

NHP & iQ4bis: Reporting Analytics for Streamlined Operations



With some 25,000 inventory line items, multiple warehouses, an online store and 19 branches throughout Australia and New Zealand, NHP Electrical Engineering Products was finding it difficult to generate standardised management reports to provide an up-to-date overview of the organisation. The reports that were being generated, which were typically flat files, were only telling part of the story, with any further analysis requiring another round of reporting. While NHP were happy with their AS/400-based BPCS enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution to the point where they had even developed some highly sophisticated business processes, the reporting issue was starting to raise a few red flags with management.

“We wanted to standardise our reporting capabilities and give our upper level and line managers the ability to query those reports,” says Vic Wotherspoon, NHP’s General Manager – IT & Process Improvement. “We carry a wide variety of products from different suppliers so we wanted to be able to calculate quickly what stock is the fastest moving as well as to be able to compare performances from different outlets and regions. These types of reporting analytics were clearly beyond the capabili-

ties of our systems so we knew we needed to upgrade.”

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE: THE BEST OPTION

A business intelligence (BI) and reporting analytics solution was the obvious choice, but Wotherspoon wanted to ensure that the solution they selected would address their specific requirements. “As we started to evaluate the current BI solutions available on the market we kept hearing about an up-and-coming product from New Zealand called iQ4bis,” says Wotherspoon.

“Not only did they have a transparent interface to our BPCS ERP system via Microsoft SQL, but they had local representation and a track record of success. But more importantly, they claimed that they could implement fully-functioning BI capabilities within an organisation like ours in a matter of weeks instead of months. So we contacted them to see what they could do for us.”

“They said all the right things – cost-effective, rapid deployment, high success rate,” explains Wotherspoon. “But what really impressed us is that they offered to provide a no-obligation ‘Proof of

REASONS FOR SELECTING iQ4bis

- Rapid implementation – the iQ4bis PoC demonstrated immediate benefits
- Optimised to run in conjunction with BPCS ERP
- Full set of reporting analytics capabilities that matched requirements
- Successful track record for implementations in similar organisations

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Estimated full return on investment in less than a year
- Provides solid BI platform for further development and deployment
- Standardised reporting analytics for up-to-date ‘snapshot’ of organisation
- Immediate access for all managers and staff from site licensing
- Improved data quality and upgraded data capture process
- Hands-on training and local support ensures efficient operations

“We believe that the system will pay for itself within a year and will be a BI platform we can use and expand on. We can now make informed, good decisions in a timely manner.”

Vic Wotherspoon, General Manager – IT & Process Improvement at NHP

WHO USES iQ4bis AT NHP

- Senior management team
- Area managers
- Sales managers and staff
- Business analysts

iQ4bis PRODUCTS AT NHP

- iQ4bis DataServer
- iQ4bis Analysis

“iQ4bis proved to us that business intelligence and reporting analytics don’t have to be expensive, difficult nor time-consuming. Now, whenever we have a question or need to solve a problem, the answer is just a few clicks away, thanks to iQ4bis.”

*Vic Wotherspoon, General Manager –
IT & Process Improvement at NHP*



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Concept’ (PoC) demonstration in which they would build a prototype BI solution using our own data. And they said they could do it in less than a week. What did we have to lose?”

“NHP is perhaps the ideal iQ4bis client,” says Curtis Williams, Business Development Manager for iQ4bis Australia. “They had a highly-developed set of business processes, plenty of well-structured data in standard formats and a huge need for flexible and easy-to-understand reporting analytics. We have implemented iQ4bis for similar organisations that use BPCS so we were able to build a sales ‘cube’ from an extract of their data quickly and easily. When we showed them how easy it was and what they could pull out of the database at the PoC, they were sold.”

“Deciding to purchase iQ4bis was an easy decision,” says Wotherspoon. “During our implementation, the team from iQ4bis helped us refine the initial sales cube and design additional views for specific roles within the organisation. Their approach is to show us how it is done the first time and then turn the tasks over to us. As a result, we are now fully capable of doing our own development. Their support has been excellent at every stage of the implementation process.”

KEY BENEFITS

“Whilst a complete ROI was not conducted,” says Wotherspoon, “we believe that the system will pay for itself within a year and will be a BI platform we can use and expand on. We can now make informed and reliable decisions in a timely manner.

“The major benefit for us is that we now have a set of up-to-date standardised analytical reports that enable us to make more informed decisions in respect to day-to-day operations, strategic planning and overall management. We initially opted for a 50-user license but the solution proved so popular at all levels of management that we quickly acquired

a site license. We can safely say that the insights we have gained from using iQ4bis have helped us streamline our operations and improve our responses to changes in the marketplace.”

Another benefit that NHP has realised from iQ4bis has been an improvement in overall data quality. “Because we can now see our data in a more rigorous context, any discrepancies, omissions or incorrect categorisations really jump out at us,” notes Wotherspoon. “While there was nothing really terrible, we were able to pinpoint areas in our data capture process that were causing issues with the integrity of the databases. Once we saw what was happening, we were able to quickly and easily fix the problems and improve the entire operation. So not only are we using our databases proactively for strategic initiatives and analyses but we now have more confidence in the numbers than ever before.”

Wotherspoon is now a business intelligence advocate. “iQ4bis proved to us that business intelligence and reporting analytics don’t have to be expensive, difficult nor time-consuming,” he concludes. “And because it is browser-based with a site license, any number of our people now have immediate access to the information they need on a daily basis to do their jobs faster, better and with more confidence. Now, whenever we have a question or need to solve a problem, the answer is just a few clicks away thanks to iQ4bis.”

ABOUT NHP

NHP Electrical Engineering Products Pty Ltd brings together leading products, systems and solutions from across five key electro-technology sectors - Motor Control, Power Distribution, Hazardous Area Equipment & Control, Enclosure Systems & Power Quality and Automation & Safety. An Australian owned company, NHP is committed to serving Australian and New Zealand industry with quality products and the best in customer support. NHP’s region-wide team of 790 includes experts drawn from the widest range of localities and industrial backgrounds.



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