

How a Large Health and Beauty Company Reduced Dashboard Load Times from 10 minutes to 10 Seconds

Our client was a large multinational company in the health and beauty industry. This company owned and distributed their own line of products, as well as acting as a distributor for several other companies targeting both the professional and consumer level. With a total catalog consisting of nearly 10,000 products, the company sold to customers in the United States and five other countries.



Challenges

As a growing company with inventory spread across the country in multiple locations and having several sales and distribution channels, a one-stop information resource was needed to keep on top of their inventory and pricing information in real-time. The client currently had BusinessObjects and decided that a dashboard would be the best solution to fill this need. This dashboard would give insight to people of all levels of the organization across many geographic locations and give them the ability to make instant sales and distribution decisions to maximize profitability.

The company created the dashboard using BusinessObjects and its native query tool Query Builder. This provided current and historical pricing, sales, and inventory information. A mechanism was then added to check real-time pricing information as needed from an online source. This delivered the total solution they were looking for. Unfortunately there was one big problem...

Every time the dashboard loaded or was drilled down into, the displayed fields would query the database, and due to the 15 separate queries looking at millions and millions of rows of data, it would take ten minutes or more before the data refresh was complete. Users would load the dashboard and then go do something else while they waited for it to load. Then if they

needed to drill down for additional data, the users would have to click and wait, again, and again. So although the dashboard was everything they had hoped for from a design, data, and decision making standpoint... At the end of the day it was unusable.



Solution

Knowing there was a business need for this data they looked for other ways they could deliver the information, whether in a different format, different product, or better yet, find a way to greatly increase the load speed of the dashboard they had already created. After looking at what was available to them externally and internally, they discovered a solution that they could implement quickly and at a very low cost.

This client already had InfoSol's InfoBurst product, but was only using a couple of its many capabilities. One of the capabilities they were not yet taking advantage of was the XML Data Cache (XDC) component.

With InforBurst XDC:

- The required dashboard data is pulled from the database and stored locally on the InfoBurst server, which greatly reduces network traffic and the load on the BO servers.
- The dashboard runs its queries and pulls from local cache instead of the database.
- When the dashboard loads or is clicked on data is retrieved locally and is instantly available, making the dashboard extremely fast and very scalable.
- InfoBurst queries the database and updates the XDC at scheduled or event based intervals instead of every time the dashboard loads or is clicked on.

So the decision was made. Since the client already had the InfoBurst product there was no need to purchase and learn

a new product, and the XDC component seemed the perfect solution to speed up the dashboard they had already created. Best of all it could be implemented and tested quickly at a very low overall cost.

Implementation

The customer worked out the strategy and then brought in an InfoSol consultant to help make the change.

Here was the implementation strategy:

1. Change the Query Builder queries to InfoBurst XDC connections.
2. Recreate the 15 Query Builder queries as Webi reports.
3. Create cache queries for the parameters.
4. Cache the report data on the InfoBurst server so all the needed data was available.
5. In the dashboard itself, change out the Query Builder connections for InfoBurst cache connectors and cache query connectors.
6. Create a data cache of over 1.7 million rows of data to access.
7. Test the existing dashboard with the new XDC related configuration and real-time pricing data connections.

Once the InfoSol consultant was brought on board, the strategy was implemented and all the steps were completed in less than two days.

InfoBurst: Because life is too short to struggle



Results

The results were immediate and astounding. The dashboard that once took 10 minutes now loads in 2-10 seconds. What was once considered unusable became an important, scalable, business decision tool that could be used at all levels across the entire company.

Due to the success of this project our client is now looking at more unused InfoBurst capabilities and how they can be used for business needs such as porting to mobile devices, offline caching, HTML5, and bursting and scheduling not just reports, but other dashboards as well.

If you would like more information on InfoBurst, or BusinessObjects consulting services, you can contact InfoSol at: 623-707-7600 or infosol@infosol.com

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