QlikView

The Cocoa Trees tastes sweet success in eliminating workflow inefficiencies and improving business decisions with QlikView

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>
> *Wess Wong, Director, Finance and Buisness Development, Focus Network Agencies (s) Pte Ltd, owner of The Cocoa Trees.*

Solution Overview

The Cocoa Trees
The Cocoa Trees is Singapore's largest chocolate distributor and retailer representing more than 35 internationally renowned chocolate brands such as Kraft (Toblerone, Milka, Daim, Cote d'Or) Masterfoods (M&M's, Snickers, Mars), Ferrero Rocher, Herhseys, Cadbury and Nestle. The company exports to duty-free operators in the region and has sales and warehousing facilities in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and China to service the domestic markets (supermarkets and independent stores) of those countries. It operates 15 chocolate boutiques in Singapore.

Industry
Retail & Wholesale Distribution

Function
Sales and Inventory

Geography
Singapore

Solution
The Cocoa Trees deployed QlikView to 10 key business users across the sales divisions (export, retail, local, purchasing, accounts and top management), all within 40 manhours. With QlikView, management can view the real time sales performance every morning, and each department can analyze the data by drilling down to the transaction/document level.

Data Source Systems
Application: MS Navision
Database: MS SQL Server

QlikTech Partner
Knowledge Management Solutions Pte Ltd
IBIZ Consulting Services Pte Ltd

THE COCOA TREES®

The Cocoa Trees is the largest distributor and retailer of chocolate and confectionary products in the Asia Pacific region. A local success story, it started in 1991 with just 5 people, representing 2 brands. In 1999, it launched the popular The Cocoa Trees chocolate boutique stores in Singapore. Today, it has a portfolio of more than 35 internationally renowned brands such as Kraft (Toblerone, Milka, Daim,

Cote d'Or) Masterfoods (M&M's, Snickers, Mars), Ferrero Rocher, Herhseys, Cadbury and Nestle, and a distribution network that covers most of Indo-China, Southeast, North and Northeast Asia and as far west as India.

Challenge:
A crippling inventory control system

In 2004, the company found that its accounting system, which was designed for generating static reports and

financial statements, and based on batch processing, became inadequate for the rapidly growing operations. They were unable to generate reports on inventory levels on-demand or in real-time. Twice a month, the warehouse supervisor had to physically inspect stocks to prepare an inventory expiry date report to monitor the shelf-life of these perishable items. It was time-consuming as each report took two days to complete, with inevitable errors. Service levels were unsatisfactory as the order fulfillment cycle took too long. Salespeople could not propose or confirm orders with customers immediately against inventory levels. On top of that, because of the lack of clarity on inventory, some salespeople circumvented the system by physically pre-packing stocks at the warehouse to reserve the stocks, leading to many internal conflicts.

With the old system, there was no automatic comparison between current and historical sales performance. Users had to painstakingly cut and paste data into a single file in order to get this information.

Clarity and accuracy at the click of a mouse

In 2004, the company decided that it had to eliminate these workflow inefficiencies and started looking for a solution that would help them achieve this.

"We started looking for a solution that enables real-time, user-friendly and flexible access to information. I was very pleasantly surprised at how QlikView could deliver dynamic insights instantaneously at an attractive price point. I knew this was exactly what I was looking for," said Wess Wong, Director, Finance and Business Development, Focus Network Agencies (S) Pte Ltd, owner of The Cocoa Trees. "QlikView provides business intelligence so quickly. All you do is click your mouse and you will know everything from inventory status, customer demand patterns, to sales performance. The short implementation time was also impressive."

In January 2005, The Cocoa Trees started implementing QlikView. It took only 40 man-hours for it to be customized to their needs.

The Cocoa Trees used Navision to assign expiry dates to inventory, allow users to "lot-track" inventory by expiry date and allow transaction processing/posting to maintain inventory balances in real-time. Data from Navision was then put through QlikView to create dynamic dashboards and analysis that offered much more insight than static reports typically generated from ERP systems.

With QlikView, information is constantly updated, and all departments from export sales, retail sales, local sales, purchasing, accounts and even the CEO, can access inventory and sales information in real-time. Reports for suppliers can be generated instantaneously, and customer orders can be confirmed immediately with the clarity of inventory status.

This greatly improved efficiency as the sales team knew exactly how much inventory is available and who has made reservations against what stock. Salespeople can easily analyze the sales information according to different variables, such as sales in weight, quantity or value and sales by country, by customer and by SKU to plan their sales strategy, rather than selling blindly.

The company now plans and executes more effective campaigns to drive sales with this new level of insight into their data. For example, by knowing the stock expiry dates, stocks can be cleared at a discount at the right time, rather than too early. By knowing how many gifts with purchases have been given out and for which brands, as well as the invoice numbers, the company can now file the claims from the right suppliers. With QlikView, it is now possible for users to automatically compare historical and current sales information.

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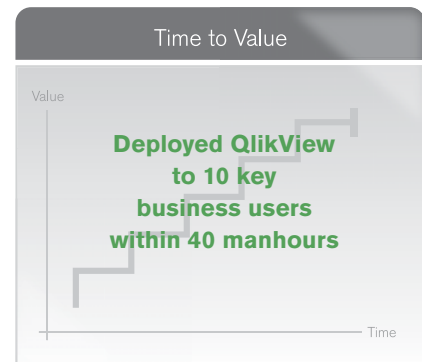
Time to Value

Value

Deployed QlikView to 10 key business users within 40 manhours

Time

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