

LABORATOIRES PIERRE FABRE MÉDICAMENT



Pierre Fabre
Médicament

“COGNOS REPORTNET HAS ENABLED US TO FIND THE FLEXIBILITY, PERFORMANCE, AND DEPTH OF INFORMATION THAT WE NEEDED TO COMPLETE AN AMBITIOUS DASHBOARD PROJECT SUCCESSFULLY, BOTH FOR GENERAL MANAGEMENT AND FOR OUR COMPANY’S VARIOUS OPERATING MANAGEMENT TEAMS.”

— CHARLES-HENRI BODIN, HEAD OF CONTROLLING, LABORATOIRES PIERRE FABRE MÉDICAMENT

Laboratoires Pierre Fabre Médicament is comprised of three companies that specialise in health, pharmaceutical drugs, and dermo-cosmetics. The group has grown steadily since it was established in 1961, and today has a staff of over 8,700 employees, of whom 34% work internationally. In 2004, Laboratoires Pierre Fabre’s revenue reached 1,470 million euros, with 45% of this figure generated by the group’s subsidiaries around the world.

As a leading pharmaceutical company they needed software that would help unite data, manage growth, and provide a centralized place to track performance. And, after all considering various BI solutions, they chose Cognos ReportNet.

CHALLENGES FACED

The Pierre Fabre group took an interest in decision-making tools at a very early stage. In the past, a structured data warehouse (broken down into individual specialist areas such as finance, commercial, market surveys, human resources, logistics, and manufacturing) supplied the information used for operational guidance. During this period, General Management was receiving a mass of data each month submitted by all of the group’s departments in a variety of formats. This was making it impossible to have a recurrent overall and consolidated overview of performance without considerable intervention from IT.

“We needed to make a more strategic investment in software that allowed the cross-fertilisation of heterogeneous data from different sources across the business,” explains Elisabeth Valadier, Project Manager IS Decision-Making at Laboratoires Pierre Fabre Médicament. “We were spending too much time sifting through in order to analyze data,” adds Charles-Henri Bodin, Head of Controlling at Laboratoires Pierre Fabre Médicament. “Setting up

Industry:

- Pharmaceutical

Geography:

- Global

Information Needs:

- Data unity across various applications
- Fast, effective reporting and analysis
- Intuitive dashboards that reflect the Company’s key performance indicators (KPIs).

Platform:

- Windows 2000
- Oracle 8i
- HP/Unix Server
- Other proprietary and transactional systems

Solution:

- Cognos ReportNet

Benefits:

- Central access to previously isolated data
- Faster, more accurate reporting and analysis
- An executive dashboard that reflects all KPIs and facilitates better decision-making.

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the right system to capture vast amounts of data is good, but being able to analyze it properly is the real value-add of having it in the first place.”

STRATEGY FOLLOWED

In March 2004, the company launched a dashboard project designed for General Management and other management levels, aimed at enhancing the way the company was run. Initially, the team responsible for the project – a project manager for users, a project manager for IT, and a specialist area manager – focused on identifying the key indicators needed for running the company. This first phase took about three months and was conducted based on interviews with the operating management teams concerned. This led to 50 or so key indicators being catalogued across all of the company’s specialist areas. In July 2004, General Management gave its approval for this first stage. “General Management was very closely involved in the project from the outset,” says Mr Bodin, “and continued to be so right throughout the development and implementation process.”

For each indicator, the team put together an ID sheet that could be consulted by users to improve communication through the entry of a single unique definition for each indicator shared by everyone. By the time this essential preliminary work on creating a glossary of guidance indicators had been completed, the existing data warehouse had been enhanced with new data models.

As it was targeted at top management users, the project was subjected to great pressure from General Management in terms of ergonomics and the way the information was organised and could be browsed. As part of a second phase, project management produced interfaces and browsing mock-ups in Excel. “Everything had to be simple and very intuitive,” explains Charles-Henri Bodin. “And to do that, we had to come up with the right way to organise all of the data.”

As a result, 20 or so dashboards were produced. At this stage of the project, Laboratoires Pierre Fabre Médicament had still not decided on which tool it would choose to create the dashboards. In fact, this choice was only made at the very last moment as the team did not want to conduct its project based on the

constraints of one tool. As Elisabeth Valadier points out, “We based ourselves on the needs of users which, in my view, is the only viable way to conduct a decision-making project.

To meet the cross-fertilisation needs of data coming from sources as varied as internal databases (data warehouses), external databases (market data) and specific-format documents (PDFs), the company needed a data retrieval tool with a broad panel of connectors in order to restrict costs and keep development lead times to a minimum. As each dashboard is capable of generating up to six enquiries simultaneously, the level of performance provided by Cognos ReportNet also played a role in the selection process. The team in charge of the project set itself a maximum threshold of eight seconds in terms of response time for a dashboard to be displayed.

With ReportNet they could organise all of the company’s key indicators into a reliable system of automated dashboards. It also provided quick and easy cross-fertilisation with different sources of information. In addition, they felt that the intuitive user interface would fit the reporting and analysis needs of both technical and non-technical users. Finally being a Web-based solution, ReportNet would streamline deployment to the group’s subsidiaries in other countries.

Cognos ReportNet was chosen for a variety of reasons, including its ability to generate composite tables – text, images, graphics, figures – as well as the sheer depth of its graphics functionalities and the way the system handled multiple sources of data,” says Valadier.

BENEFITS REALIZED

In April 2005, the first batch of monthly dashboards was sent out and the benefits were immediately apparent. By uniting data from various sources in an intuitive interface, Pierre Fabre Médicament has a genuine horizontal guidance tool that is responsive enough to suit their fast-paced business and helps them save considerable time for analysis. The system has been so successful that other parts of the company are already considering going down the same path.

With ReportNet the IT department has been able to provide the organization with:

- An all-encompassing vision: because all of the key indicators are grouped into a single interface, the operating units have a clear, horizontal view of data every month that they can use as the basis for taking the right decisions.
- Time savings: the time spent previously consolidating data manually is now put to better use. As a result, users can devote themselves to analysis and providing genuine guidance for the company.
- More in-depth data unity: the selection of data made as part of the project and the implementation of key indicators have made it possible to achieve the cross-fertilization of data that has been isolated until now because of its disparate sources.
- Better information for business reviews: The company can now conduct monthly and quarterly reviews based on this new, unifying medium and fast, accurate numbers.
- A Web-based reporting platform that makes high-quality, comprehensive reporting and analyses of their business available to foreign subsidiaries.

ABOUT COGNOS

Cognos, the world leader in business intelligence and performance management solutions, provides world-class enterprise planning and BI software and services to help companies plan, understand and manage financial and operational performance.

Cognos brings together technology, analytical applications, best practices, and a broad network of partners to give customers a complete performance system. The Cognos performance system is an open and adaptive solution that leverages an organization's ERP, packaged applications, and database investments. It gives customers the ability to answer the questions — How are we doing? Why are we on or off track? What should we do about it? — and enables them to understand and monitor current performance while planning future business strategies.

Cognos serves more than 23,000 customers in more than 135 countries, and its top 100 enterprise customers consistently outperform market indexes. Cognos performance management solutions and services are also available from more than 3,000 worldwide partners and resellers. For more information, visit the Cognos Web site at <http://www.cognos.com>.



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