



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2019

IBM Financial Performance Dashboard

Best Operational Excellence Project under 90 Days



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Synopsis

On its journey to building the Premier Cognitive Enterprise, IBM launched the Enterprise Performance Management (EPM) initiative. EPM is a framework for organizing, automating and analyzing business data, metrics, processes, and systems to optimize IBM's overall performance.

Based on the EPM solution and within only six weeks, a global, cross functional team designed, developed, and released the IBM Financial Performance Dashboard to the Europe geography.

The dashboard is enabling finance teams to streamline the creation and consumption of key financial performance metrics and to accelerate evidence-based decision making across the IBM management system.

It is changing the way we work and the way we run our business. Performance metrics are digitized, visualized, and put in the hands of the Europe Geo and Market Finance and Business leaders for self-service and to take immediate business actions.

The solution has been developed and delivered iteratively, applying Agile best practices and principles. A small, self-directed team collaborated and co-created the dashboard, delivering value quickly and continuously enhancing the solution based on the needs and feedback of the stakeholders.

The dashboard saves the Finance team 1,200h of manual work to create and distribute spreadsheets and charts. The team can now focus on analysis, providing insights and supporting the business to make better and faster decisions.

IBM Financial Performance Dashboard is based on IBM Cognos Analytics and is integrated with a cloud-based file sharing solution, enabling a secure automatic dashboard creation and distribution. It is mobile enabled, compatible with all operating systems and accessible offline.



IBM Financial Performance Dashboard Executive View

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Strategic objectives and scope

The objectives of this project were to:

- Digitize the IBM management system for the Europe geography.
- Automate the reporting of key financial performance metrics.
- Drive the cultural change to self-service for initially ~50 Geo and Market General Managers, Chief Financial Officers (CFO), Chief Operations Officers and market and brand leaders.
- Reduce and eventually eliminate the time finance teams spent to create, print, and distribute massive spreadsheets and charts.
- Enable finance teams to focus on analysis, generating insights and supporting the business teams to make faster and better, evidence-based decisions.

The key financial metrics in scope were:

- Quarterly performance of signings, revenue, gross profit and pre-tax income by market and business unit.
- Comparison of performance year to year and versus budget.
- Drill down capabilities to sub-business units, month, country, client and revenue types.
- 3 years revenue trend by business unit, market and quarter.

The deployment of the IBM Financial Performance Dashboard was a great success and received very positive feedback from the stakeholders. The solution has been presented to Finance teams in other geographies via a demo and live Q&A session who then immediately registered interest to adopt the dashboard. Work is in progress to deploy the dashboard to three additional geographies.

Operational Excellence project implementation and timeline

The project has been launched based on the initiative of the Europe Finance team to automate the reporting of their key financial metrics and to provide it to their clients in a self-service mode. Earlier this year working prototypes have been established, but the team decided to leverage the EPM solution to fully implement a solution into their management system.

At that time the EPM Finance Deployment team has been put in place to support the deployment of EPM solutions for specific use cases.

In a six weeks project, members of EPM and IBM Finance teams closely collaborated and

- Co-created the design of the solution including the user interface.

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- Developed and tested it.
- Iteratively enhanced it based on feedback from the stakeholders.
- Deployed the solution to the business and finance leaders.

At current time, new capabilities are being added to release the dashboard to other geographies and additional user groups.

Size of the project challenge

Europe is the second largest geography in IBM and represents over \$20B of IBM's annual revenue. This geography consists of eight markets and over 40 countries and is segmented by IBM business units, sub-units and a diverse industry and client structure that's driving complexity in the financial reporting. Therefore, the Finance teams spend about half of their time gathering, collating, and transforming data into business information versus generating insights and governing corrective actions.

It has been a challenge for the team to come up with a solution that is easy to navigate and read for the stakeholders while providing key insights on all dimensions of the management system.

As the project team was spread across multiple countries we used a cloud-based real time collaboration solution that allows video conferencing and whiteboarding to facilitate the collaboration. To visualize and manage the work across the different locations we had a cloud-based workload management and prioritizations solution in place.

Organizational Impact of the project

With the deployment of the IBM Financial Performance Dashboard the Europe Finance teams stopped spending countless hours creating and printing or e-mailing massive spreadsheets and 50-60 page charts. They are now performing high quality analysis, providing insights on performance drivers and advising their business teams faster to make better, fact-based decisions.

Business and finance leaders now have the key financial metrics at their fingertips anytime and anywhere. They are independent from the availability of their finance teams and are enabled to get any financial information by themselves in seconds, even on their mobile device and while traveling.

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Stakeholder Testimonials

"The dashboard is changing the way we work [...] it's enabling self-service reporting. A great example of progression [...]" - Europe CFO

"The dashboard is truly an amazing reporting mechanism. [...] Many people will be easily accessing this dashboard daily and easily getting so much information relevant to their job. Thanks to the team of experts that developed it!" - Finance Function Leader, IBM Europe Finance Centers

"An amazing dashboard with all information flow made so simple." Financial Analyst, Middle East and Africa geography.

Business Results

The IBM Financial Performance Dashboard is saving 1,200 hours of manual work for the Europe Finance teams this year. In addition to that it saves tons of paper, as spreadsheets and decks are replaced by a digital dashboard.

With the deployment of the dashboard to the other geographies we target to reduce the manual work of finance teams by 10,000 hours in 2019.

It would not be even possible to measure the value that Business and Finance leaders gain by having key financial metrics available to them anytime they need it. In addition, having that insight in a visualized way helps them direct their attention to areas that require focus and enables them to make even faster, evidence-based decisions, in support of IBM's business objectives.

Please see attachment for the larger view of an example of one of many views available in the IBM Financial Performance Dashboard.