ALLOCADIA℠

Case Study: Trimble

Case Study: Trimble

Founded in 1979, Trimble, Inc. was one of the earliest pioneers in GPS technology. In the four decades since, the company has expanded to dozens of business divisions employing thousands of employees worldwide who together drive over $3 billion in annual revenues. Today Trimble is transforming the way the world works by delivering products and services that connect the physical and digital worlds with core technologies in positioning, modeling, connectivity and data analytics.

"Allocadia provides our marketers with an easy-to-use, foundational tool that simplifies the complex, ever-evolving financial management process, gives them more accuracy in the process, and improves their relationship with the finance team."

- Michelle Chessler, Director of Integrated Marketing Strategies, Trimble, Inc.

Lacking an accurate read on marketing spend
As is common in larger companies, the Trimble marketers in charge of budget for each of their divisions either recycled the prior year's budget spreadsheet or inherited one from their predecessor. Their partners in Finance maintained a general ledger version of these spreadsheets at a macro level. To align with this, each marketer made a best effort to categorize the line items in their spreadsheet and aggregate spend under each.

Unfortunately, this meant both Marketing and Finance had to make judgment calls about how to classify transactions. This – combined with the lack of alignment across all of marketing – meant the company could not get a true read on its overall marketing spend. In addition to losing time by repeating tasks, the company's marketers were actually losing money because they couldn't tell where they had underspent and overspent. As a result, the finance and marketing teams themselves lacked confidence in their numbers. Moreover, it was impossible to work more efficiently without knowing where and why marketing was investing.

Michelle Chessler was one of those marketers. Frustrated at her lack of visibility, as she was not able to draw conclusions about how marketing was spending as a whole and within each business, she spearheaded a better approach. Her goal was to enable smarter marketing spending across all of Trimble's businesses, while reducing redundant and inefficient spend.

Chessler knew what the company didn't know was hurting it. And she was confident she could uncover places where poorly spent funds were negatively impacting the company and committed to finding and re-allocating 10% of wasted spend from the entire marketing budget. Also, due to a reorganization at the company, Chessler was put in charge of company-wide marketing communications across three franchises, making the need to improve visibility into spend even more critical.

In her new role, Chessler's first step was to ensure its marketing investment data was clean, detailed and aligned across the all the business units. Among the challenges the company needed to overcome was a lack of common taxonomy describing how marketing line items were classified, and a way to track expenditures and their impact on the business. It also needed a tool that would be adopted by marketers who disliked forecasting and budgeting.

Easily up-leveling its marketing investment data

Trimble needed to complement the organizational redesign that provided Chessler with some visibility into every marketing group. Once she saw a demonstration of Allocadia, Chessler knew it was the right platform to help up level the way Trimble managed marketing finances. She appreciated that Allocadia was built for marketers by marketers, provided her a holistic view across finances for the entire marketing organization, and met her requirement that it support multiple currencies.

Plus, Allocadia was easy to use and configure, which was critical for the company's marketers who had expressed a distaste for budgeting and forecasting. Allocadia's team created a dashboard modeled on Chessler's core budgeting spreadsheet, and each marketer could easily customize it to their needs. Just as critical, Trimble's finance team loved Allocadia because it enables a predictable approach to forecasting.

Achieving budget bliss

With Allocadia in place, Chessler can now quickly get a view into marketing's performance and easily click between budgets across divisions. She can see what spend is left of the forecast for any given period, and marketing's forecasting and budgeting process is much more accurate because everyone has access to the plan forecast and actuals.

Additionally, Chessler can accurately report to Finance whether Marketing is projecting any excess spend or is planning for accruals. This has created confidence between both teams that investments are going to the right places, and that there is more predictability in the investment process.

ALLOCADIA℠

Within six months of taking over the budgeting for the entire marketing department, Chessler identified that 10% of the budget was being wasted – either through inefficient or redundant programs. With Allocadia, she now has the visibility to make sure that her team is putting every dollar they get into impactful programs and activities. Implementing Allocadia has led to success for Chessler and her entire team as they've been able to dramatically improve how they are stewards for the business.

Moving forward, the Trimble team is planning to begin connecting some of their marketing automation and CRM platforms with Allocadia, so the Trimble team can begin assessing the efficiency of their programs, and even further optimize its investments.