

How iQmetrix BI helped Connect Wireless steer the business forward

Connect Wireless has come a long way since opening its doors in Boise, Idaho 13 years ago. The company grew from one location to 17 and in May 2013, it was presented with an opportunity to acquire 18 additional stores. Connect Wireless was already utilizing iQmetrix's business intelligence (BI) solution, but it began to realize the full value of BI's capabilities as it moved post-acquisition: the next phase of the company's growth.

Connect Wireless first began using iQmetrix BI after Graham Taylor, Connect Wireless' IT Administrator, discussed the company's reporting struggles with iQmetrix Account Manager Ryan Donald.

"We had been pulling reports into multi-level Excel spreadsheets and it became more and more of a challenge for us. So we went ahead and signed up for BI,"

Graham Taylor, IT Administrator, Connect Wireless

BI helped Connect Wireless create a culture of accountability that reaches from regional managers to store managers to team members. Staff can look at reports, pinpoint issues in particular markets or regions and identify potential solutions. By automating the frequency of various reports, Graham can now update staff daily as to their specific store's targets and performance – something that used to only happen once a week.

The Problem

In order to take advantage of the newly acquired locations, Connect Wireless not only needed to create a plan to transition its BI reporting practices to the new stores, but also determine how to use this data to grow the business post-acquisition.

MANAGING GROWTH THROUGH BI

After acquiring 18 stores and opening an additional nine, Connect Wireless grew to 44 stores within a year, spreading across six states including Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico.

During this period, Graham ramped up the company's use of BI. Graham began using BI for inventory reporting, commissions/compensation reconciliation, and HR (managing overtime) but most importantly, BI became the tool for all of the company's sales and performance reporting.

Connect Wireless at a glance

Dave Stearns (Co-Founder and Chairman) and **Dave Wayne** (Co-Founder and CEO) founded Connect Wireless in 2002 in Boise, Idaho.

June 2006 Connect Wireless installs iQmetrix's RQ Retail Management software in its stores.

March 2009 iQmetrix BI is added to Connect Wireless' software solutions.

May 2013 After growing to 17 stores in Idaho and Colorado, an opportunity to acquire an additional 18 stores presented itself.

October 2013 The deal closed and Connect Wireless jumped to 35 locations overnight.

2014 Connect Wireless has grown to 45 stores.

Using iQmetrix BI, Connect Wireless was able to simplify reporting and bring the acquired locations into the company's mix smoothly – all locations were able to be on the same page.

BI brought a new level of accountability to all levels of the organization, helping to drive sales company-wide.

BI gave Connect Wireless a clear view of the company's results, provided the management team with insights to pinpoint locations or regions that needed extra support and identify stores that exceeded performance expectations.

The Solution

Connect Wireless used BI reports to monitor the progress and performance of the new stores as they rolled them out. "(Without BI), we wouldn't have known where the heck we were at!" Graham exclaims.

BI ushered Connected Wireless through a period of rapid growth in the following ways:

- **Having custom reports ready to go was a huge time saver.** Without them, Connect Wireless would have had to hire at least one full-time person at the corporate level to do nothing but build reports on a daily basis with regional managers also spending two to three hours a day running canned reports to monitor their market. BI frees Graham up to focus on greater management priorities.
- **Available data allowed for corporate planning with greater insight.** Beyond the 18-store acquisition, the company has opened 12 new stores in the last six months and will be opening 14 more by the end of the summer.
- **Identify where to open new store locations.** Graham said an existing store in Colorado was the top store in the company. Connect Wireless was presented with an opportunity to open a store about two miles down the road.

“We were able to look at the numbers and say, ‘Yeah, it looks like (there’s enough) business there.’ (We determined) opening another store nearby wasn’t going to be detrimental.”

- **Identify and address problem areas across the store chain.** Graham recalled a couple new locations that were performing below expectations. BI helped the company track the effect of management and personnel changes on day-to-day operations. BI also allows Connect Wireless to identify which regions, stores or individuals need additional training to meet performance targets.



LOOKING FORWARD

Connect Wireless is planning to pursue further growth with help of BI.

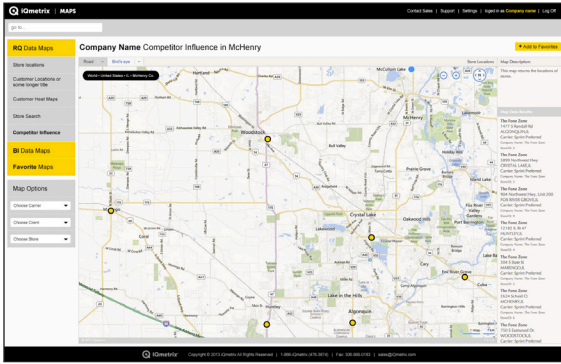
- Streamline reporting across the company. “All the things you’ve been doing to pull reports manually and exporting them into a spreadsheet, you can build all that into one BI report,” Graham says. “You’re going to have all that data at your fingertips with a click of a mouse. Huge time saver!”

For other companies looking to make the same leaps or just better manage their current operations, Graham believes BI is absolutely necessary.

- The case for a BI reporting manager. Graham’s word of advice: Make sure you have a dedicated person to staff the project.

Graham says the tool is outstanding, but as a company’s emphasis and reliance on data grow, it must dedicate the necessary amount of attention to ensure reporting is set up in a way that best suits a particular operation – something the iQmetrix BI team helps to do.

iQmetrix BI is a powerful tool that goes far beyond sales reporting. Now that Connect Wireless staff is comfortable with BI reporting, Graham says the company will be turning its attention toward:



- A new, BI-driven compensation plan. Connect Wireless hopes to further implement BI for inventory management and a new compensation plan for managers and sales reps. Other HR aspects such as payroll management will follow as well.
- iQmetrix Maps data visualization. With the launch of BI Maps, iQmetrix's new web-based BI visualization tool, Connect Wireless can cross-reference its BI data with demographic and geographic data in order to better plan marketing, inventory, and even future store locations.

BI not only helped steer Connect Wireless through its growth but also impacted the company's staff and sales performance.

These aspects are covered in **Part 2: Grow Smarter: How iQmetrix BI transformed the way Connect Wireless does business.**

About Connect Wireless

Connect Wireless, an authorized AT&T wireless retailer, was founded in 2002 with one goal in mind: To become a company that works for the success of its team members so that its team members will work for the success of the company. Over the past 13 years, Connect Wireless has grown from one retail location in Boise, Idaho to 45 locations in Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho and New Mexico.

Throughout the company's history, they have continually set the industry standard by making the customer their #1 priority. Connect Wireless combines personal accountability and team unity to create a culture that delivers an unrivaled customer experience.

