

Streamlining Information Analysis

Digital Dashboards for Learning and Development



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Overview

Country or Region:
New York, NY

Industry:
Pharmaceuticals &
Life Sciences

Profile:
Discovers, develops,
manufactures and markets
leading prescription medicines
for humans and animals as
well as many of the world's
best-known consumer
brands.

Streamlining Information Analysis

A major pharmaceutical company delivering groundbreaking innovations required a user-friendly and flexible solution that would streamline the analysis of information and support senior management in decision-making for learning and development objectives.

The pharmaceutical company partnered with DATA Inc. to design, develop and implement a browser-based application that provided easy usability and accessibility to customize statistical reports on a variety of parameters. The new digital dashboard solution streamlines the business processes behind:

- Determining critical business and development needs of sales representatives.
- Developing training programs and associated timelines for optimal delivery to address the identified needs of tenured representatives.
- Developing metrics to properly evaluate the impact of training.

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Client Overview

As a large pharmaceutical company, the client discovers, develops, manufactures and markets leading prescription medicines for humans and animals as well as many of the world's best-known consumer brands. Their innovative, value-added products improve the quality of life of people around the world and help them enjoy longer, healthier and more productive lives. The client has three business segments: health care, animal health and consumer health care and their products are available in more than 150 countries.

The Challenges

With the expansion of learning and development initiatives, the client needed a system that would combine appropriate data and information into reports that could easily be analyzed. The past system, consisting of different legacy software systems tapping into multiple data sources at normal runtime resulted in a longer-than-normal analysis of information. Drilling down to pinpoint information only served to lengthen the process.

“There was no real consistency in the way data was being analyzed and collected” said Denny Panakal, Senior Project Manager with DATA Inc. “In addition, different requirements for each functional group within the client only added to the challenges.”

With different requirements and metrics for each functional group within the client, the solution also needed to be fully automated while still customizable. The solution needed to be able to combine multiple data sources and reports into a functional system that could generate a variety of standard reports and graphical data representations, while maintaining a degree of flexibility and customization that each functional group needed.

The Solution

After careful review and analysis of the challenges involved, DATA Inc. determined that the implementation of a dashboard-based application would be the solution needed to help merge all the necessary data sources and provide the information and analysis needed for the client's learning and development initiatives.

“Our research and analysis based around our project management methodology showed that the solution we wanted to implement would help streamline the way our client looked at information pertaining to learning and development,” said Michelle Medley, Senior Project Manager at DATA Inc.



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Denny Panakal
Senior Project
Manager —
DATA Inc.

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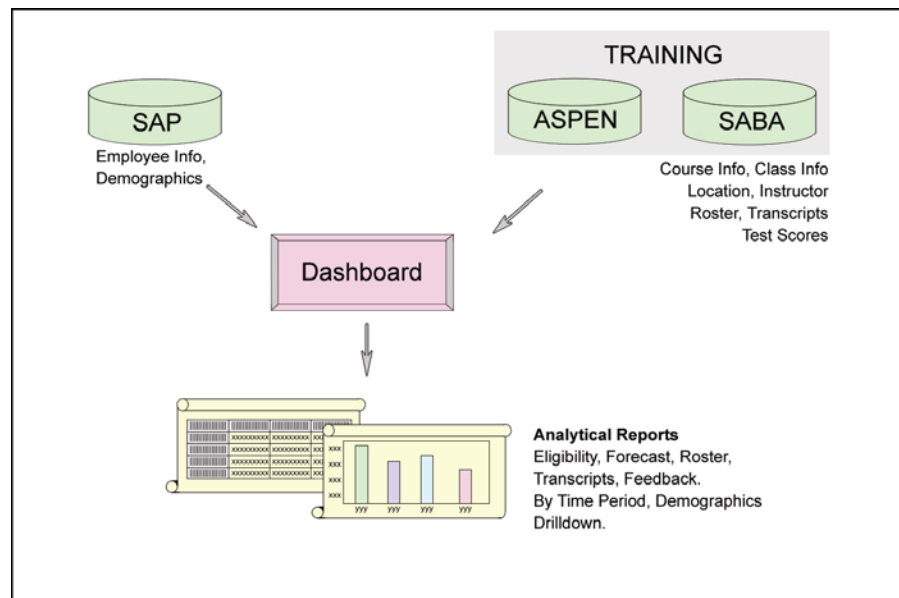
Michelle Medley, Senior Project Manager — DATA Inc.

The Solution (Continued)

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Working with key personnel at the client, DATA Inc. sought to understand the desired user experience that needed to be delivered. This understanding led to the development of the user interface architecture and the development of a template based approach, along with a standardized look and feel for all reports outputted from the application. Reports were split into four categories:

- Course Completions
- Enrollments
- Eligibility
- Forecasting



Above: Structure for the Digital Dashboard.

This ultimately led to flexibility for administrators, allowing them to set up clients and business criteria for each reports along with the customization of the look and feel as desired. Each report was built to have the capability to drill down to specific points within the information for more detailed analysis.

To get quick response times for report generation, the decision was made to use a customized Oracle 8i/9i database that would consolidate and synchronize

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Denny Panakal,
Senior Project
Manager — DATA Inc.

The Solution (Continued)

multiple data sources. Built-in scheduled batch processes were programmed with the capability for administrators to request on-demand synchronization.

The new Digital Dashboard application was designed, developed, tested and delivered on the ColdFusion Platform and consisted of a variety of standard components for navigation, security access and error handling. In an effort to reduce time-to-client, DATA Inc. adopted a phased approach and implementation schedule to deliver the application. A minimum set of reports and modules were identified that encapsulated the basic requirements and objectives of the solution. Using this as a base, DATA Inc. demonstrated the feasibility and scalability of the solution and was able to prioritize the development phases for the remaining modules.

“Testing and development of all application is critical for ensuring that performance is optimal in a variety of conditions,” said Denny. “The phased approach taken with the client’s Digital Dashboard helped ensure that we were giving them the right features while systematically and efficiently removing the old processes and legacy applications in place.”

The Results

Training coordinators, administrators and other personnel welcomed the implementation of the new Digital Dashboard. The new application streamlined the analysis process behind learning and development initiatives, eliminating the need for sifting through countless data sources to find the right information.

Delivering the data and information in a flexible format helped the coordinators streamline their tasks for setting up courses, thus reducing errors that normally occurred in the manual generation of the statistics. In addition, the application helped managers analyze training initiatives undertaken by staff, helping to improve on the popularity of the courses offered.

“Developing and delivering a solution that can effectively sort through information from different platforms and report them back in an easy-to-understand format was the paramount goal in driving this project” said Michelle. “The dashboard implementation has effectively streamlined the process behind analyzing complicated decisions when dealing with the issues behind learning and development.”

Benefits

- **Simple yet flexible graphical interface.**
In the past, training coordinators used spreadsheets and/or data dumps to get statistical reports on learning and development initiatives. The application provided a personalized graphical user interface (GUI) for reports, which were much easier to analyze and navigate compared to a normal spreadsheet.
- **Flexible report building.**
Flexible reporting enabled administrators to set up reports according to the requirements of the management. This improved the extensibility of the application.
- **Reduced start-time.**
The eligibility and forecast statistics enabled training coordinators to streamline their tasks to set up a course and thus reduce errors that normally occurred in manually generating these statistics.
- **Detailed analysis capabilities.**
This application helped managers in analyzing the training undertaken by their staff and also to determine the popularity of the courses offered.
- **Results Tracking.**
Employee transcripts helped supervisors check the performance of their subordinates.

Technologies Used

- Macromedia Cold Fusion 5.0
- Oracle 8i/9i Database
- Kava Charts



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