QlikView

Go Ape chooses QlikView to reconnect with their rapidly expanding company

"Introducing QlikView has fundamentally changed the way in which we think about and run the business."

Sara Jane (S J) Galbraith, Director of ICT & Personnel, Go Ape

Go Ape was founded in 2001 by Tristram and Rebecca Mayhew, who recognised an opportunity to create a new outdoor 'tree top' adventure experience in the UK. Nine years and 26 courses later, Go Ape is one of the UK's fastest growing companies, enjoyed by adults and children alike and celebrated 2.5 million customer visits in June 2011.

Challenges

When Go Ape first opened the gates to its 'tree top' adventure the Directors were able to manage and identify with their business as they worked close to each site of operation.

However, success and rapid growth of this highly innovative and fun organisation meant that management soon became disconnected with their ever growing yet vital business. Attempts to report on this ended up as too many different data sources, too many spreadsheets, too much

information in too many places - everything was fragmented, and every report pack took too long to pull together. The company needed a simple yet effective reporting solution to allow them to reconnect with their business and allow them to manage in real-time.

S J Galbraith, Director of ICT & Personnel for Go Ape, explains: "As the business enjoyed rapid growth, we were forced to really consider how we could streamline our company data and IT solutions, while ensuring we continued to attract new customers and retain current ones not only in our UK sites but with our expansion into the US. We acknowledged that we needed to get granular, and as we expanded we were faced with the additional issues of recognising transactions from our US operations in our UK financial reporting systems."

Go Ape's systems and reporting structure include transactional processing - online, phone and onsite bookings, accounts – costs and revenue, daily reporting – critical operations e.g. incidents and health & safety, customer feedback – comments and ratings, recruitment, and trends.

At the start of each year, Go Ape has to recruit up to 500 people in the space of 3 weeks so that all their sites are fully staffed ready for a Spring opening. Operations and site managers need to access, retrieve and process applications, as well as conduct interviews and it was becoming increasingly difficult to manage this process with the specialist HR solution they used.

Solution Overview

Customer Name
Go Ape

Sector
Consumer Products, Retail & Distribution

Industry
Travel, Hospitality & Entertainment

Function
Executive, Sales, Marketing, Web, Operations, Finance, HR, R&D, IT, Quality Management

Geography
United Kingdom

Challenges
To easily and simply reconnect with an expanding business with a solution that could deliver accurate information and reports anytime and anywhere.

Solution
QlikView in all offices and 26 remote UK locations where users can easily view, analyse, manipulate, extract and report on information from different data sources.

Benefits
- Allowed management and remote location staff to re-connect with vital company data
- Reduced timescales four-fold in generating business critical reports
- Combining information for fully integrated data e.g. bookings v weather
- Spotting trends and gaining customer feedback insight
- Simplified recruitment process from receiving applications to interview process
- Delivered unified reporting solution – one stop shop
- Web access and eliminated delivery of large attachments – getting dependable IT to reach a wooden hut in the middle of a forest is not as easy as you might think!

Data Source Systems
Database: Various sources e.g. Excel & SQL

QlikTech Partner
Atlas

ATLAS
BUSINESS GROUP OF COMPANIES PLC

QlikView was utilised to give their managers the information they needed. Another example of a key challenge was the increasing amount of data maintained in spreadsheets coupled with limitations of records – Go Ape were storing more than the maximum 65,536 rows of data that an Excel 2003 spreadsheet could accommodate!

Selection

Go Ape started looking for a solution which would allow them to reconnect with their data and unify the reporting systems. Reporting solutions and a data warehouse were considered and the company first reviewed independent research by the Aberdeen Group to compare options. This established QlikView as a highly regarded intuitive business intelligence solution for analysis and reporting of multi-dimensional data through in-memory associative technology.

Go Ape also have a developing working partnership with Atlas Business, a QlikView partner, who also provide front line IT support, managed services and host the Go Ape's servers in their dedicated data centre. Atlas also recommended QlikView and is responsible for successfully managing the Go Ape consideration, purchase, deployment and ongoing use of QlikView.

QlikView was deployed in 5 days, including both installation and training, with very revealing and informative results and ensuring all data was fully integrated. This provided instant and valuable business insight, particularly in the Activity Booking System as Go Ape could now analyse and report on combined information, for example, bookings versus weather conditions, adult (gorilla) and child (baboon) attendance, and shows and no-shows. S J Galbraith continues**:** "If the analysis and reporting isn't right, we can't improve or grow our business - it's that simple. IT and BI

solutions should be hassle-free, uncomplicated and save time and money, and QlikView is certainly delivering against these objectives. This is particularly important as we have 26 outdoor locations in the UK alone that need to access, interact and report on intelligent information as easily and effectively as possible."

Business Benefits

Key to ongoing growth and due to the nature of the business, Go Ape constantly monitor customer feedback and adhere to their health and safety policy. QlikView delivers a single and combined view of all incidents e.g. rope burn, that may happen on their courses, and can report and analyse this information in real-time for both site teams and senior management. They are confidently able to say that their tree-top adventure activities are safe as well as fun.

Jan Beattie, Operations Manager comments, "At first some of our staff were a little unsure of QlikView as they were concerned about breaking the system! However, very quickly they recognised how intuitive and easy the solution is to use, which is testament to how QlikView is delivered as a BI solution that is genuinely simple yet effective. It has speeded up many things. As an example of this, a VAT reclaim report which used to take 40 hours per quarter to generate, with QlikView we can now do this within 4 hours!"

QlikView has provided senior management, office staff and site managers with critical information anytime and anywhere, particularly for the site managers who rely on wireless access. It is also planned for Go Ape to take advantage of accessing QlikView in a mobile environment starting with senior management working with their data through QlikView from their iPhones.

S J Galbraith concludes, **"**QlikView really is business discovery and has been such a success that it is now used across our entire business. As our business continues to grow and we diversify our offerings with our onsite cafes, bike-hire and off-road Segways, QlikView is a vital analysis and reporting solution helping us understand our business, and successes as well as helping us decide on where improvements might be made or new services provided."

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