MINUTES

For business users to run consolidation workflows

90

Global business units leveraging a unified platform

ZERO

System crashes vs. previous performance issues with HFM

ABOUT COMPANY

Industry
Technology and Equipment Manufacturer

Location
Uzwil, Switzerland

As a technology partner for the food, feed, and mobility industries, Bühler has committed to having solutions ready to multiply by 2025 that reduce energy, waste, and water by 50% in the value chains of its customers. As a Swiss family-owned company with a history spanning 164 years, Bühler is active in over 140 countries around the world and operates a global network of 105 service stations, 30 manufacturing sites, and Application & Training Centers in 25 locations.

SOLUTIONS

- Financial Close and Consolidation
- SAP S/4 HANA Integration

BENEFITS

- Robust and adaptable, unified platform.
- Centralized, expandable master data model that enables the integration of different data sources.
- Advanced functionalities such as user-friendly update options and automated workflows.
- Transparency of financial and operational data.
- Increased efficiency in month-end closing.
- Stable and high-performance system with increased transparency.
- Long-term investment security.

> The implementation of OneStream has made the month-end close process much more efficient. With HFM, responsibility for critical tasks lay with the consolidation team, which often led to bottlenecks and a heavy workload. Thanks to OneStream's flexibility and user-friendliness, various processes have been automated and simplified, significantly reducing the need for support."
>
> — **Luciana Circelli**, Consolidation Application Expert, Bühler AG

REPLACING AN OUTDATED SYSTEM

Bühler AG, a leading Swiss global company providing innovative solutions in the food and feed industry, and Advanced Materials (AM) as well, was faced with the challenge of replacing Oracle Hyperion Financial Management (HFM), which had been used since 2009 for financial consolidation of around 90 business units worldwide.

Once a month, in the first five working days, the 90 company units delivered their reporting packages. In some cases, the data came in the form of manually created .xls files or directly as an SAP data extract, because the larger units work with SAP S/4 HANA. The data was then consolidated in the financial management system and made available for various reports such as the annual report.

Furthermore, the options for data extraction in HFM were limited, which made it difficult to reuse the consolidated data in other analysis tools (e.g. Power BI).

> We were actually satisfied with Hyperion. However, in recent years there have been an increasing number of performance issues. In some cases, this meant that the finance community was no longer able to log in, resulting in a significant loss of time."
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> — **Luciana Circelli**, *Consolidation Application Expert, Bühler AG*

> For IT, OneStream was the solution that best suited our setup. For me, flexibility was key. This ensures that we can map both current and future requirements."
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> — **Luciana Circelli**, *Consolidation Application Expert, Bühler AG*

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND FUNCTIONALITY

Bühler carried out a comprehensive evaluation process to select a suitable HFM alternative. A steering committee made up of the most important stakeholders and decision-makers took the lead. This included, among others, the CFO, the Head of Group Controlling, the Head of Group Accounting, the Head of Process and Project Management, the Head of HR Processes and Applications, and an IT project management specialist who also closely supervised the entire design phase.

Among the evaluated financial management tools, which all proved to be advanced and powerful, OneStream emerged as the frontrunner. The decisive factor was not only the solution's comprehensive functionality, but above all the technological features of a unified platform for consolidation, planning, reporting and analysis. This eliminates the need for multiple separate systems and ensures end-to-end data integrity. The platform offers an extensible dimension structure that makes it possible to map different business requirements in a single application — without the need for multiple applications or complex workarounds involving extensive data integration.

OneStream also offers robust integration options with other IT solutions, so that data from SAP systems, for example, can be seamlessly transferred. This enables companies to **use SAP data in real time for consolidation, planning and reporting in OneStream**, without the need to maintain redundant data during integration.

A PLATFORM OWNED BY FINANCE

Through careful project organization and planning, Bühler took a phased implementation approach, by prioritizing important milestones and coordinating regular operational reviews. The go-live was seamless, and the necessary transfer of knowledge was efficient through a five-day remote administrator training course for OneStream and close project support from the implementation partner.

"The support provided was crucial to the success of the project," said Circelli. "OneStream is a solution that has much more potential than the previous one, but also requires a familiarization period to understand the wide range of programming options." To provide first-level support for users in each region, regional power users were established through internal training.

OneStream's reload feature has also significantly reduced the need for support. "Sometimes data from the previous month is uploaded by mistake, or changes requiring a reload are made," explains Circelli. "Previously, the central consolidation team was responsible for resetting the data. This was particularly time-consuming due to the different time zones. In OneStream, any user can trigger a reload independently. **Users have the flexibility** to update either the entire balance sheet or just individual accounts." This option also allows users to test the various functions and possibilities of OneStream without having to worry about irreversible errors. If something does not work as expected, they can easily reload the data and return to the starting point.

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> With the previous tool, the entire support responsibility lay with the central consolidation team. During month-end closing, many user questions from different time zones had to be answered on the fly. This was particularly challenging because the HFM input data comes from different source systems, meaning that different levels of knowledge were required depending on the source system. In the new setup, two power users in each region now provide support, and only more complex detailed questions require centralized assistance.
>
> — *Luciana Circelli,*
> *Consolidation Application*
> *Expert, Bühler AG*

SIMPLIFYING THE COMPLEX

"The implementation of OneStream has made the **month-end close process much more efficient**," says Circelli. "With HFM, responsibility for critical tasks lay with the consolidation team, which often led to bottlenecks and a heavy workload. Thanks to OneStream's flexibility and user-friendliness, various processes have been automated and simplified, significantly reducing the need for support."

OneStream makes it possible to define a customized process for each business unit, consisting of various steps for the month-end close. For example, more comprehensive packages for data upload can be defined for larger and more complex business units, while fewer steps are provided for smaller units to simplify the process and keep it as efficient as possible. "The feedback from our global finance community has also been very positive. They find the user interface easy to understand and simple to use," adds Circelli.

> **In addition, OneStream offers the option of simplifying complex work steps that previously had to be carried out by the central consolidation team so that basically any user can initiate them independently at the push of a button."**
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> — *Luciana Circelli, Consolidation Application Expert, Bühler AG*

One important added value for Bühler is the powerful system and performance. The individual work steps (e.g. consolidation) are **significantly faster** and the system is generally more stable. "In our old system, for example, intercompany reports regularly caused system crashes," said Circelli. "With OneStream, such **crashes are a thing of the past**."

Bühler will also benefit from integrating OneStream with other software tools in the future. The platform can be seamlessly connected to ERP systems, BI solutions, etc. This integration could enable Bühler to consolidate financial data from all areas of the company and link it with operational data. This will give Bühler a holistic view of the company and increased transparency, which in turn, leads to **better decision-making**.

> We want to automate the **data flow between SAP S/4 HANA and OneStream** as completely as possible. In addition, the plan is to use OneStream's drill-back and drill-through functions to analyze transactions in detail and to access the underlying SAP data directly from aggregated data in OneStream."
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> — *Luciana Circelli, Consolidation Application Expert, Bühler AG*

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