



## Seamless financial management

The Maori Language Commission – Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Maori (TTWh) was set up under the Maori Language Act 1987 to promote the use of Maori as a living language and as an ordinary means of communication. The move to MYOB Advanced has improved the transparency and dependability of the financial data, as well as the potential of its workforce.

## Problem

### Untrustworthy systems and a lack of accountability

Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Maori was set up under the Maori Language Act 1987 and continued under Te Ture Reo Maori 2016 / Maori Language Act 2016.

In 2016, TTWh carried out an assessment of their financial systems, with a goal of improving their audit rating and overall efficiency. The Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) [2015/16](#) audit stated it had "... again found the commission's management control environment, financial information systems and controls, and performance information and associated systems and controls to be in need of improvement."

The OAG recommended that "...major improvements be made at the earliest reasonable opportunity."

A review by the Director of Corporate Services Tuehu Harris, and Senior Business Advisor Sharon Amaru, identified the need for a new FMIS and a tender process was initiated. The tender panel included an external advisor, Kara Taumaunu, who identified the need for more automation when producing financial statements, in particular monthly reporting to the board.

As Kara explains, in the previous system financial reports were produced manually, which had the potential for incorrect data, making it harder to trust the information. This often meant monthly reporting deadlines were missed, and left no audit trail for changes in the suppliers process.

**"...major improvements to be made at the earliest reasonable opportunity."**

## Solution

### MYOB Advanced functionality the easy choice

Kara was asked to project-manage the accounting software selection for TTWh and found the choice was "an easy one."

"Four companies were interviewed, one of which presented MYOB. The presentation was professional, and we were impressed with the level of expertise MYOB showed." Building and managing dashboards inside the software was a key requirement, and MYOB Advanced offered this functionality via Microsoft Power BI.

The work of consultant Maria Mullane, now at MYOB Partner Endeavour, also helped decide. "It was the confidence levels she showed, and her intimate knowledge of the system."

Tim Ryley, Chief Executive with Endeavour, commented, "Working with the Maori Language Commission has allowed Endeavour to do what we do best. We have worked together to improve the quality and reliability of information, improve business process, enhance the roles and skills of their team, and increase their audit compliance."

**"The accounting software selection choice was an easy one."**

## Outcome

### Improved performance across the board

After moving to MYOB Advanced, TTWh audit ratings have improved across all three audit assessment areas for the first time in 30 years. In the Auditor General's [2016/17](#) report, the Commission achieved a massive increase in its audit ratings in just the first year since implementation. "We were pleased to note that the commission's financial statements and service performance reporting have improved significantly since 2015/16."

The auditor found the commission's management control environment, financial information systems and controls, and performance information and associated systems and controls to be "good." This is the first time in its 30-year history that the commission has reached this level across all three audit assessment areas. As it continues to improve its financial performance and reporting, the commission hopes to achieve a rating of "very good" in the future.

Due to the automation of everyday processes provided by MYOB Advanced, TTWh has seen a major improvement in productivity, says Kara, running alongside a significant reduction in workload. "I'd guess 35%-45%, which means staff can focus on higher-value tasks," he says. A better work-life balance for staff is another positive, with out-of-hours labour significantly reduced. "The senior business advisor was working 120% of her role, which included most evenings and weekends. Now that's more like 100%."

Newly accessible and up-to-date data has also been a huge win for TTWh, thanks to Microsoft Power BI. The new dashboard reporting means board members can rely on these figures, knowing the previous month's data had been locked down, and new data can be accessed almost live. "Several board members think it's fantastic," says Kara.

Purchase-order approval automation and reconciliation has made things easier for staff, too. MYOB Advanced allows copies of source documents to be attached to POs. This allows the approver to see all relevant information, and will eventually allow transition to a paperless filing system. During audits, this creates an easy click-to-view. Commission staff are also free to get on with what they do best, rather than spending time managing a frustrating workflow.

"The automation of the system makes it more likely that you have the approvals that you need, which was previously holding things up," says Kara. "Now there's no need to chase up signatures, you just delegate it to the right person online."

**"Several board members think it's fantastic."**

Before	After
+ Manual process to complete monthly board reports	+ Improved audit ratings from "needs improvement" up two levels to "good."
+ Lack of dashboard functionality with no instant access to numbers	+ Immediate reduction in staff workload and time spent on low-value tasks
+ Poor audit rating	+ Higher level of board confidence in data, thanks to accurate, up-to-date dashboard reporting