

# NSW Business Chamber



## NSW Business Chamber gets closer to its members with QlikView

NSW Business Chamber is one of Australia's largest business support groups, helping over 25,000 businesses each year.

Founded in 1825, they support thousands of companies, from sole traders to large corporates, and have developed into a leading business solution provider and lobbying group with tremendous strengths in workplace management, work health and safety, IR, HR, international trade and improving business performance.

Independent and non-government, NSW Business Chamber represents the needs of business at a local, state and federal level, lobbying governments and authorities to create a better environment to do business in.

### Many reports, little consistency in look and feel

Akash Jaiswal, Manager of Analytics and Application Development at NSW Business Chamber, found he was juggling a multitude of requests for data about membership. Senior management and board members were constantly seeking reports detailing the number of members, the products, services or events that members had paid for, membership data by region or industry sector, and changes in membership.

"There were lots of reports flying back and forth but no consistency in look at feel," Jaiswal explains. "We never had an opportunity to look at the variety of information being used or to consider what was needed from month to month. When we did stop to look we discovered the same information was being reproduced nearly every time with just minor changes."

When an organisational change forced Jaiswal to look carefully at his staffing resources, he realised that the number of requests being received and the production of ad hoc reports for the board each month had become too time consuming. It was clear the Chamber needed a tool to automate and bring consistency to the process, one that could make the relevant data available to all stakeholders. Further, Jaiswal wanted to apply the tool to more than just membership information. The Chamber had a wide variety of financial and commercial data that could benefit from such analysis and reporting.

*"If I were to put in a percentage amount, the improvement in automation is between 60 and 70 percent."*



### At a glance

#### Industry

Business Association

#### Function

Board, executive management, general management, finance, sales

#### Location

New South Wales, Australia

#### Challenges

- Data from multiple sources
- Inconsistent ad-hoc reports
- Board level reports took too long to produce

#### Solution

NSW Business Chamber introduced QlikView to provide board level reports and analysis of the organisation's membership, commercial, financial, legal and Apprenticeship Centre operations

#### Benefits

- Monthly report preparation time reduced from days to hours
- 60-70% improvement in speed and automation of board-level reports
- Improved staff morale due to removal of monotonous, repetitive data preparation tasks

#### Data Source Systems:

**Applications:** Microsoft Dynamics CRM, Microsoft Dynamics GP, Open Practice (Practice Management), Job Ready Apprentice Tracker, Microsoft Excel

**Databases:** Microsoft SQL Server, FileMaker Pro, Microsoft Excel

**Data Warehouse/BI:** QlikView data files

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## Check with the experts

Jaiswal began to research business intelligence (BI) and analytics tools. "We checked with the Gartner report to see who the providers were in the market and whether they were benchmarked as leading or emerging. We identified which tools would fit our requirements."

One of the Chambers biggest concerns was the need to bring together the vast amount of membership data that was being held in different systems, including their Microsoft Dynamics CRM (customer relationship management) solution. "We had to have a tool to integrate with the multiple databases that we had. Most, but not all, were SQL based," Jaiswal notes. The chosen solution would also need to work with the organisation's financial software and other commercial systems.

From his research Jaiswal identified QlikView as a suitable solution. "It could do all the things we were after, including providing external, web-based access to the data," he says.

The fact that Professional Advantage could build and deploy the solution for the Chamber was an added bonus. "Professional Advantage was already an internal partner. They supported and therefore understood our finance system. This gave us better leverage than bringing in a new vendor who would have had to start from scratch to work out how to integrate QlikView to the financial system," Jaiswal points out.

*"The manual data mining that we had to do in the past was monotonous and repetitive. QlikView has allowed us to take this work away."*

## Land and expand

Professional Advantage recommended the Chamber adopt the proven "land and expand" methodology for the deployment, starting with small, discrete projects and then expanding from there. This would allow the Chamber to quickly begin reaping benefits from its investment as each stage was completed.

The first area of the business chosen to benefit from QlikView was the Chamber's commercial services. Jaiswal says, "We chose this because commercial services had fewer automated reports." Therefore, he explains, it presented the greatest opportunity for fast and appreciable business improvement.

The project focused on reporting transactional information for the Chamber's general manager and for inclusion in board information packs. Within three months the QlikView solution was up and running with a simple-to-use dashboard providing access to a range of reports such as the top 50 or 100 customers, product performance by various business groups, and comparisons of sales year-on-year, by individual, product and client. All data is capable of being filtered according to region or industry sector.

Next, QlikView was integrated with the membership data. Jaiswal comments, "Data mining was key for this, especially with regards to storing a historical copy of data, and the need to validate the business rules behind that particular data. For example, if dealing with a membership reinstatement or invoice cancellation, the rules of that time have to be factored in."

Managers and the board welcomed the new reporting functionality. "This was the first time we had information that was flexible, that could be sliced and diced. We were getting a consistent view of the data and no longer needed an analyst sitting there working out the reports. The feedback from the business was very positive," Jaiswal affirms.

Finance was the third area to come under the QlikView spotlight. This was soon followed by the Apprenticeship Centre, a division within the Chamber's business dedicated to helping employers and their apprentices build effective and mutually rewarding working relationships. QlikView is being used to help track the number of apprentices and their performance in terms of completion and cancellation rates.

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## Morale, productivity and quality benefits

The Chamber has embarked on a number of additional QlikView projects but Jaiswal believes the organisation is close to saturation point. His main priority is to ensure the business maximises use of the tools that are now in place. "It can be very relevant to have a lot of information on hand but if the business is not using it, it can soon become an expensive toy. It's a matter of encouraging users in terms of making sure that the information they need is available," he observes.

Within Jaiswal's team, staff morale has improved markedly. "The manual data mining that we had to do in the past was monotonous and repetitive. QlikView has allowed us to take this work away. Instead of allocating analysts to work with each part of the business we now have just one analyst working across all five units, supporting all the dashboards."

Where it used to take two days to prepare monthly membership data for reporting, it now takes Jaiswal's team less than an hour. In other areas of the business, Jaiswal believes that QlikView is saving anywhere between one and five days in monthly report preparation.

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## About Professional Advantage

Professional Advantage focuses on providing technology and services that enable high-performance workplaces and organisations. Professional Advantage was established in 1989 and today employs more than 230 people in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, London and Fargo, USA. The company is the largest provider of leading brand global business management systems such as financial management, ERP, CRM, retail, business intelligence, business process management and portal solutions to mid-sized organisations in Australia, supporting over 800 clients nationally. Its multi-product offering is complemented by its development, systems integration, consulting, training, and support services. Professional Advantage is the winner of many business and vendor awards including the Microsoft President's Club 2011 and the 2012 Asia Pacific Partner of the Year Award for Infor.

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