

**University of Technology, Sydney**  
Australia  
www.uts.edu.au

#### Industry

Higher Education

#### Employees

2700

#### Students

30000+

#### Excel4apps products and services:

GL Wand



**“GL Wand supports the UTS reporting needs as a research driven university. In this environment, requests for ad hoc reports come out of nowhere, as when we are lobbying for government grants. With GL Wand, our Finance Department can quickly determine the spending across research activities over a specific timeframe. This flexibility helps us continually improve our analysis, response and processes for grant funding.”**

-- Chris Chand, Business Systems Analyst, The University of Technology Sydney



## Background

The University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Australia, is a growing university with 30,000-plus students and a vision for becoming a world-leading school of technology. The university is recognized in Australia for its research strengths, ranging from traditional areas like physical, biological and engineering sciences to emerging fields, including design, nanotechnology and sustainability. One of the ways UTS plans to achieve world-class status is by embedding leading edge information technology (IT), such as its Oracle enterprise resource planning system. But when the UTS Finance Department began a review of its current reporting tools, a need was soon discovered for more advanced reporting functionality than Oracle provided for support of project and operational strategies. UTS was both budget- and time-constrained from purchasing traditional BI software, but found that GL Wand could accomplish its goals at a fraction of the cost. Also, because GL Wand is easily installed, enhanced reporting functionality would be in place almost immediately.

## Challenges

Management reporting at UTS requires production of dashboards and report packs for faculty, divisions, research activities and executives at monthly and quarterly intervals. However, because data had to be manually transferred from Oracle's Financial Statement Generator (FSG) to Excel and formatted to achieve the desired representation, creation of report packs was a lengthy process for the UTS management accounting team. This left little time for accountants to provide effective analysis for groups using the various packs. There was also no easy way to perform ad hoc analysis, with requested reports taking up to two weeks for completion.

## Solution

After viewing a demo of GL Wand, UTS realized the software's potential for helping achieve its management reporting goals. The team engaged in a two-month trial of the product for the management accounting team and soon discovered how easily GL Wand could download and populate Excel spreadsheets with Oracle data. The software's Excel front end capitalized on the Excel skills of the UTS accountants, who could easily tailor information and dashboards for specific users of the report packs. This was accomplished without the need for an FSG specialist or Oracle programmer. Excellent results from the GL Wand trial provided the business case for purchasing the software. Also, the application's minimal information technology (IT) footprint was a big factor in its favor. GL Wand required no additional hardware or applications, such as additional servers or database software. Because the Finance Department could install and maintain GL Wand itself, the only involvement required of IT was loading a database service pack (which was a 5 minute task by a DBA).

## Benefits

With GL Wand, report production is now automated so accountants can focus on value-added analysis of financial and budgetary trends. UTS immediately saw benefits from the installation, according to business systems analyst Chris Chand, who says accountants save two to three days per month on each report pack, allowing them more time to review the data with various groups. The savings is expected to grow with the development of quarterly and forecasting packs.

As UTS is a research focused university, GL Wand is also helping more closely track spending and provide ad-hoc reports needed in emergency situations, such as when the university is lobbying for grants. Chand also reports that GL Wand provides flexibility in how UTS develops these research reports, which include standard P&L-based reports and "Life-To-Date" reports, or a combination of both. "It gives researchers a timely and complete view of their progress and budget performance, which is critical when you have limited funds," Chand notes. Users remain thrilled with GL Wand, says Chand, who cites an example from the university's tax and insurance officer who can now compile the necessary reports in just half a day when it used to require an entire week.