

EDITORS LETTER

Welcome to the second edition of visualmetrics NEWS.

Many thanks to all of you who contacted us on receiving edition one. It was good to know that you found it both interesting and informative.

In this edition, we have included a range of stories and features, that will give both current and prospective customers a broad understanding of our business.

Many thanks to those who have contributed comments for inclusion.

Further case studies, and information about our applications and professional service offerings, can be viewed on our website at www.visualmetrics.co.uk but don't forget, we are still a business that likes to talk to people directly, so don't hesitate to give us a call.

Happy reading!

The Editor

"Who are visualmetrics?"

The ethos of visualmetrics is centred on two simple principles, namely working in a collaborative way with our clients and partners on goals of mutual benefit, by bringing value to each others businesses. In addition, by providing an environment in which our employees develop their career and personal aspirations in a "life-style" cultured business.

Since our last newsletter, there have been two new additions to the

visualmetrics team, Adam Westbrook & Dave Heath. Adam has joined us after 8 years at HBOS, working in their 3rd party channel, developing affinity business, working in conjunction with the Contact Centre as an operational medium. Adam's role will be to develop the Partner community within visualmetrics. Dave Heath, who recently graduated from Bristol University with a degree in Business Information Systems, has joined our technical support team who are

responsible for the Technical Support of both current projects & existing supported customers.



Adam Westbrook

We welcome Adam & Dave to the team and hope that they have long and fruitful careers with visualmetrics.

"Did you know"

From research done by recognised Global IT Analysts, the overall Business Intelligence market (aka: QRA - "Query, Reporting & Analysis") is still growing at a compound rate of 7% per annum, with the overall global revenues this year being \$3.7Bn. But there is a shift from just buying BI tools towards three key trends:

- **Pre-Built Analytical Applications** which address key business subject areas such as Sales, Inventory, Finance, Supply Chain, and more.
- **Regulatory & Internal compliance** for auditability re: Sarbannes-Oxley (SOX), Basle II, and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- **Optimising** the existing BI investment through the use of **external audit services**, BI tools rationalisation, data infrastructure, and "best practices".

visualmetrics has capability in all three of these business areas. For more information please email info@visualmetrics.co.uk.

"Packaged Solutions, Compliance and Optimisation".

CONTENTS

page2

- How to plan for success first time
- There's more to life than BI
- Jargon jungle

page3

- New Business wins
- Case Studies

page4

- Enhance Your People Skills
- Our business partners

“How to plan for success first time”

Committing to an investment in a BI project is more than just a capital commitment from the business, or even the individual sponsorship from a senior management individual. Information touches all business functions and user groups within a company, therefore the “commitment” has much broader reaching business implications. As a result of these implications, it is important that a company embraces the project commitment with its eyes wide open.

In conjunction with one of our consulting partners, visualmetrics have constructed a succinct qualification card, which will ensure you have covered all the business bases, before capital approval is signed off, and the project is initiated. This will ensure a greater chance of optimising the investment and overall business success.

For a copy, please subscribe via email: info@visualmetrics.co.uk, or contact Dave Heath on 0870 7606467.

“Did you know”

Business Intelligence is evolving into business-led application deployment. Conversationally, Business Performance Management (BPM), Business Activity Monitoring (BAM) and Information Democracy are key drivers to the successful adoption of BI within businesses.

There's more to life than BI



“Chris wins the Cup” - as a stress buster, Chris Coan has been running a local football team for the last 3 years, and after a successful year in the league & festivals, his team won the Chester & District Cup competition. All credit to the lads who won 3 - 2 in extra time.

“Mercy Ships recycled phones” - David Evans, Finance & Operations manager has worked in the business for over 7 years now, and his commitment extends far beyond visualmetrics. David is heavily involved in local Christian work, and recently recycled all the old visualmetrics mobile phones, the proceeds of which were given to Mercy Ships. To find out more about how you can contribute to this charitable cause look on www.mercyships.org.uk

Jargon jungle

It is well recognised that IT, and specifically the area of Business Intelligence (BI) is full of jargon which can be mis-leading and mis-interpreted. visualmetrics uses consistent pre-defined terms when discussing both business and technically oriented aspects of BI projects. Below are the terms which visualmetrics use, and believe are most business applicable, and of broadest demand within companies today.

BI - Business Intelligence: Software tools which are employed in the overall delivery of BPM-based solutions, from companies such as Cognos & Business Objects

Metrics - A client's business measures which are quantifiable, including their associated business rules (aka KPIs)

Methods - A client's business processes which are employed in conjunction with the BI-tools and Business Metrics to fulfil the overall BPM objectives

BPM - Business Performance Management: The sum of BI, Metrics, and Methods (otherwise known as CPM: Corporate Performance Management, or EPM: Enterprise Performance Management)

BPM Definition - a business activity for better decision making, not better systems. It is used to plan on a time basis (month, quarter, year) for proactive planning, not just to “keep score”, delivering a “joined up” view from management underpinned by a “Data Integration Model”

Analytical Application - a pre-built application using a BI toolset, based on a “domain of data” which allows businesses to track, monitor and effect business performance through the analysis of their Metrics

Data Warehouse - an off-line database which retains all the aggregated and restructured data relating to the delivery of a BPM solution through an Analytical Application

Data Mart - a single subject-based, off-line database which retains all the aggregated and restructured data relating to the delivery of a BPM solution through an Analytical Application

Information Supply chain - A suite of software programmes which automate the time-based selective extract transformation and loading of relevant data for reporting purposes

NEW BUSINESS WINS

AMG Ashworth Mairs Group (AMG) is one of the most successful firms of international Loss Adjusters, Surveyors and Engineers to emerge in the UK in the last 50 years. Having enjoyed rapid expansion, AMG saw that future growth was dependent on being able to bring additional value to its clients, particularly through the supply of management information on client business. Achievement of this key competitive advantage demanded a Business Intelligence system that offered each client its own self service, analytical and on demand view of the status of all its claims business.

AMG's starting situation was not unfamiliar - internal operational systems as the source of data coupled with a heavy reliance on

internal IT resources to configure customer specific reporting. As a consequence, maintenance costs were relatively high and flexibility towards client needs was constrained.

AMG commissioned visualmetrics to design and implement a Business Intelligence solution to meet this challenge. The visualmetrics application captures data from Head Office operational claims management system and case information from regional offices into a SQL Server and Business Objects served Datamart. Clients and internal users now have summary and detailed analysis of general claims information, project management and predictive cost models.

Real and tangible benefits are being enjoyed by both AMG and its clients.

UNIPART

Unipart Automotive have recently contracted with visualmetrics to develop a BI-based application focused on optimising the Inventory element of their Supply Chain Management. Nigel Goodey, Director of Planning at Unipart Automotive said "Product inventory is the lifeblood of our business. Get the planning wrong and you can lose sales as well as having precious cash tied up in excess inventory. The visualmetrics application is designed to help us improve our information management in this key area". visualmetrics are delighted to have extended their project work with Unipart into other business areas, and look forward to a strong ongoing working relationship.

EXEL HEALTHCARE

"In the contract distribution market, performance management against both client Service Levels (SLAs) and internal operational metrics (KPIs) are key to achieving optimal business efficiency. Exel recognised the need for a balanced scorecard for warehousing and distribution" said Paul White, IT Director of Exel Logistics, Healthcare Division.

"Because visualmetrics has extensive knowledge of our business and the sector, they were the obvious choice. Their application and consultancy knowledge have greatly assisted us in this area".

AVAYA

Avaya have contracted with visualmetrics recently to enhance the Avaya Operational Analyst - Advanced a BI-based application which will help a major media client become more operationally efficient in managing the Customer Service aspect of their Contact Centres in Belfast & Glasgow. Bret Lathrop of Avaya was quoted as saying, "Avaya is very proud of the Interaction Center suite and particularly the amount of open access ways the solution can provide BI. We are equally proud of our partnership with visualmetrics in taking the BI we offer to the next level." visualmetrics are delighted to be in partnership with Avaya and look forward to a long and successful relationship with them.

Hazlewood Pizzas

Hazlewood Pizza is the UK's second-biggest private own-label producer of chilled and frozen pizzas, producing 13 million individual units a month from a product range of 75, with annual revenues of £50m. Its customers include Asda, Iceland, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Safeway.

Hazlewood Pizza recognised it needed better business reporting to give it real-time information and greater control over the business. Management wanted to analyse to a greater degree than the current database allowed the revenue and costs relating to the company's various customer contracts. Typically, a contract between Hazlewood Pizza and a customer will be signed to supply product for three years. During the contract's lifetime, Hazlewood Pizza needs to calculate volume, forecast peaks in demand and fix the price.

It also needs to carry out financial reporting, analysing profit and loss, balance sheet and projected budget costs.

The brief was to build two applications: one for sales analysis and the other for financial analysis. In particular, Hazlewood wanted to be able to calculate net profit in real time and to improve sales analysis by product volume. The financial analysis from the general ledger, included profit & loss and balance sheet as well as reporting individual cost comparison statements for different products. Actual spend versus budget can also be analysed.

Hazlewood Pizza IT manager Mike Bartkiw said: "The applications generate a number of standard reports on a weekly basis. We have a master database and several smaller databases. Some are customer specific so an account manager can provide data that the customer sees on his calendar file and not ours. Such innovations are very popular with customers. Other new dimensions include brand dimensions that offer a greater level of drill through. We now have many more dimensions to our database, meaning more information and more control. We now have up-to-date figures on the current position in real time, on-line, as opposed to three weeks later, which was standard previously."

The visualmetrics applications gave business managers enhanced information visibility, and for the first time Hazlewood could work out if it was going to achieve its net profit targets on a week-by-week basis.

Mike Bartkiw added: "visualmetrics were very professional. We sat down and developed the project. We read it through and made sure that it was understood even before we started. Before implementation, everything was developed and checked and we all went on a visualmetrics training course."

visualmetrics founding director Chris Coan said: "At the outset we agreed a project plan, by defining the business issues, the users and their needs. Then we built the application."

We are delighted to be working with Hazlewood Pizzas, which extends our working relationship within the Hazlewood Food group.

Enhance Your People Skills

visualmetrics can deliver application-based training courses as part of its overall project delivery services, and recently delivered two courses for Operational, Management, & Executives of Hazlewoods over a two day period. Mike Bartkiw of Hazlewoods said, "The training went very well and the feedback that I've had indicates that everybody on the course found it was pitched at the right level, and was very conducive to an effective learning process".



If you wish to have application training as part of your project delivery or as a user refresher course for lapsed

or new end users, then please contact visualmetrics via training@visualmetrics.co.uk, or contact David Evans on 0870 760 6467

"Did you know"

Research undertaken by independent analysts confirms that 58% of all BI-based projects fail to deliver against their Executive Capital Expenditure due to insufficient training investment.

"our business partners"

To achieve its business objectives of being a premier organisation in the delivery of Analytical Applications, which derive business value for its clients, visualmetrics recognises the need to have a range of business partners who fall into three distinct categories:

- **Product vendors** who develop industry leading BI tools & BI suites. These are core components of the applications which visualmetrics already has, or will develop for custom specific reasons.
- **Application vendors** who have market leading operational applications, in chosen business sectors & operational areas. Their clients have requirements for information analysis, which is satisfied by the applications and consulting services of visualmetrics.
- **Consulting partners** who are recognised industry experts in management consulting, and technical consulting areas.

visualmetrics has recently extended its business partnerships to include PCMS & Avaya, who are recognised leaders in the industry sectors of Retail Supply Chain solutions and outsourcing & Contact Centres multi-channel applications, respectively.

visualmetrics operate in close collaboration with these partners, when client requirements are defined. Recent examples of this include the AMG project, which was worked in conjunction with Business Objects, as well as BBC/Capita which was worked in conjunction with Avaya.

Product Partners



Application Partners



Service Partners



The Meadows Church Road Dodleston Chester CH4 9NG

T: +44 (0) 870 7606467 F: +44 (0) 870 7606468

www.visualmetrics.co.uk sales@visualmetrics.co.uk

NEWSLETTER

If you do not wish to receive future issues of the Newsletter, or you know of someone who would also benefit from receiving it, please email your request to: newsletter@visualmetrics.co.uk.

If you have any other comments relating to the Newsletter, please address them to the Editor at newsletter@visualmetrics.co.uk.