

AGRICULTURE: GRASSLAND FERTILIZERS



GRASSLAND FERTILIZERS, A HIGH-QUALITY AGRICULTURAL FERTILISER PRODUCER, NEEDED TO IMPROVE ITS SALES TEAM'S PRODUCTIVITY TO STAY AHEAD IN THIS COMPETITIVE IRISH MARKET

SQL SERVER 2008

DATABASE: 500GB

USERS: SALES TEAM

DEPLOYMENT TYPE: MOBILE, INTRANET AND EXTRANET

APPLICATIONS:

SALES MANAGEMENT, CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORTING, CREDIT CONTROL, ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

USING MICROSTRATEGY MOBILE TO INCREASE SALES TEAM PRODUCTIVITY

Tied to the office

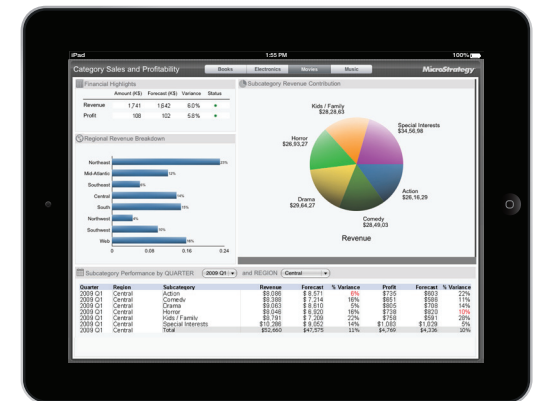
With salespeople located across the company's Slane, Limerick and Cork offices, as well as a head office in Dublin, Grassland Fertilizers has customers right across Ireland.

The company's salesforce were not able to view vital customer information while travelling, and were often forced to go into their local office at the beginning and end of the day to access sales data and cumbersome paper-based account records, such as statements and invoices. This was taking up valuable time that could be better spent with customers – an important consideration in the drive to remain competitive.

Information on the move

Working with MicroStrategy's partner Avnet Client Solutions, Grassland Fertilizers took the decision in 2010 to build on the existing MicroStrategy platform and implement a mobile application. This has revolutionised the lives of the sales team by letting them use an iPhone or iPad to retrieve account information, no matter where they are.

This means that salespeople on the road can view data needed to prepare for customer meetings – such as types and quantities of



fertiliser purchased over a specified period, account balances, and payments made – instead of having to go to an office or phone office-based colleagues. This information is currently generated up to the previous evening's figures, but work is in progress to make real-time data available soon.

When a salesperson logs into their mobile device, they are only presented with data that's relevant to their own customers, to prevent them from being overwhelmed by unnecessary material. However, they can access any information in the company's data warehouse if it's required, right down to the most granular level of detail.

“As soon as MicroStrategy Mobile was launched, we bought iPhones and began testing it,” recalls Larry Fay, IT manager at Grassland Fertilizers. “We’d already identified the need for this application so when it became available we jumped straight on it.”

The rewards of greater productivity

Grassland Fertilizers has seen huge benefits from salespeople having customer data to hand. Now they no longer need to spend time in the office looking for information, or taking up other employees’ time by calling in asking for account details, they can focus purely on meeting and servicing customers.

This means that productivity has improved significantly, and since the sales team does not need to be office-based, they can be more flexible in their day-to-day work. The iPhone and iPad touchscreens also allow users to call up and interact with the information that they need quickly and easily.

“You’ve only got to talk to the sales team to see what an enormous difference this has made to the business,” says Larry Fay. “They say the new application has changed their working lives dramatically and saves them a huge amount of unnecessary work.”



Building on success

Grassland Fertilizers’ mobile application is based on its existing MicroStrategy Business Intelligence platform. This was originally implemented because Grassland Fertilizers had ten to twelve years’ worth of historical sales data stored in a Progress Database; however, the company had no application to access and manipulate this valuable resource. Instead, the company only had a very basic view of its customers based on simple sales printouts, and year-on-year comparisons had to be carried out manually from paper files. With the MicroStrategy platform, the company was able to easily access information within the data warehouse for the first time, and perform effective analyses such as comparisons of customer sales, prices and volumes over any time period. This gives a much stronger view of sales performance and allows for better-informed business planning.

This important information is available to employees at all of Grassland Fertilizers’ offices across Ireland, and with the roll-out of the mobile application it is now accessible by travelling salespeople as well.