



## Customer story Pon

Excellent Management Information  
with arcplan Enterprise

Partake Consulting



■ **The smart way to business insight.**

## **Customer story**

### **Pon**

**Excellent Management Information  
with arcplan Enterprise**

“In the area of management information systems,  
I regard arcplan Enterprise as Pon’s best invest-  
ment in the last five years.”

**Jos Brouwer, Manager Corporate Financial Systems Pon**



## Consistent and reliable information

### Business requirement:

Management information at Pon Holdings: One version of the truth in a web-based management portal.

### Solution:

arcplan Enterprise on top of Hyperion Financial Management.

Jos Brouwer, Manager Corporate Financial Systems, is the holding company's person responsible for the company-wide availability of management information. This information must be quick to produce, easy to use, flexible and has to add value. Pon Holdings was looking for an information portal that would serve as a guiding tool for c-level management and as an instrument to graphically present calculations on return on shareholders'



*Jos Brouwer  
Manager Corporate  
Financial Systems*

*Jos Brouwer of Pon and Marco Vissers and Anton Plaisier of Partake*



equity. It would also provide a global communication medium for operations, management and the holding company, thereby reducing paper flow and creating a single version of the truth.

## Reasons

1. Jos Brouwer says, "Figures without explanations are worthless". Numbers on their own do not provide answers. That is just half the story. The spreadsheet solution in use left much to be desired. A more professional alternative was necessary.



Foto: Edwin Walvisch

2. By providing insight based on numeric data, you minimise business risk. Looking ahead helps to reduce risk. Risk and especially risk management merit structural attention from the executive team. A solution was needed.

3. Insight and understanding will improve through the combination of graphical representation and a solid figure-based foundation. Targets are likely to be reached faster and more effectively if there is clarity, at all levels, as to where different costs are allocated and how they originate.

4. Employees are Pon's most valued "asset", therefore management does everything possible to develop its employees and keep them "on board".



Foto: Edwin Walvisch



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### The solution

Jos Brouwer was familiar with arcplan, a German based company, and its solution, arcplan Enterprise – the most flexible he had ever seen. Pon Holdings created a development and implementation plan with Partake Consulting, using our experience with both Hyperion and arcplan. This plan was slowly but surely rolled out within the organisation.

The requirements were clear:

1. Explanatory notes to the monthly figures are important. All levels of the organisation are given the opportunity to comment on the figures produced by arcplan Enterprise, comments that added value to the analysis.

### About Pon Holdings

Pon is an international trading group with a wide range of activities. The group's product mix reflects an optimal balance between nature, quality and organisation. Pon also continuously strives towards adding the greatest possible value in the customer-manufacturer relationship and has a long-lasting relationship with many of the manufacturers it is authorised to represent as importer. Pon Holdings is a family-run enterprise with approximately 8,000 employees, of whom around 3,000 work outside the Netherlands. The group operates five hundred branches in ten countries. Pon values and instils entrepreneurship in its operating companies and business units, with each being responsible for its own results. Therefore, Pon Holdings has a decentralized management structure that depends on consistent and reliable information at all levels, in all operating companies and all working areas.





2. By closely monitoring the figures, you are managing the business intelligently. A trading company always runs risks, for example a supplier fails to deliver or a customer does not pay. Risk management provisions must therefore be visible in the balance sheet. The arcplan Enterprise solution provides the necessary structure and insights. As a result, the agility to adapt to change has improved.

3. Having a local operating company increase its sales in the event of disappointing results is not always the solution. Perhaps the sales method used is too costly and the extra effort thus proves fruitless. Analysing figures from different perspectives and representing them graphically leads to clarity and greater involvement in solving any problems. Benchmarking is also possible through proper and transparent communication throughout the whole company.

4. Analysis of absence through illness, seniority, staff turnover, age structure, levels of training and the number of vacancies are examples of arcplan Enterprise's HRM solution at Pon. By representing

the company's "softer" side in hard figures, the "social" impact is more revealing in the corporate annual report. A small decrease in absence due to illness results in a large decrease in costs. This type of insight is highly valuable to management.

### The partnership

Trust and pragmatism characterise the relationship between Pon and Partake. Both businesses have their feet firmly on the ground and know their business. The current arcplan Enterprise implementation was executed in a cyclic development model. "It was notable", says Jos Brouwer, "that within 3 days Partake had a working prototype in place that immediately told the story. No one else could match that – even after 20 days. You will understand how impressed we were, both with Partake and arcplan."

Then the focus shifted to knowledge transfer. With a small team, Pon provides clear information for the entire business. It only hires in expert help when necessary. A short training course was all that was needed to quickly get going.

*"arcplan gives us insight into our most valued asset: our employees."*

Jos Brouwer, Manager Corporate Financial Systems of Pon





*Eric Op Ten Berg, Maarten van der Heijden and Jos Brouwer of Pon*

## The results

The most significant result is insight. The pieces of the puzzle fell into place with the first reports delivered during system implementation. With this insight and clarification of cause-and-effect, directors of the operating companies are now more knowledgeable and aware of consequences while making investments.

In addition, the analysis reports provide additional confidence to directors and managers when making decisions. They have more faith in the information – the story is told in no uncertain terms – good or bad – truthfully. Further, the quality of the information improves over time as the truth also bears fruit on the shop floor.

And last but not least: the speed at which information is delivered. With arclan Enterprise, every authorised person can view and analyse data at any time they wish. Data compilation for the annual report is now also a simple matter, which is now ready by mid-February, instead of mid-May!

## The future

At the moment, Jos Brouwer is looking at the possibility of incorporating the consolidated inter-company figures in the reporting structure. This consolidation is time-consuming and labour-intensive. In this way, Jos Brouwer would aim to prevent repeated data related tasks and therefore repeated data verification.

In addition, everyone must be able to trust the reports blindly. For this reason, a better audit and alert system must be incorporated so that exceptional deviations can be immediately detected and reported.

Given that a company always has more than one system in use, Jos Brouwer is also investigating the possibility of incorporating information from the other systems via arclan Webservices, in addition to reporting and combining with other information sources via arclan Enterprise.

## Our mission

We make it our mission to make sure you do not waste time and money on high volumes of inexperienced consultants. Instead we work with small teams of experienced consultants with complementary business, technology and infrastructure skills, so that you benefit from better solutions delivered faster. Partake has premium partnerships with leading software suppliers in the Corporate Performance Management market.

**Partake Consulting**



■ **The smart way to business insight.**

**We look forward to partake in your quest for business insight.**

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