

This UK Tele-Communications Provider (UKTP) now have real-time visibility of sales and customer service performance across the organisation, and of a granularity to meet the needs of each different tier of user.

visualmetrics Solutions Consultant, and project delivery lead, commented:

“The customer was undergoing rapid growth and needed to ensure that as they expanded, they were able to run as effectively as they did when they were a small business. The **visualintegrator** Data Warehouse and SAP BusinessObjects based reporting solution, which **visualmetrics** scoped, designed and implemented, delivers them cross-organisation Information Insight of sales performance, imperative to enable UKTP to deliver against its customer service objectives and maintain service excellence during this substantial growth phase.”

Profile UKTP has developed a broad range of products, solutions and services for Networking, Data Centre and Unified Communications aligned to the fundamental challenges facing SME organisations. Today, UKTP services over 3000 customers.



The Challenge

UKTP's operations can be segregated into two key product categories: Solutions, which are comprised of hardware, software and service components, for Networking, Data Centre and Unified Communications; Services, including Professional & Consulting services, Project & Programme management and delivery, Support, Training and managed Services. These Solutions and Services are devised to ensure:

- Enhanced Customer Service
- Maximised Productivity
- Operational Efficiency
- Security, Compliance & Continuity
- Corporate Social Responsibility

Following a period of sustained and controlled growth, UKTP recognised that its current Business Intelligence solutions were not adequate to support the future demand for information across the organisation.

Quality of Reporting System

Sustained growth across all areas of UKTP's operations had resulted in a multitude of operational solutions, each collecting data in isolated stores or 'Data Silos'. Manual extracts from each silo formed the basis of divisional reports, and a labour intensive process integrated these static extracts to form group reports.

Cost of Production

Manual processes for data extraction, integration and de-duplication resulted in a significant and unnecessary cost drain, and failed to support fast informed decision making.

Quality of Information

The manual intervention necessitated by data extraction and collation left the process prone to human error, both in report generation and decisions resulting from them. Multiple versions of the truth, posed a continual irritation.

Relevance of Information

Access to data and control of the reporting process resided exclusively amongst those with the pre-requisite IT skills. The inherent difficulties in communicating requirements meant reports produced often failed to answer the critical business questions which promoted them.

Timeliness of Information Delivery

The cumbersome process for report generation and distribution meant information was usually only available monthly. Specific report requests were difficult to facilitate, and took significant time and effort to produce.

Modeling of Information

Report modeling was only possible through a process of review and feedback. Consequently it suffered from resource availability, communication inadequacies and insufficient tools. Consumer interrogation of data was impossible.

Sharing of Information

The timetables against which consumers received their reports resulted in multiple versions of the truth being created for each individual function. Combined with inconsistencies in definitions of key metrics, the process made cross-function and cross-department collaboration impractical. The solution also failed to enable streamlined sharing of individual reports.

Definition of Terms

Poor definitions of key business Measures and Metrics impeded communication and shared information analysis. The use of Excel as the primary reporting tool meant a consistent metadata could not be enforced.

The Solution

UKTP recognised the inherent short-falls of their reporting solution, and saw the opportunity to capitalise on the valuable information locked inside their operational Data Silos. Partnering with **visualmetrics**, and utilising our **visualintegrator** software integration and rapid deployment Data Warehouse toolset, delivered a cost effective, risk managed, flexible and future proof solution to UKTP's Data Warehouse and Business Intelligence reporting requirements.

The **Discover & Reveal** scoping exercise, part of **visualmetrics** DRIVE project delivery methodology, delivered an end-to-end blueprint for the Enterprise Wide solution.

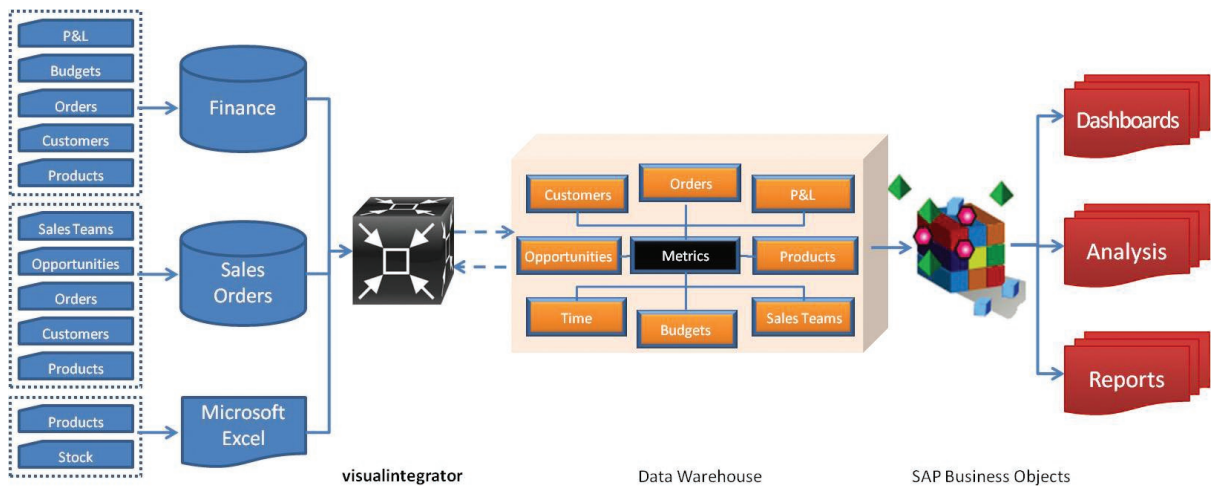
The D&R identified a set of KPIs, through which business performance is monitored. Some of the first phase KPIs included:

- Sales Order Value (SOV)
- SOV YTD
- Top 5 Orders
- Gross Margin
- Gross Margin Variants
- Sales Order Mix
- Selling, General and Administrative Expenses
- EBITDA

The Data Warehouse hierarchies reflect UKTP's required reporting structures; analysis of metrics by:

- Time
- Budgets
- Customers
- Sales Teams
- P&L (General Ledger)
- Orders
- Opportunities
- Products

Analysis & Reporting



visualintegrator and Microsoft Sql Server 2008 were utilised to automate the creation of the Data Warehouse that would capture data on a daily basis from the existing, and anticipated future, operational systems. Its "plug and play" nature enables simple streamlined introduction of new systems.

In phase 1 of the project, extracts were written which captured data from the Finance and Sales applications. Controlled data capture spreadsheets allowed swift entry of both Project Control and Stock Location information. The solutions' ETL process performs a complete refresh of the **visualintegrator** Data Warehouse, and upwards of 500,000 records, on a nightly basis.

A series of high impact interactive SAP Business Objects Xcelsius Dashboards were designed and developed for Executive and Managerial users to allow both fast assimilation of key information, and interactive analysis on trends over time.



The Benefits

Business Effectiveness

Project Compass developed UKTP a solution capable of delivering and conducting timely analysis of sales performance across all divisions and lines of business, thereby enabling the organisation to dynamically react to trends in customer buying behaviour, manage opportunity forecast and react to service demands. Insight into performance is delivered at a significantly lower cost, with savings swiftly justifying the investment.

Performance can be reported across a number of key dimensions against defined Measures to quickly answer critical questions such as:

- **Who are UKTP's top ten customers this quarter by revenue?**
- **What is the expected revenue pipeline this month for Product A in Region B? How does that compare to last quarter?**
- **Which product has generated the highest % Margin in last quarter, which generated the lowest?**
- **Which region has the highest average Margin ratio?**
- **How did Sales Revenues for Milestone sales in BTB North Region last month compare to month before?**

Information Integrity

The automated processes by which **visualintegrator** validates and loads data into the Data Warehouse enforces data quality and streamlines the introduction of new data sources thereby removing the requirement for manual manipulation. The result being accurate and unambiguous information, which utilises one consistent universal terminology, is shared by all consumers.

Relevance of Information

Information is now tailored, and delivered, to users' precise needs. Directors and senior managers utilise a series of interactive high level KPI (Key Performance Indicator) SAP Business Objects dashboards to monitor daily performance, as well as an intuitive toolset which enables them to conduct ad hoc reporting with drill down and query capability. Data analysts can now spend their time utilising the new powerful toolset to perform complex analyses on customer trends.

Independence of Users

Intuitive tools, and a robust communal portal through which reports are accessed, has enabled users to self-service their own reporting requirements. In turn these new tools and processes have enabled closer collaboration and swift communication between Directors and data analysts.

Ease of Use

The SAP Business Objects toolsets utilise a set of templates which give reports and dashboards a UKTP look and feel, or allow for customisation to meet specific needs. Users have been given specific access and functionality based on their requirements and abilities, and trained in their use as part of the solution.

Uniformity of Terms

The combination of **visualintegrator** and Business Objects Master Data Management functionalities enforces a strict control on data quality through a consistent business terminology aligned metadata. Reporting against KPI using known, understood and controlled business terms has enabled meaningful communication across the organisation, simplified collaboration, and a single version of the truth to be shared by all



The Case for Business Intelligence

We are familiar with the maxim.

- We know what we know
- We know what we don't know
- We don't know what we don't know
- There is another dimension, just as important.

We don't know what we know

To quote a former HR head of Hewlett Packard "if Hewlett Packard knew half of what it knows, it would be twice the size" This was an eloquent way of saying that HP understood that realising its untapped knowledge was the most productive singular step the business could take. This is a situation familiar to many organisations. They know that within the wealth of data they have is knowledge that would help to run the business better. They often know where to find this information but the time and cost it takes to make it coherent diminishes its usefulness. Worse, they know that there is business critical knowledge within this data, if it could be identified.

They don't know what they know.

This is the Business Intelligence challenge. To identify topics that are critical to business performance. To identify information within the data stores relevant to these topics. To mine the data and organise it in patterns that illustrate relationships. To manipulate this information to show the behaviour and trends which flow from these relationships. And finally to present the findings to decision makers in a time frame and form that allows insight to be drawn and action to be taken.

Business Intelligence (BI) answers this challenge through solutions based on a number of key principles.

One Version of the Truth

A common problem organisations face is that information used by different parts of the business is often collected from disparate sources of data. This can lead to inconsistency and conflict. BI applications developed by **visualmetrics** are based on a single repository of data. There is always only one **version of the truth**.

Business Intuitive

Traditional reporting often delivered little more than large reports containing even larger volumes of data. Interpretation was left to the reader. A key characteristic of the BI solution is that it presents information in a multidimensional format that allows cause and effect relationships to be interactively explored. By being **business intuitive** a BI application quickly brings insight into how the business is working.

Fit for Purpose

Different members of an organisation will require information pulled from the same sets of data but pitched at differing levels of detail and scope. The needs of the Board will differ from that of the Functions even when the same topic is being examined. BI applications present information that is **fit for purpose** for its user.

Just in Time

A reporting solution should optimally present up to date performance information with sufficient time for effective consequential actions to be taken. BI applications are designed with this **just in time** concept in mind.

Self Service

While information is designed so it is fit for purpose, there is often the need to manipulate it further by drilling down to greater detail, or to look for behavioural relationships between other sets of data. This needs to be achieved quickly and cost effectively. BI applications provide for a high level of **self service**.

Information Supply Chain

None of the preceding benefits of a BI application are possible without there being the capacity to identify, capture and consolidate data from an organisation's functional applications. To do this in the required time frame, and without operationally impacting these applications, requires sophisticated automation. **visualmetrics' visualintegrator** software automates the **information supply chain**.



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