



Customer Case Study Mitre 10

Halo provides large retailer some much needed visibility

Business Situation

- Unable to monitor individual performances, tracking trends and preparing clear, useful and timely reports
- Tons of data but no way of drilling down into those numbers
- Each department needs different kind of reports

Benefits Achieved

- Empower users to analyze their own data
- Leverages their IBM iSeries database resources
- The ability to ask and answer their own questions
- Greatly reduced the amount of time to generate a report

Why Halo?

- Mitre 10 needed enhanced analysis and reporting capabilities
- Could easily handle large and dynamic data sets
- Ease of use and low training investment meant Halo could be effective immediately

Mitre 10 and Halo Building Better Business Intelligence

A Little Bit About Mitre 10

Since opening their doors in 1974, Mitre 10's presence in New Zealand has been expanding. A market leader in the home improvement sector with 34 Mega stores and 3 more planned before the end of 2013. Their 61 Hammer Hardware and 48 smaller Mitre 10 stores can be seen up and down the country. Structured as a marketing and buying cooperative, Mitre 10 supports its store owners from a Support Centre in Auckland. This structure keeps the power in the hands of the individual Kiwi store owners, allows each store to respond to the unique demands of its community and this means that the people making the decisions are also the ones talking to the customers everyday.

With this huge advantage also comes greater complexity-with the huge number of stores and some 80,000 individual items

on offer at any one time, monitoring individual performances across categories and regions, tracking trends and preparing clear, useful and timely reports could be an impossible task. As Mitre 10 Senior Analyst, Rod Mchugh will tell you, it wasn't collecting the data, but being able to collate and organize it into something meaningful that was the issue. "We have figures from all the stores on their sales each month, and purchasing numbers and selling information. There was loads of data, but no way of drilling down into numbers." The sheer volume of data, and the different kinds of reports each management department needed, meant that keeping the information timely and accurate was proving to be hugely time consuming. Implementing the Halo Business Intelligence (BI) system changed all that.

“In 10 or 15 minutes you can give people the basics, and when someone new starts in here, I just send them a link to the system. People can just jump in when they need something. They’re always surprised at how simple it is.”

- Rod McHugh, Senior Analyst

Point of Differences

“Putting [the data] in a way that makes it easier to use means we’re spending far less time getting it in order, and more time actually analyzing it. Typically a report just offers another question, like why is this figure unusually high or low? Previously, relying on static reports meant we couldn’t drill down. We just had to hope on finding another report (that was probably a 1000 pages long) that had the information we needed in it.”

Halo is unique in that it arranges information in predefined ‘cubes’ – sets of information relevant to a particular department that can be dynamically arranged and analyzed easily by even non-technical users. “Pulling information into a cube improves the accessibility. With other systems, you get the same reports, but they’re very static, so if it doesn’t give you the answers you’re looking for, there’s no easy way for users to drilling down into the data to work it out.”

Halo’s flexible and easy-to-use reporting system, means the next level of information is a click of the mouse away – no need to send out to IT for another whole report. “What I like about it is, once the information cubes are set up, it’s really simple on a design level to make changes, so that you’re looking at the information in the most useful format for you.”

“The information’s all right there and accessible and easy to use. It’s a huge time saving, and saves a lot of paper too!” “Just the other day I had to generate a fairly complex report of sales and performances. Under our old system, the report would have taken me at least an hour to pull the data, make the calculations and then format the report. With Halo I could do the exact same thing in a few minutes.”

Using the Halo Source, the data is extracted from Mitre 10’s source systems, transforming it into the more usable data warehouse format and to build into the information cubes.

The system also appealed to McHugh for its compatibility with other systems. Mitre 10’s Halo system was able to simply sit on top of their SQL Server 2008 R2 on Windows Server 2008, with most of their data coming from their ERP system on IBM iSeries. This meant the company saved cost and time because they didn’t need to implement whole new systems.

McHugh especially likes Halo for its uniquely simple user interface, which means that everyone in Mitre 10 HQ could ask and answer their own questions. “When you compare Halo with other systems, it’s so much quicker to bring people up to speed with the system, provided they’ve got some basic computer knowledge. In 10 or 15 minutes you can give people the basics, and when someone new starts in here, I just send them a link to the system. People can just jump in when they need something. They’re always surprised at how simple it is”. “It’s easy on the back end too, if you want to add new information cubes and views for different users.” McHugh says it means more people in the organization are making decisions based on timely, accurate information, rather than on instinct. “With Halo, you can get a quick ‘state of the nation’ view which is so crucial for monthly management meetings where we talk about overall performance and strategies. And then the category managers use the system when they need to do things like compare actual sales to predictions. This allows them to make adjustments on pricing and promotions.”

Beyond the system itself McHugh has high praise for the team at Halo, who just seem to “get” Mitre 10’s business, and always be “one step ahead”. “...[the Halo team] was a big selling point for moving forward. When we want to add new cubes, they just come in and get it – they’re a real asset to the business.”



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