

GROUPON®

CUSTOMER STORY

Groupon has the ticket to agility in a changing environment

Mature, thoughtful approach to Connected Planning delivers automation and standardization for fast-moving business

The Anaplan logo, featuring the word "Anaplan" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font with a stylized blue slash mark to the left of the letter 'A'.

Anaplan

SOLUTION:
Finance

INDUSTRY:
Business Services

As a young, fast-growing company, Groupon deployed Anaplan in 2013 for financial consolidations. Since then, Anaplan use has expanded across the company, including an innovative Master Data Management model that touches workforce, general ledger, vendor information, and financial data. A Center of Excellence (CoE), executive alignment, and custom training programs ensure that maximum benefits of automation and standardization are achieved.

Use cases

- 20+ connected use cases, including:
 - Financial consolidations.
 - Master Data Management (MDM).
 - Workforce planning.
 - Cash Flow and Capital Expenditures planning.
 - Zero-based supplier expense planning.
 - Revenue and gross profit planning.

Challenges

- Rapid company change and reporting requirements.
- Constantly evolving priorities and emphases.
- Desire for automation and standardization.

Solution

- Models for financial consolidations.
- Innovative MDM model.
- Anaplan Center of Excellence + executive sponsorship.

Results at a glance

- One source of data for key financial documents.
- Ongoing alignment between finance and corporate goals.
- 50% of users are power users.

Why Anaplan

- Powerful planning and modeling engine for a variety of use cases.
- Enterprise scalability enables use cases to grow and evolve with the business.

Partner

- Impetus Consulting Group

Company

Groupon is an experience marketplace that brings people more ways to get the most out of their city or wherever they may be by enabling real-time mobile commerce across local businesses, live events, and travel destinations. Groupon helps local businesses grow and strengthen customer relationships, resulting in strong, vibrant communities.

Since its founding in 2008, Groupon has steadily grown and evolved to meet the needs of its customers and merchants. Anaplan has been in use at Groupon since 2013 and has been proud to play a supporting role in its growth. “We were pioneers,” says Groupon’s Finance Manager Megan Carrozza. “We were one of the first Anaplan customers in the Chicago area.”

As a result, Groupon has developed a mature, thoughtful approach to Connected Planning that provides inspiration and examples for companies everywhere along the Anaplan journey.

“The 20+ use cases in the Anaplan environment at Groupon are organized into three groups,” says Carrozza, a Master Anaplanner and leader of the company’s Anaplan Center of Excellence (CoE).

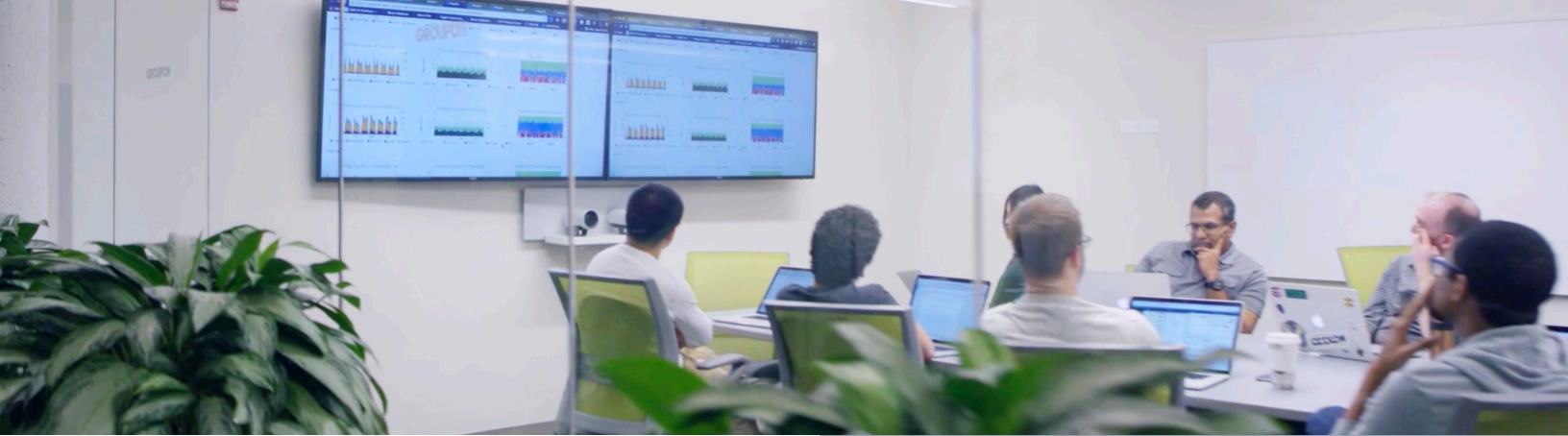
- Financial consolidations provide the primary source of truth for key financial documents such as Groupon’s income statement and balance sheet.
- Financial forecasting and modeling use cases support financial outlooks and analytics, and include revenue and gross profit planning, workforce planning, CapEx planning, and vendor-level planning.
- Center of Excellence (CoE) models support, and are shared by, the other use cases. For example, an innovative Master Data Management (MDM) model helps align key data across disparate systems: employee information from Workday, general ledger figures from NetSuite, vendor data from Coupa, and Anaplan itself, using SnapLogic for extract-transform-load (ETL) tasks.

The Anaplan models are run by the Center of Excellence (CoE) team, who are finance team members. Anaplan users work in many different finance functions. “A majority of team members who report up to our CFO uses Anaplan,” Carrozza explains.

The four-member CoE, along with model builders in specific finance functions, oversees the entire environment. (This is called a *Centralized/Federated* hybrid approach.) The CoE annually reviews projects for alignment with company strategy, develops and maintains standards for all Anaplan models at Groupon, and runs a rigorous, customized internal enablement program that trains more model builders in the organization. These efforts have also helped make about half of Groupon’s 150+ Anaplan users

“A majority of team members who report up to our CFO uses Anaplan.”

Megan Carrozza, Financial Manager



into power users.

Carrozza says the resulting automation and standardization benefit the entire company. Automation cuts down mundane tasks and makes them more accurate, which delivers substantial time-savings; and standardization removes complexity and enables people to move easily between projects. Automation and standardization also help with process improvement, she adds: “We never lift and shift a process when moving it to Anaplan. We make sure it’s done in the way that makes the most sense.”

And that yields the most important business benefit of all: Agility in a changing business environment. Carrozza sums it up this way: “The power of Anaplan to apply automation and standardization to a fast-moving company like Groupon is really powerful.”

“The power of Anaplan to apply automation and standardization to a fast-moving company like Groupon is really powerful.”

Megan Carrozza, Financial Manager

Groupon’s keys to success

Groupon’s years of successful growth and expansion with Anaplan can be attributed to two factors, according to Center of Excellence (CoE) leader Megan Carrozza:

- Executive sponsorship. The tradition of leadership engagement and alignment that began in the early years of Anaplan use at Groupon continues to this day. Groupon’s CoE team meets with the company’s executive leaders monthly to give updates and receive guidance for the coming month and quarter. “After all, who knows the company strategy and where things are going better than those folks?” Carrozza asks. “They’ve been pivotal and helpful in guiding everything we’re doing.”
- Having a CoE. Groupon’s CoE helps the company apply its resources in the best possible way, which is especially important in a fast-moving business. “The power of Connected Planning is in connecting more and more models, processes, and functions,” Carrozza says, “but there are risks in growing fast without having a dedicated, aligned team.” Groupon’s CoE is supplemented by partner resources from time to time, but Carrozza believes in-house expertise that intimately speaks Groupon’s language saves both time and money in the long run.

Carrozza adds that these two factors work together to unlock success. “It’s a really powerful combination, and it’s leading the way,” she says.

About Anaplan

Anaplan (NYSE: PLAN) is pioneering the category of Connected Planning. Our platform, powered by our proprietary Hyperblock™ technology, purpose-built for Connected Planning, enables dynamic, collaborative, and intelligent planning. Large global enterprises use our solution to connect people, data, and plans to enable real-time planning and decision-making in rapidly changing business environments to give our customers a competitive advantage. Based in San Francisco, we have over 20 offices globally, 175 partners, and more than 1,400 customers worldwide.

To learn more, visit [Anaplan.com](https://www.anaplan.com)

