

ATG

Multi-faceted Swedish horse racing giant bets to win, with agile Unit4 cloud solution

The Unit4 Business World (formerly Agresso) ERP's security, completeness and data restoration are key supports to racing firm's 58 entities

Overview

ATG, a large, multiple-entity business that operates 100% of Sweden's horse racing betting market, is a \$1.84 billion company associated on the front line of its operations with speed, power and excitement. Yet for the corporate executives responsible for the company's long-term growth, financial stability and technical infrastructure, words like "secure," "reliable" and "change-ready" are more commonly heard in the back office. Particularly, when the conversation is supporting ATG's financial operations, regulatory compliance requirements and evolving business requirements.



With 58 separate legal entities spanning the full spectrum of physical racetrack properties, restaurants, media, IT services and more, ATG places big demands on its enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution. In a business where client fortunes can be won by a nose and transactional volumes can be measured in the millions each day, there is no room for error and a premium is placed on trust. ATG executives say they favor a "sure thing" from trusted partners, as they strive to be one of Europe's leading betting organizations and entertainment firms.

The need

ATG has 35 horse racing associations with different tracks, six restaurants, building management companies and an overarching infrastructure

management organization. Founded in 1974, the company was established by Sweden's government with the aim of creating a premium level equine sport experience on multiple fronts: providing first-class entertainment, promoting equine sports health and contributing significant economic profits. ATG has 250 employees and prides itself on its reputation for corporate innovation, client accessibility and an attractive workforce experience. In fact, in 2004, ATG was awarded "The Healthiest Company of the Year" by the Swedish National Federation for Workplace Health and Sports, which evaluates all companies in the private and public sector.

In 2012, ATG was faced with dual technology challenges: an aging, on premise ERP software solution that had been first implemented in 1998 and was no longer meeting its growth/ business change requirements. It was also being "sunset" – a term used in the software industry when future releases are no longer built, nor supported.



Photo: Thomas Blomqvist, Kanal 75



Photo: Tommy Holl / ATG

Faced with an imminent IT requirement approaching criticality, ATG's management group went to work on scoping a massive list of 200 requirements and ranked three overarching priorities. The new ERP solution needed to:

- Meet all/most of the then current 200 wish list items, while supporting evolving, changing business needs, all-inclusive from one vendor;
- Manage the unique requirements attached to ATG's value added tax (VAT) reporting;
- Move the technology to a cloud-based, software-as-a-service (SaaS) deployment model, to redirect internal technology resources to activities more focused on process improvements and business development.

The solution

ATG executives said that during the vendor review cycle they kept an "open mind" reviewing ERP software vendors from throughout the world, even though they were replacing a more local Scandinavian-based solution. Ultimately, the prospective vendor list was narrowed to four contenders: Unit4, Microsoft Dynamics AX, Deltek

and Jeeves. Unit4 won the \$11+ million dollar deal in September 2012, and started bringing its 58 entities online eight months later, in May 2013.

Unit4 has completed the onboarding of all ATG sites with a full spectrum of Unit4 Business World modules that includes: General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Asset Management, Workflow, Time & Project, Planner, Reporting & Analysis Suite and Logistics.

“Business World has taken a big burden from our support team, both with its change-supporting architectural features, as well as its management of the product through its cloud deployment option. We viewed a wide range of cloud-supporting ERP solutions, and we believe Business World is clearly the best for complex businesses like ours on multiple fronts: business change support, comprehensive feature/functionality, security of data, and the ability to rapidly perform data restoration as required.”

*Mats Barfvestam,
Project Team Leader*

The benefits

Today, ATG's Chief Financial Officer Karin Olofsson, IT System Controller Lars Norrstrand and Project Team Leader Mats Barfvestam say that after 10 months of deploying Business World, the company now has the right infrastructure for advancing its ambitious operational and business objectives.

"The comprehensive interoperability and process-driven controls have completely changed the way we operate for the better," Olofsson says. "We have improved our internal controls to more effectively protect our profitability, meet our financial/VAT reporting and we also have the ability to more quickly and effectively evaluate new ideas and opportunities. Previously, this type of analysis and reporting might have taken us weeks or longer to evaluate."

From an IT perspective, supporting ambitious objectives, complying with regulatory changes or making any type of business or system modification was time-consuming, expensive and an ongoing resources drain. "Business World has taken a big burden from our support team, both with its change-supporting architectural features, as well as its management of the product through its cloud deployment option," Barfvestam says. "We viewed a wide range of cloud-supporting ERP solutions, and we

"The comprehensive interoperability and process-driven controls have completely changed the way we operate for the better," Olofsson says. "We have improved our internal controls to more effectively protect our profitability, meet our financial/VAT reporting and we also have the ability to more quickly and effectively evaluate new ideas and opportunities. Previously, this type of analysis and reporting might have taken us weeks or longer to evaluate."

Karin Olofsson,
Chief Financial Officer

believe Business World is clearly the best for complex businesses like ours on multiple fronts: business change support, comprehensive feature/ functionality, security of data, and the ability to rapidly perform data restoration as required."

ATG's IT staff also mentioned that Unit4's long-term business reputation and large footprint as a cloud solution provider mattered in the decision-making, and is a factor going forward. "First, we recognize that there is a huge responsibility and trust in releasing the management of your IT operations from on-site controls to an off-site deployment model," Norrstrand said.



Photo: Kanal 75

“Reputation is at the forefront, and we felt strongly that we had to have a well-established company like Unit4 that could produce many years of successful cloud references.”

With hundreds of cloud customers deployed for more than two decades in a wide range of cloud models: multi-tenant, private-cloud and hybrid cloud, Unit4’s advanced cloud capabilities have also been evaluated by the global technology analyst community for having five key advantages over competitive ERP cloud solutions:

- Better security
- Better portability
- Elasticity to modify release adoption on a customer-by-customer basis
- Feature/function completeness (of a cloud-centric ERP solution; no waiting for new cloud modules)
- Forgiveness (in the event of accidental data deletions; no delays as typical of other cloud vendors).

Of the above five technical advantages, ATG says data security, completeness and forgiveness top their priority list. On the business operational advantages, ATG’s CFO underscores that complex VAT reporting is a requirement that needs the very sophisticated financial support offered by Business World that was difficult to find competitively.

“Some of our business entities are taxable, some have operations that are partly taxable and some of the income, like betting, is not taxed at all,” Olofsson explains. “Therefore, when you are purchasing services like advertising, for example, across the corporation, you have partial splits tied to different entity requirements. It’s a complexity that Business World solves very well, and altogether we have gotten everything we need from the Unit4 system.”

About Unit4

Unit4 is a leading provider of enterprise applications empowering people in service organizations. With annual revenue north of 500M Euro and more than 4000 employees world-wide, Unit4 delivers ERP, industry-focused and best-in-class applications. Thousands of organizations from sectors including professional services, education, public services, not-for-profit, real estate, wholesale, and financial services benefit from Unit4 solutions. Unit4 is in business for people.

unit4.com

Unit4 N.V.

Stationspark 1000
3364 DA Sliedrecht, Postbus 102
3360 AC Sliedrecht, The Netherlands
T +31 (0)184 44 44 44
F +31 (0)184 44 44 45
E info.group@unit4.com

Copyright © Unit4 N.V.

All rights reserved. The information contained in this document is intended for general information only, as it is summary in nature and subject to change. Any third-party brand names and/or trademarks referenced are either registered or unregistered trademarks of their respective owners.
CS150731INT-5825