

Gaming the BI System



BACKGROUND

Following the US recession, innovation and technological achievement took a hit across all organizations as IT departments leaned and R&D funding slashed. The homebuilding market was especially hard hit. Many organizations went out of business, and those stable enough to survive were far from equipped to adopt the advanced data and analytics practices that have become the norm in most industries. In early 2015, Convergence Consulting Group (CCG) was enlisted by one of the largest home builders in the world to support the organization's first ever true Business Intelligence (BI) initiative and help lead their industry back into the future of modern BI and analytics.

CHALLENGE

After a thorough BI Tool Selection process, IBM Cognos Analytics was chosen and implemented on the cloud through the infrastructure as a service (IaaS) platform, SoftLayer. This implementation was one of the first large scale Cognos Analytics installations after its release in December 2014. The primary objective for this investment was to lower customer acquisition costs by modernizing sales and marketing practices and enabling data-driven decision-making.

Previously, each department maintained their own data sources and derived performance metrics separately. When the time came for enterprise-wide analysis, the amount of manual data entry, extraction, and attempted consolidation through Google Sheets became a monumental headache. The metrics provided by one department did not utilize the same calculations as the others due to lack of data governance. CCG was tasked with leveraging IBM Cognos Analytics to create visibility in performance across decentralized sales teams and compel marketing to make more informed investments in digital channels.

SOLUTION

CCG partnered with executive leadership to implement a new reporting system that visualized performance management and incentivized employees through a modern sales compensation plan. Leveraging IBM Cognos Analytics, CCG developed a series of dashboards that were rolled out enterprise-wide.

Marketing		Call Center		Sales		Rules	
Dashboard		KPI Scores		Collaborate		Questions	
Total Points	9.61	Time on Site	Value: 16.49, Points: 0.16	Page Loads	Value: 33.07, Points: 0.24		
Avg Time on Site	Value: 13.63, Points: 0.15	Avg Page Loads	Value: 56.77, Points: 0.48	Returning Visitors per Month	Value: 59.14, Points: 0.36		
Returning Customers	Value: 88.45, Points: 0.30	Transactions per Period	Value: 74.75, Points: 0.32	Revenue per Period	Value: 37.56, Points: 0.57		
Goal Completion Rate	Value: 88.01, Points: 1.15	Organic Traffic	Value: 68.28, Points: 0.97	Campaign Leads	Value: 32.01, Points: 0.58		
Campaign Wins	Value: 55.98, Points: 0.44	New Followers	Value: 64.89, Points: 0.58	Followers Growth	Value: 6.58, Points: 0.07		

This project established agreed upon metrics and methods for acquisition among the dispersed departments. The dashboards created in this project displayed near real-time sales performance across the entire organization, allowing for transparency in performance, improved collaboration between sales and marketing, and heightened competition among teams. CCG was able to customize the IBM Cognos Analytics reports to perfectly match the picture wireframes created in Visio, allowing the home builder to personalize these dashboards to appeal to end users.

These dashboards were developed using agile methodology, rapidly produced through two-week sprints. This allowed for the home builder to quickly see the value in their investment and feel confident in their processes when rolling out Cognos Analytics to their end users. Through the eradication of duplicate data, elimination of manual data processes and reduction of on-site infrastructure costs, this home builder is expected to reduce overall costs by upwards of two hundred million dollars. Additionally, this investment, which has already improved so many internal efficiencies, is placing this home builder at the forefront of their industry, with an expected increased market share of 2%.

The behavior and mentality at this organization has shifted for the better, growing to be more modern and collaborative largely in part due to this BI project. CCG continues to support their data and analytics initiatives so that they can build on this strong BI foundation and continue to benefit long into the future.

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