



Noble Group Improves Business Efficiency By Deploying Qlik

“Qlik has allowed us to access critical business data that has been locked away inside legacy vendor systems and present and distribute these data globally to interested parties.”

– Peter Blanks, CIO Asia Pacific, Noble Group



Established in 1986, Noble Group (SGX: N21) is a commodity trading and supply chain management company with a diversified portfolio of soft, hard and energy commodity products. Headquartered in Hong Kong, the company operates from over 140 locations, employing more than 70 nationalities worldwide. Apart from managing a diversified portfolio of essential raw materials, the company is also responsible for integrating the sourcing, marketing, processing, financing and transportation of those materials. Noble Group owns and manages a portfolio of strategic assets too, sourcing from low cost producers such as Brazil, Argentina, Australia and Indonesia and supplying to high growth demand markets including China, India and the Middle East. Today, Noble Group has interests in grain crushing facilities, coal and iron ore mines, fuel terminals and storage facilities, sugar and ethanol plants, ports, vessels and other key infrastructure facilities

Until recently, Noble employed a multitude of traditional reporting tools, SQL extracts and Excel spreadsheets to source, manipulate and present business data. Unfortunately they did not give a holistic view of the business - data was highly fragmented with similar and same data type held across multiple systems resulting in uncoordinated, repetitive, slow and costly business reporting and data mining. The reports generated were not graphical, interactive, mobile and collaborative. The only ‘business intelligence’ (BI) came from pivot tables using Microsoft Excel.

Quest for an efficient global BI solution

The Noble Group was looking for specialist BI software that is globally scalable, browser based delivery model and one that is reputable and in the leaders section of Gartner’s Magic Quadrant for BI. The solution also needed to be simple to learn and one that can be used on tablets. The goal here was to use the BI tool to drive revenue generation, identify efficiency opportunities and support operational improvement programs.

Qlik ticked all the boxes and Noble Group is now able to consolidate and aggregate data from various sources and provide an interactive user interface

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Noble Group

The Noble Group manages the global supply chain of agricultural and energy products, metals and minerals. With its headquarters in Hong Kong, the company owns and manages a portfolio of strategic assets, sourcing from low costs producers and supplying to high growth demand markets.

Industry

Conglomerate

Function

Supply Chain, Finance, HR, IT

Geography

Global rollout including several hundred users in Asia Pacific, North America and EMEA

Challenges

Improve the process and cost of business reporting & data mining
New & timely reports that do not replicate information
Consolidate similar/same data held across platforms

Solution

QlikTech partner Velocity Business Solutions deployed Qlik for Noble Group

Benefits

Better support for Operational Improvement programmes
Increased efficiency opportunities
Improved revenue generation

Data Sources

Databases:

Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server, Excel

Applications: Various in-house developed operational systems, Peoplesoft, Sun Accounts .

QlikTech Partner

Velocity Business Solutions
www.vebuso.com



making it easier for employees. The associative search also puts the user in control.

Efficiency Improvements

The company's Human Capital Management (HCM) platform is over eight years old and the technology, license agreement, and security model limits system access for reporting and analysis purposes. Using Qlik, the Noble Group created a dashboard for use by Human Resource professionals to access & analyze employee data from anywhere in the world. These reports are more in-depth as Qlik enables HR employees to highlight present data by country, business unit, legal entity, role, age, sex, and tenure. This in turn helps the company analyze headcount and better manage resources.

Dashboards for the finance department were also made using Qlik. General ledgers are consolidated into real time finance dashboards and the department can now group and slice data by Profit Generating Unit, Legal Entity, Chart of Accounts and Cost Centre.

There were also improvements to inventory management as the company can now map over 4000 storage facilities with near real time utilization and capacity data from multiple sources. The new dashboard allows staff to drill down on inventory, schedules, costs, fees and contacts.

Peter Blanks, CIO Asia Pacific at Noble Group felt the value BI brought to the business justified the cost of licenses, infrastructure and development effort to support a global rollout, "apart from reasonable costs to the company, Qlik also offers a different approach to doing things – it's less static reporting and more dynamic data analysis"

QlikTech Partner Velocity Business Solutions offers an end-to-end solution

The turning point came through the expertise and specialist knowledge of the BI solution marketplace brought to the Noble Group by QlikTech's Hong Kong partner, Velocity Business Solutions. The delivery of solutions was made through a 'Seeing is Believing' approach where the company built a prototype against an operational system. Ian Whitehouse, Director, Velocity Business Solutions, says: "Our deep understanding of Qlik meant we could help The Noble Group deploy the solution in the most effective manner. Existing reporting tools left Noble users dissatisfied with the level of available information detail based upon pre-defined paths of navigation. Qlik has provided Noble with the ability to analyse company data the way the users wanted to see it. Noble can now perform analysis of data at the most granular level, providing insight into the events impacting its business performance."

Moving forward with endless possibilities

Peter is confident the solution has had a positive impact on the operations at Noble Group. "Our work and success to date gives us a great foundation to build on. I believe Noble Group is just beginning its BI journey and as we build our capabilities and experience we will continue to make core business data available to our clients in ways we never thought possible. Leveraging QlikView's simplicity and customization abilities will definitely assist in creating efficiencies across all levels of our business."

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