Get more out of your existing systems with Business Intelligence

Business Analytics: Comment article

Get more out of your existing systems with Business Intelligence

By Chris Safhill, Lead CRM Consultant at K3 Business Technology Group

Forward–thinking SMEs are getting more out of their computer system investments by using special software to help deliver Business Intelligence (BI) quickly and easily to the desktop. Such technology is removing the use of error–prone spreadsheets and information that could seriously damage the health and wealth of a company.

Chris Safhill, Lead CRM Consultant at K3 Business Technology Group explains.

Companies that have invested in modern Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and Customer Relationship Management systems (CRM) will be able to use the built–in analytical tools provided by the system. SYSPRO, for example, offers a wide range of pre–made dashboards that are designed specifically to meet the needs of manufacturing and distribution companies straight out of the box.

Using these easily navigable dashboards, means that managers and other staff can gain instant access to important information residing within a system s database. This automated procedure eliminates manual information gathering and reduces administration time and costs. The dashboard provides push–button simplicity and speed to getting the information   no more requests for other people to create reports and send them to the people who need them and so on. Anyone thinking of upgrading to a new computer system should give serious thought to dashboards!

It should be noted that such dashboards can be improved even further still with the addition of easy to use business intelligence software. The benefits of business intelligence are not restricted solely to those companies who have upgraded their computer systems. Indeed, in these challenging economic times some organisations are choosing not to buy new systems for buying sake. Instead, they are researching how they can do more with what they already have.

This is not straightforward because as a company grows, so does the extent of its information silos. This is exacerbated by each department recording information and creating reports in its own way. The administration time and effort needed to collate the information contained in each report can be a major issue, pulling people away from their main jobs and creating bottlenecks for the business.

Some see the use of spreadsheets to be a way forward and are satisfied with this flat view of their business. However, spreadsheets can be dangerous. One wrong number could be disastrous some errors may not see the light of day for weeks and by that time the damage is done. Creating a monthly spreadsheet report also adds further inertia to getting things done as each one can take days to produce even in the hands of experts.

Instead of this slow and error–prone spreadsheet process, companies need a single true view of the information buried deep within their various systems. Thankfully, there is an easily deployable business intelligence solution that can bring these various information streams together.

K3 Business Technology Group has had great success with a software product called QlikView. This is a relatively cost effective BI solution that is suitable for any industry. It can be implemented in days rather than weeks and a free copy is available for trial. The software is in daily use with thousands of organisations to provide highly structured and useful information to drive their business forward.

The software can be used with any source of data and we encourage its use with our own business system solutions, adding even more power to SYSPRO and Microsoft CRM.

The reason why SYSPRO and Microsoft products can also benefit from the addition of QlikView is simple. These powerful, state–of–the–art systems contain a huge wealth of information that Business Intelligence software quickly brings to the surface, allowing faster decision making and all of the associated benefits it brings. Research shows that customers using this software will reduce the time needed to analyse information by 51 per cent and decrease their reporting overhead by 28 per cent. They will also increase business agility by 38 per cent. As one customer said: seeing is believing!

Ends