



Enabling Service Excellence at Land Securities Trillium

A Microsoft Windows 2000 solution powered by SQL Server 2000 Analysis Services and ProClarity

Background

Trillium is the leading integrated property services group in the UK, combining property ownership, active estate management and serviced facilities. Trillium is owned by Land Securities PLC, one of the UK's leading quoted property investment and development groups. It has over 40 offices and 600 employees, and works with seven service partners to deliver value for money and a service that is driven by new standards of customer care. Trillium takes on the risk of owning and managing property allowing the customer to focus on its core business, enhance its balance sheet and gain flexibility to meet changing accommodation needs. Working with Trillium, customers can replace a patchwork of contracts with one single point of contact, and through Trillium's purchasing power, can gain major efficiencies.

Issues

Trillium's business proposition is centered around taking the pain out of property management for its customers – very large organisations. Business success is achieved by delivering outstanding service to customers whose expectations are defined in service level agreements.

Underachievement of service levels carries penalties. Given this model, the ability to manage service levels and service providers is key. Trillium's managers are empowered to make proactive changes quickly and need tools to monitor performance on a very wide variety of measures. Reporting and analysis has to be timely, accurate, flexible, secure, and most of all, easy.

An Oracle system had been developed in order to provide the operational monitoring and calculation of performance scores against work order events, and is updated several times each day. The Oracle database had been optimized for data input and calculation, and with complex scoring algorithms, its relational schema was not aimed at reporting, query and analysis. A separate Trillium project team was tasked with delivering management reporting within this area and beyond. The team's evaluation process resulted in the selection of Thorogood as implementation partners, providing the correct blend of experience and skills aligned to the chosen technologies.

Solution

The Trillium project team identified that a Business Intelligence solution was clearly needed, and after evaluation of the alternatives, a solution built on the Microsoft Windows 2000 platform, using SQL Server 2000, Data Transformation Services and Analysis Services was chosen to provide a powerful and scalable multi-dimensional database on the server side. ProClarity 3.0 was selected as the client tool for its rich functionality encompassing an intuitive interface, easy to use navigation through business dimensions, and the ability to select, tabulate and graph information with drill-down and drill-across to any levels of the analysis services data cubes. In addition, ProClarity's unique analytic visualizations present information in ways designed to highlight those areas of performance that most deserve attention. ProClarity offers rich functionality including web and desktop deployment options, web based help facilities and access to detailed source information. A www.thorogood.com

ProClarity add-in also offers functions such as auto-email and the ability to export to current and previous versions of Excel.

The selected technologies provided a cost-effective solution compared to other technologies in the marketplace.

Data Transformation Services is used to extract information incrementally from the Oracle source to a staging area on a nightly basis. This minimizes the amount of reprocessing required by the system. An automated process identifies and resolves invalid reference data, and the data is then transformed into a star schema. This star schema is accessed by Analysis Services to provide daily OLAP information to users.

Key features of the system include:

- point-in-time reporting capability, with updates being entered as amendments. The time horizon can be rolled back at will, so that managers can see how things looked at any previous point in time;
- partitioning of annual data with programmatic reprocessing to reduce update times;
- parameterized security allowing rules to be updated without code changes;
- the provision of 2 user cubes – a standard cube with 10 dimensions and an advanced cube with 20 dimensions - to best meet the needs of a range of users;
- the use of parent / child dimensions;
- a robust update cycle, including automated backup and restore-on-fail.

The system offers flexibility, as it contains multiple hierarchies to meet different business views. As an example, information on a building can be viewed in the context of either present or past property portfolios. Alternative time hierarchies allow the user to analyse by calendar or fiscal year, start date, end date and penalty date. When considering manager performance over time, the comparison is always based on their relevant responsibilities at each point in time.

Thorogood was uniquely placed to implement Trillium's requirement for a number of reasons:

- as an independent company specializing in Business Intelligence solutions, we were able to draw on our knowledge and experience of the leading technologies, including those from Oracle, Hyperion, Microstrategy and Microsoft;
- as early adopters of Microsoft's Business Intelligence technologies, we have over three years of practical experience in a wide range of application areas;
- we have extensive experience of the available front-end technologies and indeed we are ProClarity's EMEA Certified Partner of the Year for the third consecutive year.

Thorogood input

In a five month period, three Thorogood consultants worked with the project team at Trillium. The first stage of the engagement was to pick up Trillium's initial statement of requirements and to refine it with user representatives in the light of the chosen technologies. We then proceeded to design and implement the solution, including testing, up to the stage of user acceptance testing.

The production server, a Compaq ML570 Server, comes equipped with quad-processing capabilities and is powered by Intel Pentium III Xeon processors. For the initial roll-out to 75 users, 2 gigabytes of RAM were installed. A larger user base will be supported in the longer term. The star schema tables are approximately 1 gigabyte in size, and the Analysis Services cubes compress this data to 185 megabytes, an 81.5% compression rate.

**Benefits
to the client**

Trillium's business performance is directly linked to meeting customer service expectations. This system enables empowered managers to see what needs to be done to best service their customers and thereby earn profits. Opportunities for better service, problem prevention, cost control and better supplier management can be seen early and in time to be managed.

Managers at all levels, from the board through regional and area managers, to facilities managers can monitor progress and ensure that both client and supplier relationships are developed in the best possible way.

Finally, Trillium's business growth is driven by its track record with existing customers and its ability to understand and assess the cost drivers associated with the property portfolios of prospective customers. This solution provides the Business Intelligence they need to succeed.

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 the full picture 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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