

# Selling More Orange Chicken with Simulation

## Vertical

Food Service

Pharmaceutical

Healthcare

Portfolio

Logistics

Financial

Government

Business

## Genre

Case Study

Project Review

White Paper

Technology Overview

## Client

**Panda**  
RESTAURANT GROUP, INC.



## Situation

California based Panda Restaurant Group (PRG) operates about 1,400 restaurants in 38 states, and is expanding to Mexico this year. PRG includes the original Panda Inn fine dining restaurants, Panda Express, and Hibachi San. It takes a vast IT organization to support this volume of restaurants and IT project management is one of the most challenging areas within this IT functional operation.



Only 30% of PRG IT projects were completed on time, most were 200% over-budget and some were never even completed. Given the slower economy, delivering critical projects on time and within budget was absolutely necessary. Leonard Yip, PRG CIO had previous experience with ProModel technology. Currently using spreadsheets to manage projects and make project resource decisions and analyze other portfolio data, Leonard and his team decided to formulate a project management methodology using Microsoft Project Server and ProModel's Enterprise Portfolio Simulator (EPS) to help them analyze their full portfolio of IT projects and make portfolio decisions.

## Objectives

- Establish a project management methodology using Microsoft Project and EPS
- Create a single source for managing all IT projects
- Make accurate resource capacity decisions
- Deliver projects on time and within budget at least 80% of the time

## Results

The results of this project planning and resource management approach were very dramatic. The first project (GEAPI) completed using the new tools was examined in detail and determined to be a troubled project. The original plan predicted a six month delay. Examining the impact of using additional resources to improve timing and financial performance, PRG identified ways to accelerate the project such that it could be delivered according to the committed deadline.

The result the first year PRG used Project and EPS they completed over 80% of their IT projects on-time. PRG continues to use this project management methodology with EPS and plans to improve their on-time project completions by more than 85% in the coming year.

*Scott Orr, Director, PM office at PRG, "Being able to present outcomes from the simulations, speaks volumes! Presenting these outcomes in logical terms that others can understand allows us to optimize the value of the portfolio we have put together."*

*"Simulation is the only way that would give us the data to substantiate our claims or provide us a better way to complete the portfolio of projects."*

—Leonard Yip.

**Solution**

The first step PRG took was to obtain Microsoft Project and enter all of their IT projects into the tool. It then became critical to keep the project plans updated with the most current information. PRG was then able to get some accurate resource usage data for current projects.

ProModel's Enterprise Portfolio Simulator was selected as the top-level resource requirements predictor and timing platform. PRG imported over 80 major projects into EPS. Microsoft Project data was imported directly into EPS which was then used for predicting resource requirements, first on a project basis, but eventually for the entire portfolio of projects. The key difference was the ability of ProModel's technology to delay task completions when no resources were available, and at the same time, predict the project completion as if they were. These two data points pointed out how bad the current project portfolio was and how good it could be.

In addition, EPS showed the potential weaknesses in the project plans, such as critical paths, and interdependency between shared resources and projects. This ability allowed PRG to build parallel processes and contingency plans. Below is a typical Resource Usage chart showing the overcapacity nature of the PRG IT portfolio.

