

California Garden plants BI roots

by [Peter Branton](#) on Sunday, 26 March 2006

One of the region's leading canned food manufacturers has implemented business intelligence (BI) tools from Cognos to help improve its reporting and decision-making capabilities.

Dubai-based Gulf Food Industries' California Garden, part of the global Americana Group, has purchased the Cognos 8 Business Intelligence solution and has implemented the query reporting analysis and dashboarding tools. It plans to add the budgeting and planning and scorecarding modules to the solution in the future.

California Garden, one of a number of Middle East-based companies to purchase a Cognos solution in recent months, joined Contax Group, a professional services provider with offices across the Middle East, which implemented Cognos Enterprise Planning solution last December.

Previously California Garden had been using software supplied by Cognos' rival Business Objects. However, California Garden's IT manager, Alaa El Taher, explained that the company decided to switch to the Cognos solution because it included dashboarding features.

"The dashboarding tool is very useful for us because the management don't just want to see numbers they want to see graphs — it helps them to make quicker decisions. The dashboard is like a performance analysis tool that gives you some indicators for your business. You fix these indicators and run it on a daily basis to see your performance," he added.

The fact that the Cognos solution provides a web-based database was also a major factor in California Garden's choice, according to El Taher, who pointed out that this was particularly useful for traveling executives and for those working in other offices outside Dubai.

Thierry Nicault, Business Objects country manager for Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa, said he could not comment on California Garden's decision. However he added that the vendor had a number of customer wins it would shortly be announcing.



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