TopUp Consultants

Successful Yardi implementation with Oracle integration for a commercial property owner, manager and developer

When Shannon Commercial Properties' ambitious plans for growth required the upgrade of disparate legacy systems – they knew to select the Yardi experts.

Shannon Commercial Properties (SCP) owns and manages one of the largest property portfolios in Ireland. Alongside Shannon Airport and its retail units and concessions, SCP's portfolio includes eight business and technology parks, more than 2.4 million sq ft of building space, over 300 buildings and in excess of 1,600 acres of land. It is part of the Shannon Group plc.

The challenge

In order to build on consecutive years of growth, SCP's parent, Shannon Group plc, had devised plans to deliver an ambitious investment programme while improving profitability.

Up to this point, SCP used multiple and disparate systems to manage its property portfolio. These systems had served SCP well in the past, but the compilation of financial information was a considerably manual and inefficient process.

With the scale that the organisation now operated, the legacy systems would soon become a barrier to achieving the aspirational new targets.

SCP therefore decided to implement a single dedicated property management solution – and, after a tender, selected the best-of-breed **Yardi Voyager** platform.

The **Yardi** platform would need to consolidate SCP's financial information and integrate with the parent group's **Oracle eBusiness suite.**

An added complication was that the **Oracle** platform also required an upgrade. Both projects would need to run in parallel.

The solution

> "We were looking for an implementation partner with appropriate project management skills and experience of implementing Yardi. With TopUp we got both of these skill sets."
>
> *David Neylon, Shannon Commercial Properties*

Given the complexity of the project, SCP wanted a safe pair of hands as their implementation partner. After a comprehensive tender process, they chose **TopUp Consultants** due to their extensive experience with both the **Yardi** platform and managing large-scale commercial real estate software projects.

Although both the **Yardi** and **Oracle** projects shared a steering committee and overall project structure, there was limited shared resource between the two. Consequently, communication would be vital throughout the venture.

TopUp and SCP discussed a methodology and approach that would ensure all parties remained on the same page.

Key stakeholders were identified and a plan devised to maintain and synchronise a regular flow of communication throughout the implementation period

Because of their expertise and independence, **TopUp** acted as the project champion for SCP at meetings with both Yardi and Shannon Group.

> Open and productive communication is key to the success of any implementation project. Intra-organisation communication can, however, be negatively impacted by competing priorities and day-to-day work pressures.
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> Individuals and teams often find it easier to share experiences and take advice from experts outside their organisation. By engaging an external expert to, for example, facilitate meetings, open discussions on requirements and prioritise according to your organisation's goals, you can add value to your project and avoid internal conflict.

Together, **TopUp** and SCP developed a bespoke model for the project plan with a timetable for the main stages of scoping, implementation and go-live, with **TopUp** leading on:

- Project Management
- Business Analysis
- Process Modelling
- User Acceptance Testing
- Training
- Risk/Governance

Because the **Yardi** system would be new to SCP users, support and training would be vital.

To make sure all end users were ready and confident with the use of the new system **TopUp** introduced a new training approach.

This included hands-on training sessions based on provided sets of exercises, onsite support and an open-door policy for all users.

Having extensive experience integrating **Yardi** with other platforms, **TopUp** worked with **Yardi** on the design of an **interface with Oracle** and made sure that the SCP team understood and were satisfied with the proposed work requests.

> "A perfect technical implementation is wasted if end users are not confident in using the new system. That's why we place such an emphasis on support for all users throughout the project lifecycle. It's something that's ingrained in our approach – as evidenced by our industry-leading Helpdesk service. SCP immediately saw the benefits and, consequently, received the rewards of successful implementation and a smooth handover to business as usual."
>
> Kyri Striftombolas, MD of TopUp Consultants

The Result

Instead of the inefficient practice of operating disparate system platforms, SCP is now operating a single property management solution: **Yardi Voyager**.

SCP's financials are **integrated with Oracle** at the GL level and accompanied by a full financial reporting stack, which is both legally and business needs compliant. The consolidation of financial data to **Yardi** and **Oracle** was enabled by a custom interface that acts as a bridge between the two platforms.

The bespoke training programme and open-door support policy ensured that, across the board, SCP's teams were confident and ready to use **Yardi** before go-live. Having worked through real-life scenarios in advance, and with **TopUp** on hand to provide constant support, end-users were quickly up to speed.

The handover to business as usual was expedited by a re-designed live-to-test database refresh schedule, along with the introduction of a staging database. This reduced the initial configuration process and provided end users with added confidence.

In fact, SCP were comfortable enough to bring forward the proposed implementation of the Yardi Construction Management Module – and were able to do so while keeping timelines and budgets under control.

The end result is that SCP have an efficient operation ready to continue growth and profitability into the future.

> "The implementation of Yardi Voyager has significantly improved how we perform as a company. Business processes have been enhanced, information is more readily available and the quality of our data is far higher.
>
> We would like to work with TopUp again in the future and we would happily recommend them to other businesses."
>
> *David Neylon, Shannon Commercial Properties*

> **"When we help our clients marry their real estate systems, such as Yardi, with other platforms, such as Oracle, it's akin to laying foundations for success. I'm pleased that, working with SCP as partners, we were able to help them achieve the immediate efficiencies they were looking for and, in the process, unlock the power of their data."**
>
> Kyri Striftombolas, MD of TopUp Consultants

Key activities

- Lead the planning and implementation of Yardi Property Management System
- Define project tasks and resource requirements
- Develop full scale project plans
- Assemble and coordinate SCP project staff
- Manage project resource allocation
- Plan, schedule & drive project timelines
- Track project deliverables using appropriate tools
- Oversee & assist data transfer
- Provide direction and support to project team
- Be the project champion for Shannon Commercial Properties

- Constantly monitor and report on progress of the project to all stakeholders (provide a bi-weekly update to the Managing Director of Shannon Commercial Properties)
- Present reports defining project progress, problems and solutions
- Implement and manage project changes and interventions to achieve project outputs
- Lead User Acceptance Testing (UAT) elements to ensure systems are ready for Go-Live

Yardi modules

- Yardi Voyager Commercial
- Yardi Fixed Assets
- Yardi Maintenance

- Yardi Inspection
- Yardi Construction Management Module

TopUp Consultants is an established member of the Yardi Independent Consultant's Network