



Early Adoption Success for Kerry Foods

'We have found SQL Server & Analysis Services to be extremely feature rich and easy to use. We are already seeing a considerable timesaving in terms of administration and performance.'

Fernando Quinzi, Project Manager, Kerry Foods Ltd.

Background

Kerry Foods Ltd is part of the Kerry Group, a major international food manufacturer with a turnover in excess of £1 billion and employing over 10,000 people.

In the UK, Kerry Foods Limited supplies both branded goods and own label products to retailers. Brands include Richmond, Wall's and Mattessons. In addition to supplying dairy, savoury and chilled convenience foods to major retailers, Kerry has a food ingredients business supplying savoury ingredients, flavour coating systems and bakery ingredients worldwide.

Issues

Prior to this project, reporting was paper based and derived from an RDB database on VAX. Kerry's business is growing quickly with an increasing need to understand up-to-the-minute sales patterns and trends for numerous lines.

The challenge addressed by the IS function was to put powerful, flexible and easy to use analysis and reporting facilities into the hands of key business managers, including finance, sales, head office and National Account Managers. New to data warehousing and starting with a 'clean slate', Kerry faced the challenge of selecting the technology base without prior experience.

Solution

Thorogood and Kerry have worked together to produce a data warehouse containing sales transactions, prime cost information and budgets in Microsoft SQL Server 7.0 on a 400Mhz Pentium II server. Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services is used to provide multidimensional manipulation and views of the data customized to the interest areas of the managers who use the system.

Administration is designed to be simple to use with database updating and view creation having been packaged up in a VB5 application. This exploits the DSO interface to control Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services and ADO MD to manipulate the multidimensional data objects.

The first application is built on a 370mb database with 12 million fact rows, and is expected to grow at 25,000 fact rows per week. Loading data extracted from the VAX system into Microsoft SQL Server 7.0 took under 12 minutes.

A second Direct Sales application has been successfully prototyped with an anticipated database size of 30 gigabytes and 35 million fact rows. Data loading speeds of 1000 rows per second are being achieved across a network connection. The multidimensional application can be queried by any of the client products currently available that support OLE DB for OLAP, including ProClarity, NovaView by Cognos and others.

Thorogood input

Thorogood helped Kerry Foods:

- Understand exactly how to apply data warehousing and OLAP technology to their business
- Identify benefits and manage the risks associated with using a new technology
- Plan work to manage risk and ensure early success
- Gain the necessary skills in their project team
- Design and build their relational and multidimensional database structures with customized views and filters
- Select client tools best suited to their needs and budget

Benefits to the client

Kerry has gained confidence in Microsoft SQL Server 7.0 and Microsoft SQL Server Analysis Services as a highly credible technology with low cost of ownership. Information on the value and profitability of accounts is now provided directly to their key business managers. National Account Managers now focus on customer/product relationship issues without dependency on IS support. Kerry is keen to gain further benefit from their newly acquired technology and skills by applying them to other important information delivery projects.

Imminent projects include:

- Customer statistics for service level monitoring
- Promotional Activity
- Category Management Sales Budgets

In today's technological age there is no shortage of information, but how do you access the facts you want, when you want them and in the best possible format? To help you, Thorogood makes sense of data. We combine our skills in IT and numerate analysis with business understanding to provide you with solutions to help you get ahead in today's marketplace. Independent since 1987, our focus is to find exactly the right system to match your needs.

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