Case Study

GrayMatter
Empowering Intuition

CUSTOMER
Specsavers - United Kingdom

TITLE
Complete integration of complex data points for BI

CUSTOMER SPEAK

""Red Hat and Pentaho provide a great BI solution for us. We're delivering enterprise-wide applications, and continuously improving our ability to use technology to benefit our business, while reducing and containing costs by using proven commercial open source software from leaders like Red Hat and Pentaho. The complex implementations would not have been possible without the expertise of GrayMatter! For example, 'the solution was developed with data from the CSV feeds transformed to a data warehouse, designed and developed by GrayMatter, using Pentaho ETL tool Kettle' "

Complete integration of complex data points for BI

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Specsavers

Company Overview:
Specsavers is a major Spectacles, eye and hear care retailer in the UK, as well as in other countries in Europe. They have a legacy system called Plato, into which data from all the stores in a country comes in. They had csv feeds of the data from the source transaction system.

Key Challenges
They had the onerous task of collating all this data and preparing a commentary / executive report out of all this data. The csv feeds were translated to Excel and from the Excel; various analyses were carried out to obtain the requisite reports / charts and commentaries / observations.
They also had different in-store systems and metrics across multiple acquired businesses and stores. They had inconsistent strategic metrics across major geographies.
The process of agglomerating and analyzing the data manually through Excel was very laborious, time consuming and restricted in nature to only the previous month's analysis. Further, they were not able to look at trends across, say, months of some key performance indicators.
It was not just this mammoth effort of collating and analyzing the data, but also the limitations provided by the method of analyses that prompted Sepcsavers to look to Pentaho.

Pentaho Solution
The Pentaho solution was developed on MySQL Enterprise Database on Red Hat Enterprise Linux OS. Specsavers had used the Pentaho BI Suite Enterprise Edition and it was one of the world's largest open source BI deployments. GrayMatter implemented the solution for Specsavers, with active management participation from Pentaho itself. The solution was developed with data from the CSV feeds transformed to a data warehouse, designed and developed by GrayMatter, using Pentaho ETL tool Kettle.

Subsequently a menu driven user interface of all possible analyses Dashboards was developed. The same set of dashboards / reports were accessible to the online user and to the PDF user. The online user would generally be interested in doing the analyses based on the period of his choice, including trends.

The PDF user's objective was to look at a particular month's analysis dashboards and it had the capability of adding and storing narration. There was a feature of printing a PDF book of the dashboards, along with the Executive summary and narrations entered by the PDF user. This PDF report can then be sent to the management / required users. This solution was moved into Production to start with, for the Dutch pack and then replicated the same BI solution across other countries.

Results

Consistent strategic metrics across countries was achieved, as a result of this implementation. At the click of a button, users were able to do the various analysis (view various dashboards) for whatever stores / combinations of stores / regions they wished to analyze. There was no manual effort required and there were literally no restrictions to the kind of analyses that could be done.

This helped Specsavers to focus more on strategic decision making based on real-time as well as historical KPIs.

Specsavers also benefitted by the significantly lower Total Cost of Ownership of Pentaho than proprietary BI. The other advantages of Pentaho of Enterprise deployability and breadth of capabilities added to the Pentaho offering from GrayMatter.