

BI Portal and Reporting

Client: Industry leader in the field of promotional marketing

Location: USA

Client Description

The client is a full service promotional marketing agency and an industry leader in the field of promotional marketing, providing years of experience and expertise in the proper selection and use of promotional merchandise. The client has rich experience with the disciplined techniques of marketing as well as the best practices of promoting 400,000 promotional products and apparel items. It is a part of a leading wireless high speed Internet Service Provider which builds and operates next generation wireless broadband networks that enable fast, simple, portable, reliable and affordable Internet Communications.

Business Need

The client was facing difficulty in reconciling the financial and operational data in terms of both, effort and time. Report generation was not centralized and the analytical reporting capability was also missing. The client was facing technical challenges in generating adhoc reports using MS Access. Also, there was no mechanism for exporting the reports to other formats and no standard method for report distribution. Business executives were unable to access up-to-date business metrics as and when required. Hence the client was looking out for a vendor with right experience and domain knowledge to meet their expectations.

Solution Offered

BSI, with high-end technology expertise and domain knowledge, was selected to be the client's technology partner. On the reporting front, Blue Star Infotech (BSI) used Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) to transform the client's valuable data into shared information for insightful and timely decisions with low cost of ownership. BSI also proposed to develop BI portal using .NET with Web Parts. Role based access for the portal helped the client's business executives to make better decisions faster and with ease.

The solution involved 4 major steps:

- 1) **Assessment/Requirements gathering:** A BI consultant was deputed onsite for fact findings and to gather business requirements. Report wire frames (mockup) were converted to reports using SSRS. Simultaneously, BI Portal was designed.
- 2) **Implementation:** Further reports were developed and a BI Portal was developed using .NET web parts.
- 3) **User Acceptance Testing (UAT):** UAT was performed after each design stage.
- 4) **Production Rollout:** On successful completion of UAT, reports and the portal related changes were rolled out for development.

Since Microsoft does not provide any in-built OLE DB driver for MySQL which could be used in SQL Server Intergration Services (SSIS), third party OLE DB driver for MySQL was configured to be used with SSIS. But, the performance of this driver was not as expected and it did not even support the text data types. BSI, after a detailed research and analysis, selected Connector/Net6.0 to be used as a driver. This enhanced the performance of the portal.

The solution facilitated the client with a BI portal framework for information collaboration which could be easily extended to fulfill the enterprise need. BSI designed / developed reusable BI Web Portal framework using web parts. This helped the client to a great extent in report distribution. Also, Ajax technology added to the better response time of the portal.

Benefits to the Client

- Use of BI dashboard gave user groups visibility into performance and KPI, thus enabling them to take action quickly to resolve business process issues and reduce costs.
- Global Delivery Model saved countless expensive man hours each year, meaning that valuable human resources were now free for other business activities.
- The solution improved the report distribution mechanism.
- The client saved time on present report development and maintenance work and empowered users to create, manage and distribute reports based on business needs.

TOOLS / TECHNOLOGY

- MS 2005 Integration Services
- MS 2005 Reporting Services
- MS 2005 Analysis Services
- MS SQL Server 2005
- Dundas Chart/Gauge/Map for Reporting Service
- .Net 2.0
- .Net Web Parts
- Ajax

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