

The core business of Canon Oy, the Finnish subsidiary of the world-wide Canon group, consists of solutions and services for business information and office technology and consumer products including cameras and printers.

In 2002, Canon Oy's turnover was EUR 122.2 million and its number of personnel 460.

Canon Oy steers its activity with QPR products

Canon Oy selected the QPR ScoreCard as a decision-making tool and the QPR Process Guide for process control. Thanks to software from QPR, Canon's processes and scorecards are accessible to the entire personnel over the Intranet.

Canon and QPR: Long-term co-operation

Co-operation between Canon Oy and QPR Software Plc began in 1998, with Canon's purchase of the QPR ProcessGuide software. Since the mid-1990's Canon Oy had studied the use of process thinking, working with the ISO 9000 quality system. At first, process descriptions were written with PowerPoint, but Canon soon realized the need for good software to generate descriptions and flow charts. Since then, Canon has been using the QPR ProcessGuide. The company has defined its core processes as well as the subprocesses and supporting processes, and written the descriptions with the QPR ProcessGuide. Process thinking is also linked to the use of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) on the company level. Canon purchased the QPR ScoreCard software at the end of 2002, mainly for strategic planning, and the system was adopted in March 2003. Canon's ISO 9001/2000 system is linked to the QPR ScoreCard.

Balanced Scorecard implementation supported by management

Mr. Jaakko Muilu, Assistant General Manager at Canon Oy, describes the decision to purchase the QPR ScoreCard software: "In 1999, Canon's Customer Services studied the suitability of the BSC as a management control system. They piloted the BSC on Excel and PowerPoint and thought it suitable for the overall organisation. Canon Oy's President saw the benefits of the BSC, supported the decision to adopt it for the whole organisation and launched a project which was started in October 2001. Next, we wanted to find a software tool to concretise strategy for our employees and to communicate it to all of them. We looked for a tool which could measure performance and quality control. We also wanted to link our rewards system to our strategic goals. The QPR ScoreCard software was introduced at the end of 2002, and during 2003 the QPR ScoreCard software has been used to construct Canon Oy's BSC system, which goes by the name 'Cartta 2003'."



"We selected QPR's software because of the Finnish consulting and software support offered by QPR, as this makes direct communication with the software supplier easy. QPR had good Finnish references, and its Helpdesk also functions well. QPR's software suited Canon's purposes and met our criteria", is Muilu's description of the process of choosing the software supplier.

"Canon values transparency of decision-making. Through Canon's Intranet, the whole personnel can access both the process descriptions in the QPR ProcessGuide and the score cards in the QPR ScoreCard," says Jaakko Muilu, Canon's Assistant General Manager.

QPR ScoreCard for an easier decision-making

Canon uses the QPR ScoreCard to bring together performance and quality results and the action to be taken. This year the score cards have been used for the main processes on the company, unit and group levels. "We have decided that in 2004, all of Canon Oy's personnel will have personal score cards. The system reports all deviations and describes the actions for avoiding them in the future", says Jaakko Muilu.

Jaakko Muilu considers that the introduction of the BSC has enabled a meaningful discussion of the company's goals. The goals have been communicated to all the personnel, and internal communication has also improved. Moreover, the BSC has been used for personnel appraisal and discussions on results. Muilu notes: "The QPR ScoreCard makes decisions easier. It allows the steering group to gain a rapid overview of the company's or unit's situation and the direction in which it is heading".

Management and personnel commitment needed for a successful project

On the practical level, Canon's BSC project took a lengthy 14 months. The steering group worked on Canon's mission, vision, strategies, strategic objectives, critical success factors, key performance indicators and action plans. Workshops were also arranged. From the outset, the middle management's commitment to decisions was sought, so that they were involved in project work from the start. "In practice, we spent a lot of effort on the implementation of the measuring tools", says Jaakko Muilu. "We were heading for an over-sophisticated system. Especially for the first version, the measurement tools should be kept simple, in order to avoid project fatigue. In the following versions you can elaborate them further."

The QPR ProcessGuide was easy to implement. The process descriptions were written by the Customer Service unit. At the stage of process development, the persons in charge of the core processes – owners and sponsors – were defined, and they took part in writing the descriptions. Canon was already using the QPR ProcessGuide at the start of the process development project, and it proved a useful tool.

Jaakko Muilu considers that both projects ran very smoothly: "At Canon, people have been enthusiastic about building the system, and we have reached our goals."

"The two training days arranged by QPR were quite sufficient for training the seven main users of the QPR ScoreCard for Canon. We trained the browser users ourselves in only a few hours", says Muilu.



***"We find QPR's products easy to use, and the software has worked according to Canon's expectations."
Jaakko Muilu, Canon Oy***

Canon's processes and score cards on the Intranet

Of the QPR ProcessGuide Jaakko Muilu says: "When you have professional software for process control, descriptions are easy to write. Moreover, all descriptions have the same format, so they are easier to read and update. Especially the QPR 7 version makes the publishing of process descriptions very easy. Now, Canon immediately has the correct process descriptions in the Intranet, at the same location as the QPR ScoreCard."

Future goals

Jaakko Muilu has also presented the QPR ScoreCard to representatives of Canon Europa. The next step for Canon Finland is to generate personal score cards for all its employees. A further step will be to use the software as a tool for customer feedback, summaries and reports. Every year, an EFQM-based self-evaluation is carried out at Canon, which will also produce its own score card. QPR's products will thus continue to provide advantages to Canon.