BCLC gave each prospective vendor one month to build a prototype and Cognos shone through as the best solution. The BCLC was impressed by the overall ease of use and efficiency of the solution.

“We chose Cognos because there was a synergistic and cultural fit between the two companies,” states Klotz. “We knew that the Cognos Solutions Implementation Methodology (SIM) combined with Cognos BI technology would help deliver a solution...fast. We also loved the approach of being able to propel information out quickly to the rest of the company.”

Since going live with Cognos in 2003, the BCLC has deployed the solution throughout the entire organization. It has also standardized on Cognos products for all its reporting and BI needs.

During the four years since its initial implementation, the BCLC has often turned to Cognos Consulting to help with a wide range of services. Not only did Cognos partner with BCLC on the implementation of their first roll-out, but it has been enlisted to provide services for best practices, migration and upgrades, project management, staff augmentation, and knowledge transfer. “We can always count on Cognos Consulting to get the job done,” stresses Klotz.

The BCLC also relied on Cognos Consulting to help with its migration to Cognos 8 BI. In addition to providing a migration roadmap, part of the SIM, the Cognos consultants helped Klotz define the scope of project and tackle its critical components. Specifically, the consultants developed an interoperability approach between Cognos PowerPlay and Cognos 8 BI that allowed both products to run at the same time.

“The Cognos consultants were fantastic,” praises Klotz. “They provided us with a smarter and quicker approach to managing our migration and in the end, injected more value into our reports.”

Integral to the overall success of the BCLC’s deployment has been Cognos Training. “From day one, training was identified as critical to accelerate overall user adoption and has been supported by executives,” emphasizes Klotz.

Cognos Training has helped the BCLC deliver multiple-level training sessions to all its users, either on site or at the Cognos office in Vancouver, supplementing them with computer-based training. The training was customized to accommodate the skills of general users who needed to become familiar with the solution, and the knowledge workers, who became the power users in the organization.

Most recently, Cognos partnered with the BCLC to train its users on Cognos 8 BI, offering classes such as the Cognos 8 BI Fast Track Course. “Cognos training has been well-received,” states Klotz. “We always do a post-mortem with the users after their sessions and the feedback has been amazing. Employees come back from the Cognos training absolutely thrilled with their experiences.”

The BCLC also had the opportunity to work with Cognos Support. “Cognos was able to respond, and more importantly, resolve our problems,” says Klotz.

As the BCLC looks ahead, it plans to tap Cognos Consulting, Training, and Support to add even more business value. Building on its Cognos 8 BI solution, the organization wants to expand the company’s information scope, provide more services to its players, and use the Cognos scorecard capabilities to track key performance indicators (KPIs).

### **Benefits realized**

“We’ve partnered with a leader in the industry and it has really paid off for us,” acknowledges Klotz. “Bottom line—Cognos 8 BI and the services from Cognos Consulting, Training, and Support have enabled us to provide strong business value and decision support, and ensure that we have an integrated, trusted, and reliable environment.”

Using its Cognos BI solution, the BCLC has been able to consolidate the information from its three divisions and provide a single version of the truth. As a result, employees now have direct access to consistent and accurate information, which has led to increased insight into the organization. Furthermore, the new executive dashboards, developed using Cognos 8 BI, have enabled management to gauge easily how the business is doing, and enable a proactive approach to measuring and monitoring key business drivers. “We are at the point now where anyone in the entire corporation can get access to the information they need easily and quickly,” emphasizes Klotz.

IT has experienced strong benefits through the improved reporting. The self-service capabilities in Cognos have alleviated much of the reporting burden on the team. Another benefit has been the speed-of-delivery. “In the last four years, we’ve probably done around 30 to 40 various releases for different business units,” explains Klotz. “We are constantly expanding the functionality and matching it to the company’s evolving BI needs.”

The BCLC also experienced resounding success from the portal it created for its financial data using Cognos 8 BI. “The portal was a huge win for us,” emphasizes Klotz. A one-stop repository with menus available from its SAP general ledger, the finance portal replaced PDF reports scattered on the intranet and enabled employees to connect directly through a link to the financial page. The portal has increased data integrity and efficiency, as documents are no longer being sent by email.

The triumphs achieved with the reporting and the new financial portal allowed the BCLC to cultivate a strong partnership with Cognos Consulting, Training, and Support. “It’s a big part of our success,” confirms Klotz. “The Cognos team cares about our company as much as my employees and that is very cool. They are committed to delivering a high quality product.”

Summing up his Cognos experience, Klotz offers some advice to companies looking for a BI solution, “When partnering with a BI company, remember to search beyond the technology, and consider consulting and training as a critical component to any success in this type of environment.”

### About Cognos

Cognos, the world leader in business intelligence and performance management solutions, provides world-class enterprise planning and BI software and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance.

Cognos brings together technology, analytical applications, best practices, and a broad network of partners to give customers a complete performance system. The Cognos performance system is an open and adaptive solution that leverages an organization’s ERP, packaged applications, and database investments. It gives customers the ability to answer the questions — How are we doing? Why are we on or off track? What should we do about it? — and enables them to understand and monitor current performance while planning future business strategies.

Cognos serves more than 23,000 customers in more than 135 countries, and its top 100 enterprise customers consistently outperform market indexes. Cognos performance management solutions and services are also available from more than 3,000 worldwide partners and resellers. For more information, visit the Cognos Web site at <http://www.cognos.com>.

