



Western Beverages (Heineken Group) raises a glass to better business performance with Cognos and ProStrategy... You can't interrogate a piece of paper. Business managers in a fast-moving wholesale environment need timely, interactive and actionable information to stay on top of business performance. Here's how Western Beverages (Heineken Group) did just that!

About Western Beverages (Heineken Group)

Western Beverages is a wholesale company formed in 2011 through the amalgamation of Western Beverages, West Cork Bottling Co and Nash Beverages. Wholly owned by Heineken Group, its product range includes soft drinks, beer, cider, wines, spirits, and bar supplies. Operating from five sites, the company has over 3,000 customers across Ireland.

Background / Project Drivers

Western Beverages wanted to provide managers with daily interactive reports covering sales, purchasing, stock and distribution. With over 3,000 customers across Ireland serviced by a team of sales representatives, and an extensive product list where prices are negotiated individually, the need for greater insight across three disperse sister companies became very apparent in a period of significant sales growth. Looking to go beyond the limits of printed reports and fixed analysis, beverage distribution company Western Beverages wanted a way to provide managers with interactive reports covering sales, purchasing, stock and distribution.

Cognos Analytics, delivered and supported by ProStrategy, has given the company previously undreamed-of Insight into its business performance. Reports emailed every morning allow Western's management team to review at a glance key company macro-measures right up to close of business the previous day and measure against key metrics such as case sales performance against target and last year, on-time delivery, stock shortage and average margin per case.

"At the end of the day, we need to know on every single product line and every customer account, are we returning a margin and then quantify that margin. With individually negotiated prices across our entire range of product line and customer base, we simply could not micro-manage margin without Cognos analysis. To know, on a daily basis that the margin is holding up across almost two million lines of pricing, and more importantly when and where it is not, is the bread and butter of this company," says Western Beverages' Regional Sales Manager, Ciaran Dooley.

The Solution

IBM Cognos Analytics, with a reporting application designed and built specifically to the Group's needs. Data from the sales application in all branches is stored in a central analysis cube which produces daily reports for senior management.



“Rather than a fixed report, with pre-determined fields, what managers really wanted was a mini-dashboard. Now every morning at 8am, they are automatically e-mailed key macro-information detailing sales, distribution and purchasing performance versus target and last year. Managers then have the power to interactively drill information and get to the micro-root of reported variances and red alerts,” says Kieran McMahon, IT Manager at Western Beverages. “There’s no doubt, in a challenging environment where margins are getting increasingly tighter, key indicators and daily up-to-date data is infinitely more important than at a time where sales and margins are growing. Daily information and analysis along with user’s ability to micro-manage through drill-down is increasingly important now in order to stay ahead of the curve.”

The Benefits

- Full daily visibility and drill-down of KPIs such as month-to-date sales and margin vs the same period last year and/or vs targets
- Consolidated purchasing from five units into one centralised purchasing department – benefiting from increased economies of scale
- Purchasing department is now a revenue-generating unit for the company where revenues are reinvested into promotional activities
- The ability to track and analyse purchase orders gives greater visibility of purchasing patterns, letting Western negotiate better rates with suppliers
- Measure of key distribution indicators such as “On-Time” and “In-Full” deliveries to customer premises (OTIF reporting)
- Stock control measurement and stock variance reporting. Exception management of stock.

About ProStrategy

Established in 1985, with offices in Cork & Dublin, ProStrategy has over 30 years’ experience providing Business Management Software Solutions & Services to our Irish and International Clients. With an established Strategic Business Alliance with Global brands and a leading IBM & Microsoft Gold Partner, we are one of the Industry Leading Partners of choice in Ireland for Data and Analytics, Financial & Operational Performance Management Analytics, ERP and CRM.

With each project we undertake, ProStrategy empower our Customers to make better business decisions and drive their business success. ProStrategy have over 150 customers across a range of Industries and sectors, where we have several success stories in well-known local as well as International Companies. With a team of over 50 highly-skilled Business & IT Professionals, ProStrategy provide a one stop shop - from Business Consulting to Scoping and Solution Design, Project Management, Implementation and Development Services to Cloud Hosting Services; Customised Training and Help-desk/Application Support Services.