

Case Study

Business Intelligence & Augmented Analytics

Smarten Business Intelligence Implementation for a Leading Pipes Manufacturer



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Client

The client is one of the leading pipe manufacturers in India and among only a few companies adopting the latest technology and quality control programs that are widely accepted at a global level to develop CPVC plumbing systems as per the Indian plumbing market.

The company has manufacturing units at Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu.

The Objective

The client needed a scalable, comprehensive, and robust Business Intelligence tool to fulfill their vision of building a strong decision support system that runs on their ERP from a local vendor and is rolled out across different departments, such as Sales, Finance, Manufacturing, and Procurement & HR, later client migrated to SAP® (R/3 ECC6.0).

They needed a simple BI to derive consolidated analysis of data coming from their ERP and spreadsheets for timely decision-making. They also needed hassle-free migration of BI objects post changing their ERP to SAP® (R/3 ECC6.0).

Challenges

- The ERP system spread across various units did not adequately support the organizational structure.
- Need for Sales Performance Dashboard to measure sales performance of various Segments, Regions, Product, and Regional Heads.
- Need for Dealer Performance Dashboard to measure performance of their vast dealer and distribution network.
- Need to identify potential market for new product launched based on its revenue growth.
- Track Actual Vs. Target and monitor variance and exception reporting for each Sales Head.
- Dynamic ad hoc analysis for faster and more confident decision-making.
- Reduce time to publish reports to various stakeholders on periodic basis.
- Need for uniform, multidimensional information architecture for accurate, timely data analysis.
- Compatibility of BI with different data sources and different mobile devices.

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To overcome these challenges, the client wanted a powerful Business Intelligence (BI) solution built on industry-standard architecture that was flexible enough to connect to all data sources available now and in future. The client expected the BI system to answer all business and time-critical questions efficiently and wanted a system that could be accessed through browsers from any location.

After exploring several platforms ranging from internal solutions to other BI vendors, following a Proof of Concept, they selected the Smarten tool for its speed, simplicity, and flexibility. Also, it was rare combination of Traditional and Modern BI in one platform.

The Solution

The Smarten team presented a Proof of Concept with industry-specific templates to the client to show how Smarten would effectively satisfy all their functional and technical needs. The demonstration involved the client's Technical and Management teams. They analyzed the solution from various perspectives of implementing a centralized BI system in their organization.

The client's IT team working in consultation with the Smarten team built optimized multidimensional data models from various data sources scattered

throughout the organization. The Smarten team also helped identify effective KPIs for various functional areas and implemented them within the BI solution. Comprehensive training and on-site implementation facilitated a short implementation cycle. A simple, user-friendly interface allowed leveraging of the BI solution for every business user, requiring no programming or expert support. Smarten's compatibility with various data sources and fine-grain security helped the organization harness the BI potential to its fullest.

Hands-on workshops on BI concepts, best practices, system administration, and end user training were conducted for power users who further trained other users in the organization thereby ensuring rapid implementation of the business intelligence solution. In addition, the Smarten solution worked as a self-starter package, leading to significant reduction in Total Cost of Ownership for the client.

Technology & Platform

- Server : IBM Blade Centre
- O.S. : Windows 2008
- ERP : ERP from local vendor & SAP® (R/3 ECC 6.0)
- Backend (Database) : Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Enterprise

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Key business intelligence objects implemented in the first phase of deployment include the following:

Sales

- Sales Performance Dashboard
 - ❖ Product segment
 - ❖ Customer category
 - ❖ Region segment
 - ❖ Sales Head
 - ❖ Dealer & Distributor network
- Actual Vs. Target & Variance Analysis
- Top Product, Region & Sales Head analysis
- Stock outs Analysis

- Key Market penetration and Revenue Growth Summary for new product

Finance

- Financial Performance Summary
- Income & Expense Analysis
- Ageing analysis of outstanding dues

Smarten Team Role

Keeping in mind the needs and business functions of the client, Smarten provided dedicated consultancy and support services to the client for the following:

- Installation & connectivity with data sources
- Support for migration of BI objects post ERP migration to SAP
- Power User Training to design, develop, and deploy Sales Performance Dashboard and cross-tab analysis, graphs, and reports
- BI concepts and best practices sessions
- Technical training
- Administration training

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- Business analyst training
- End user training

Conclusion

The Smarten team helped the client in establishing a corporate Business Intelligence system rather than merely setting up a Business Intelligence tool for reporting.

Key Benefits and Deliverables:

- Sales Dashboard covering Sales, Revenue, and Profits for different stakeholders with fine-grain access rights, enabling a view that is meaningful to their roles and responsibilities.
- Cross-tab Analysis of Revenue Growth to identify potential market for New Product.
- Exception reporting to monitor sales performance against given target.
- Publishing of reports to various stakeholders on a periodic basis.
- Ready-to-use sales templates, low cost of acquisition, short rollout time, and less training needs added to lower TCO.

- User-friendly and self-serve interface reduced burden of ad hoc queries to IT team.
- Enterprise architecture with zero footprint browser interface ensured rapid rollout across various locations to a large number of users.
- Responsive user interface allowed users to access the solution with all popular smart phones, tablets, and other mobile devices.

The Smarten solution deployed has offered a web-based, self-serve, error-free BI system to the client in a short amount of time within a rational budget. Client intends to use ready templates of HR, Production, and Finance in future.

The success of this project is a perfect example of how Smarten's augmented analytics, short implementation cycle, and Self-serve data preparation capabilities allowed data integration from disparate sources ensure rollout with highest ROI and decreased TCO.

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