EMC²

6.2

Providing Better Visibility to Performance Metrics through Integrated Business Intelligence

EMC, the global information management powerhouse, has been using Dimensional Insight's The Diver Solution™ since acquiring Data General in August of 1999. Bob Petrillo, Corporate Technical Operations Manager, describes the early benefit that EMC derived from Diver by creating a 'single version of the truth' from their data. "We would spend hours reconciling data. Once we started using Diver, there was no need. Everyone worked from the same set of numbers. This allowed us to transition our user community from report builders to business analysts to help drive change in the business. This alone had a huge impact on our business operations."

While EMC had always used DI's suite of tools for ad hoc analytics and reporting, 2008 posed a new challenge. Petrillo and his team were asked to investigate BI tools that used dashboards and scorecards to report critical metrics to executives responsible for the operations of EMC's Professional Services business. The new functionality present within Dimensional Insight's newest release, The Diver Solution™ 6.2, provided EMC with the necessary tools to quickly design, develop, and distribute a set of role-based dashboards that visually communicated the performance of several key areas of the business. EMC executives realized that in order to move the Professional Services group forward, they needed to explore the use of scorecards delivered ▶

Insight at-a-glance

Industry
Data and Information Storage

Customer Since – 2000

Employees – 40,000

Company Description – Founded in 1979, EMC has grown into the largest vendor of enterprise information storage platforms and services in the world. Despite intense competition from IBM and Hitachi, EMC has experienced double digit revenue growth for six consecutive years, attaining $14.9 billion in revenues last year. EMC products and services span a broad spectrum, from securing critical corporate data and implementing information management strategies to running data centers more efficiently and reducing storage infrastructure costs. Underscoring EMC's commitment to maintaining its leadership position is their concerted push into cloud computing and enterprise virtualization technologies.

Headquarters
Hopkinton, MA

Website
http://www.emc.com

Information Delivery Goals:

Eliminate 'report overload' by providing executives and managers with dashboard-based scorecards

Obtain the ability to display current, actual numbers on dashboards relative to targets, forecasts, and goals

Provide non-technical end users with a highly graphical, rather than tabular, display of information

Create dashboards displaying key metrics that provide EMC executives with a complete view of their business units

Key Benefits

Provided the ability to seamlessly integrate data from multiple enterprise data stores into a single dashboard

Delivering comprehensive reports to users quickly, with frequent refresh of data

Obtained a validated, single 'version of the truth' for corporate financial and operational data

Ability to scale up to larger, diverse communities of users, while maintaining support staff and infrastructure

via dashboards to provide "at-a-glance" summaries of their particular business units. According to Petrillo, EMC's Professional Services group needed to be able to analyze the following four principal dimensions:

• Financial
• Operational
• Customer Satisfaction
• Employee

Petrillo describes why Diver is well suited to this analysis. "Data compiled in our dashboard environment comes from several different stores. One of Diver's most powerful capabilities is that we are not limited to data that comes from one place. We can easily go to any major data mart and blend information into our environment. Other BI vendors may claim to have this ability, but this is something no one else has really been able to accomplish to our standards before Diver."

Petrillo and his team created top level dashboards for senior management that provided a high level view of key financial and operational metrics. EMC's Divisional Managers have an analogous dashboard that provides them with their own unique view of the business allowing them to drill down into their respective regions to access more details. "For an executive to use a dashboard, you need to provide them all the key metrics they need in order to see the totality of the business. Otherwise, it would be back to several reports," explains Petrillo. With the enhanced layout flexibility and new indicator types built

into DivePort, Dimensional Insight's web portal interface, Petrillo was able to design dashboards that met the requirements of several EMC executive teams. "Being able to show current, actual numbers on the dashboards relative to targets, forecasts, goals - things that we didn't do very well in the past - is a huge plus for us," states Petrillo. "Most users would extract the data, put it into other formats, and then manually apply their goals and targets. Version 6.2 allows us to display current data with targets/goals all in one space, which makes DI's dashboard and scorecard abilities several times more powerful than other methods we've tried to use."

Before Diver, EMC found their reporting environment was highly vertical - meaning each report was very specific to a given topic - requiring a user to run several reports to have the ability to see their whole business. "Although our users had the ability to run all of these reports, they would spend many hours combining the data into spreadsheets. With Diver, they no longer have to do this. We get the same exact data that they get through corporate reporting."

While EMC started using DI's business intelligence tool to support a small group of EMC's power analysts, the features and functionality present in the newest release allowed EMC's use of the product suite to shift dramatically. Version 6.2 focuses on creating a seamless web-based environment capable of supporting the information needs of users across the enterprise thus facilitating user adoption. Specifically, Diver's self-service reporting paired with its ad-hoc analytical functionality are helping more EMC employees gain visibility and insight into their data. "When we started tracking Diver usage back in January of

2008 we had 100 users and in a very short time, we've seen our Diver users grow to more than 600. Usage and adoption has grown significantly. We track both the number of users and their session activity, and we have seen exponential growth in both areas - especially since the roll-out of this newest version," explains Petrillo.

As an integrated business intelligence suite, The Diver Solution includes a number of client interface options to service the needs of different organizational users. "With version 6.2 we are able to support line managers who use Diver's OLAP functionality to do "what-if" analysis while our executives are served by dashboards and self-service reporting capabilities. We have done this without growing staff or infrastructure. It was not a huge investment on EMC's part to derive the benefit that they have from Diver." New visualization options allow EMC to service users in a better way so the data views delivered are more meaningful because information has already been customized to meet user requirements.

Petrillo's group sees plenty of additional Diver-based BI applications making their way into other areas of EMC's business to boost productivity and provide further visibility into corporate information assets. Petrillo states, "We have several tools and applications designed to improve productivity and Diver sits on top almost all of them as the reporting and visualization tool. The ease and flexibility of Diver has allowed us to quickly build and provide the information needed to keep a very close eye on our programs. As an added benefit, we also have the ability to quickly address situations where changes and tweaks are needed. We couldn't do this without Diver."

Dimensional INSIGHT

DATA→INFORMATION→ACTION