



## Gympie Regional Council renovating their digital infrastructure with Civica Authority



Seeking to improve data quality and availability Gympie Regional Council (GRC) embarked on rebuilding its General Ledger in preparation for the next Authority upgrade.

### Health checks identifying the best way forward

Gympie Regional Council (GRC) is located 160 kilometres north of the state capital, Brisbane in south-east Queensland. With staff of around 500, operating across 31 separate sites, GRC relies on Civica's Authority software modules across major aspects of council operations from the General Ledger (GL) to animal registrations.

Previous attempts to rebuild the GL in preparation to advance Council's use of the Authority suite encountered multiple issues. Management recognised the need for a fresh approach.

With strong leadership, the right people in place, a vendor with a sound strategy and an organisation ready for change, this project gained the momentum essential for a successful outcome.

Sandra Cormack, Manager Information Services said "We discussed the challenges we were experiencing with Civica," said. "In response, Civica's Rob Thompson, the Territory Manager, arranged for health checks of the financial and payroll modules, resulting in a number of recommendations. Some issues identified were rectified on the spot, resulting in immediate efficiencies."

The main recommendation from the health checks of the financial and payroll modules was a rewrite of the General Ledger (GL) and the introduction of the job costing module, along with new financial reporting tools. Re-engineering business processes was another priority that would ensure all processes aligned with Authority not against it.

Civica's Change Consultant, Danny Roberts was brought in to map out the best strategy to move GRC towards better processes and efficiencies At the foundation of this strategy was the agreement reached by all stakeholders across council to verify data held within the existing version of Authority before upgrading to the latest iteration (v7.1).

"Previously, our chart of accounts was over 3,500 pages, the equivalent of seven reams of paper. Now, it is less than 100 pages."

**Rosemary Peters**  
Senior Business Analyst  
Gympie Regional Council

### Outcomes

- ▶ **Improved ability to report on job costs for Council**
- ▶ **Improved data availability for decision making**
- ▶ **Streamlined GL Master Accounts from over 4,000 to less than 200 and GL Resource codes from over 100,000 down to less than 3,100**
- ▶ **Efficient data analysis through the elimination of duplicated processes**

"We have been using Authority for over 20 years and we were aware that we hadn't maintained it as well as we could have," Ms Cormack said. "Just like any asset, regular health checks and proactive maintenance are important to any software's value as a business-enabling tool."



"We do condition assessments on our roads and vehicles to decide if they need repairing or replacing so the same should have been true for our information system assets. This had not been happening which is why we needed to do a health check on Authority to see if we should repair or replace it, and we decided to repair it."

### Setting expectations across the business

Although there was buy-in from all the major stakeholders within the council, it was important to understand the task ahead by visually conveying both before and after scenarios.

With a physical asset a visual clearly shows its condition. However with information system assets, this is a little more difficult. The project team needed an analogy to identify with which is why it chose images of a teenager's bedroom. Two images of a teenager's bedroom were pinned up on the notice board, the first being a very messy bedroom with clothes everywhere, and the second the same bedroom with everything tidy and in its place, making it easy to find things. The analogy worked well.

### Laying the foundation for business excellence

GRC's GL serves as the core of their accounting system and needed a rebuild because it had grown very large over a period of 20 years.

The project manager for the GL restructure - Rosemary Peters, Senior Business Analyst at GRC, is satisfied with the transformation. Ms Peters said "Authority GL system performance has improved since rationalising our chart of accounts. The introduction of Authority work orders has also made project costing easier. We can now spend more time focusing on advancing our broader objectives for GRC."

### Moving forward

GRC will continue to gradually implement the recommendations that emerged from the initial health checks bringing onboard more Authority modules, and the much-anticipated upgrade to Authority 7.1 later this year.

"I have seen several software implementation projects undertaken and all have had multiple issues. For me, this is the first time that this was not the case."

**Sandra Cormack,**  
Manager Information Services  
Gympie Regional Council

Implementing or upgrading information systems usually has its problems. There were challenges but these were worked through systematically until resolved, with the project staying on time and within budget.

"Now when I attend our multi-council meetings with other IT managers and CIO's, I can enjoy the enviable position of talking positively about my IT provider. I feel very proud of Civica and the internal team" Ms Cormack said.