

Express Data and iQ4bis: Improving the Bottom Line with Smarter Inventory Decisions



Valuable—but untapped—information assets

Express Data is the leading distributor of best-of-breed networking, security, software licensing, thin-client, and storage solutions in the Australia/New Zealand market place. For distributors like Express Data, maximizing sales performance and optimizing inventory management are important keys to business success.

The company had plenty of sales, inventory, financial, and CRM data, representing a valuable—but largely untapped—corporate asset. Instead, Express Data managers were forced to rely on “gut feel” to understand key drivers such as the buying patterns of customers.

Much of Express Data’s inventory is ordered from offshore, and inventory unsold for longer than 90 days is detrimental to the bottom line. “Our sales people needed tools to help them accurately assess the needs and buying habits of their key customers and targets,” says sales director Ian Jansen. “Having inventory profiles for those customers is critical. We made a strategic decision to invest in a business intelligence solution to give us capabilities to ‘operate smarter’.”

Identifying iQ4bis as the right solution

“We selected iQ4bis for a number of reasons,” says Jansen. “iQ4bis was optimized to work with our Microsoft SQL Server databases. Additionally, iQ4bis’ ease-of-use meant we could train all of our key staff without taking them off-line. After a two-minute introduction, our top level management, sales directors, marketing, and finance people could drive iQ4bis Analysis.” iQ4bis also combines the backend extract, transform, and load (ETL) functions and data warehousing tools, employing Microsoft’s SQL Server and OLAP technology for analysis.

No problem implementation

“iQ4bis’ Proof of Concept was key to our selection,” Jansen explains. “We could see our own business information working in the iQ4bis architecture before we had to make any decisions. And the Rapid Implementation Module resulted in an implementation that was 100% successful, on time, and on budget.”



Up-to-the-Minute Customer Profiles Enable Obtaining and Delivering the Right Inventory at the Right Time

Business Challenges

- Increase sales and profits through better customer analysis and inventory availability
- Reduce inventory backlogs through smarter purchasing decisions
- Improve decision making through access to better business information

Business Results

- Increased bottom-line profits 5-10% within 12 months
- Reduced aged inventory from 40-50% to 15% in the same time
- Improved “time spent/revenue gained” ratio for sales representatives

success.

Express Data and iQ4bis: Improving the Bottom Line with Smarter Inventory Decisions (continued)

While iQ4bis is effective off the shelf, Express Data chose to customize the iQ4bis CRM “Face to Face” view. “We wanted to analyze the performance of our individual sales representatives,” says Jansen, “specifically to understand how many hours each sales representative spends with each client and then compare those hours with revenue generated, something we couldn’t do before. Now, representatives access this information easily, and we can more effectively evaluate sales representative performance.”

Immediate benefits

Since implementing iQ4bis, Express Data has seen a bottom line improvement of 5-10% in the first 12 months alone. “We’ve been able to reduce our aged inventory from 40-50% to 15%,” says Jansen.

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Sales Director, Express Data

“That represents a huge savings for us. iQ4bis has fundamentally changed the way we do business. Staff and management use it daily to make savvier business decisions. We can understand and analyze business information from our own desktops in real time, seeing trends as they happen and making decisions based on hard information rather than intuition.”

“Before iQ4bis,” says Jansen, “we thought we understood key metrics through ‘gut feel’. But now that we use iQ4bis to see the reality, we’ve tightened our operation notably. The proof is the significant increase in our bottom line.”



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Sales Director, Express Data

Who Uses iQ4bis In Express Data

- National Sales Director
- Financial Controller
- Marketing Manager
- Account Managers
- Product Managers
- Sales Team

Benefits For Express Data

- Improved bottom line results 5-10% within the first 12 months
- Reduced aged inventory from 40-50% to 15%
- Enhanced decision-making processes
- Improved “time spent/revenue gained” ratio for sales representatives

iQ4bis Products

- iQ4bis Analysis
- iQ4bis DataServer
- iQ4bis Views
- iQ4bis Sales
- iQ4bis CRM (Face-to-Face customized view)
- iQ4bis Inventory
- iQ4bis Debtors

Associated Platforms

- Microsoft SQL Server 2000
- Masterpac (ERP)

Key Reasons Express Data Selected iQ4bis

- Runs on the Microsoft SQL Server platform
- Proof of Concept and Rapid Implementation Module
- Ease-of-use and streamlined training
- Combined extract, transform, and load (ETL) back end modules feed front-end analysis tools

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