

O'BRIEN SEES THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

CASE STUDY



CHALLENGE

Disparate and unwieldy reporting systems were not supporting the business' financial modelling and reporting process requirements. O'Brien needed to view and extract data in different layers for different departments in very short timeframes to allow for dynamic decision-making.

SOLUTION

Based on IBM Cognos TM1, Certus Solutions designed and implemented a business- wide analysis, forecasting and reporting solution. In addition to better planning, budgeting and forecasting, O'Brien is better placed to spot trend and anomalies, compare 'what if' scenarios, predict revenue opportunities and manage business risk.

BENEFIT

- Consolidation of financial management capabilities
- Reduction in time taken to calculate full P&L forecasts
- Future proofed solution – The O'Brien team was trained in order to extend the solution as business requirements change over time

OVERVIEW



PROJECT: Business Analytics

TECHNOLOGIES: IBM Cognos TM1

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing

O'Brien Glass achieved a cohesive business-wide forecasting model and uncovered emerging business opportunities with Certus.

As O'Brien, a dynamic retail business, planned its advertising and marketing activities to promote its services to customers, it sought a deeper understanding of customer demand following such activity to enable the company to more effectively allocate labour and resources.

However, its existing information services platforms could not support the data-intensive analytics required. By engaging Certus to design and deploy an appropriate IBM Cognos TM1 solution, the company has exceeded its expectations in managing business performance – gaining new business insights, having an ability to optimise resources and enhance revenue streams.

"IBM Cognos TM1 has helped us consolidate our financial management capabilities. The ability to view data in different layers and to extract the information we need for different departments – in a very short timeframe – makes it an ideal solution," said Vivian Quinn, Chief Financial Officer and IT Director, O'Brien Glass Industries Ltd.

"Compared to our old reporting methods – there was no question that it could deliver a dramatic improvement in both our financial modelling and reporting processes."

Vivian Quinn,
Chief Financial Officer
and IT Director,
O'Brien Glass Industries Ltd



Partial views not clear enough

In the absence of a holistic modelling solution, O'Brien was heavily reliant on lengthy data analysis, and was struggling with reporting processes that did not sufficiently meet the needs of an organisation that comprises approximately 70 branches, mobile technicians, authorised dealers and many contractors located across Australia. O'Brien's largely manual

processes meant that its departments were receiving only a partial view of sales and profit and loss data.

It needed to find a faster, more flexible solution that would help it manage financial performance in a very dynamic environment – helping the company to determine optimal advertising activities, while forecasting the impact on its revenue streams and labour costs.

Technology reflects business needs

"Following the demo of Cognos TM1 provided by Certus, we were very eager to put its capabilities to use in our business," explains Ms Quinn. "Compared to our old reporting methods – there was no question that it could deliver a dramatic improvement in both our financial modelling and reporting processes."

Certus and the O'Brien IT team engaged business users so that requirements could be adapted as the solution was being developed. This not only enabled the O'Brien employees to test the new technology, it also ensured that it was built and refined in the most suitable way for business needs. Certus also trained this team to freely extend the solution as the business requirements changed.

Certus implementation maximises insights

"The adaptable approach at Certus ensured that we were able to maximise the value of this sophisticated solution," explained Ms Quinn.

O'Brien is much better placed to spot trends and anomalies, compare 'what if' scenarios based on advertising spend and spread, predict potential opportunities, manage key business risks – and to plan, budget and forecast resources. With the implementation of IBM Cognos TM1, O'Brien also expects to significantly reduce the time taken to recalculate a full profit and loss forecast. The company is now planning to roll out the new solution to its New Zealand sister company, Smith and Smith.

"Certus' implementation of TM1 has given us the insight we need to identify variances to budget quickly and take appropriate actions. It helps us see the outcomes of any advertising activity and understand where to focus our resources," said Ms Quinn.



ABOUT O'BRIEN GLASS INDUSTRIES LTD

Established in 1924, O'Brien® is Australia's leading automotive, home business emergency glass repair and replacement company, serving more than 300,000 motorists each year, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. With approximately 70 branches, 88 authorised dealers and many contractors located across Australia, O'Brien also has several hundred mobile technicians to carry out work at any location.

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