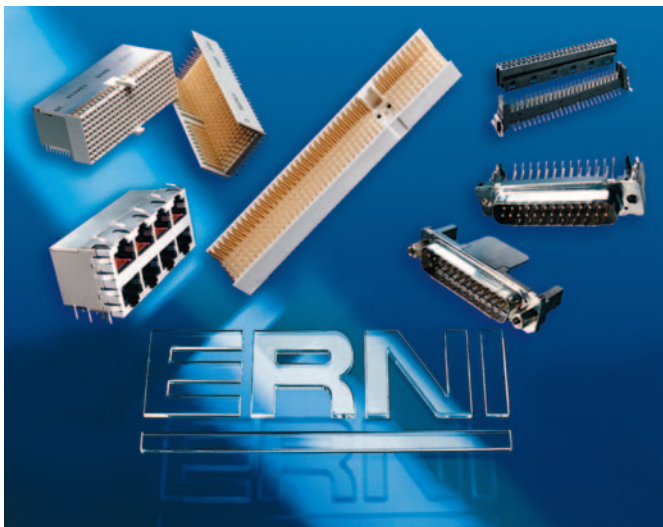


Electronics specialist implements comprehensive corporate controlling system

ERNI selects MIK-BIS BI solution

ERNI Elektroapparate GmbH, with its headquarters in Adelberg near Göppingen, Germany, was founded in 1956. Today, the 50 year-old company is a healthy medium-sized corporation with approximately 500 employees and sales of around 103 million Euros for its fiscal year 2005. This



makes ERNI one of the world's leading manufacturers of connectors for use in telecommunications and industrial electronics. GmbH is part of an international group with subsidiaries in Europe, North America and Asia that all belong to the Swiss ERNI Holding AG.

Holger Neige, project manager for the introduction of a business intelligence system at ERNI, reports that in the past different data sources from heterogeneous systems were used in controlling and reports were generated manually using Excel. »We really lacked a comprehensive method of graphical visualization and were completely without a multidimensional method of conducting analysis. Also, because data always had to be updated manually, the manpower needed to do comprehensive reporting, including report generation and analysis, was simply too much for a medium-size company to handle«, explains Neige.

»Thanks to the multidimensionality, we have more ways of evaluating it and are essentially capable of comparing everything with everything else. In addition, visualization of the data in MIK-Graphics is simply very impressive.«

Holger Neige, project manager for the introduction of a BI system

For this reason, ERNI decided to implement a BI solution. They were looking for a software solution that would allow for the various data sources to be tapped into automatically and data to be extracted. After conducting a thorough survey of the market, three systems were reviewed in greater detail. Finally, MIK, a vendor based in Reichenau, Germany, convinced them with its modular solution MIK-BIS. »Here, the visit that we paid to another user, the speed with which a prototype could be built and the simple way in which data could be extracted that we were able to experience for ourselves even during the test phase were the main reasons for the decision. We also really liked the graphical interface and design capabilities of MIK-Presentation, because all of the views can be assembled individually. In addition, the fact that the software offered by MIK could be purchased directly from the manufacturer meant our individual needs could be satisfied more quickly«, Neige adds.

ERNI decided in favor of the MIK-BIS modules MIK-XLReport, MIK-Graphics, MIK-Presentation, MIK-Maps and MIK-Slide-show. The project started in January of 2006 and the first subproject on sales management went productive already in August. The company planned to integrate finance, materials management and manufacturing in order to execute a complete corporate controlling concept by 2007.

Speedy reactions from the sales forces

Approximately 20 sales employees have access to a sales cockpit through MIK-Presentation. This allows them to analyze and work independently with the data from their own region. Now, they can analyze sales figures, contribution to profit figures, customers and, as a result, the respective customer structure, extremely quickly and also have access to calculation data. »Particularly with price negotiations, it is of great benefit to enable sales employees to analyze quickly on site whether the pro-

ducts the customer is interested in buying yield a profit and then be able to determine where price concessions can be made e.g. whether certain prices need to be raised«, Neige explains.

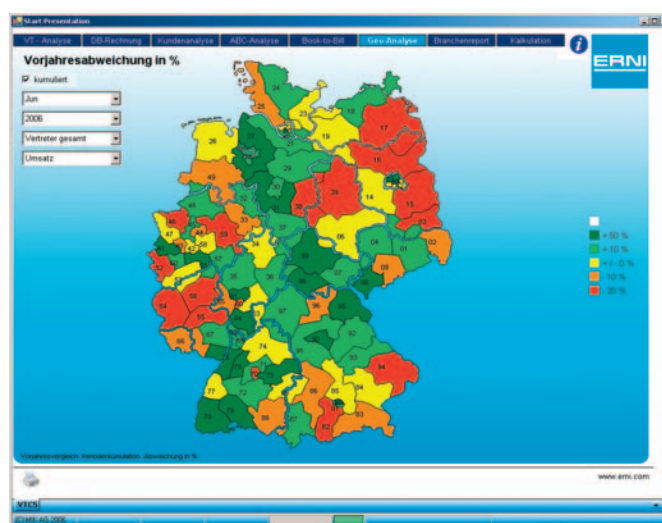
Controlling, sales managers and the management, of course, are always able to retain an overview of the big picture and can determine the customer structure for the entire company, analyze products sold and clarify strategic questions. In the last resort, sales and data on contributions towards profits that have been updated on a daily basis can be obtained from the ERP system. Tests have also already been performed with transferring data from Lotus Notes, because this is where sales employees store their visit reports and this information could eventually be taken into account with reports. Excel will continue to be used for special types of reports and it has already been confirmed that the data from the MIK solution can be transferred without difficulty.

From collecting data to transparent analysis

Neige definitely expects the introduction of the new solution to result in a restructuring of the tasks involved in controlling. In other words, transferring and making data available will take substantially less time in the future and more time can therefore be devoted to performing analysis and concentrating on what really matters. ERNI has already witnessed how graphic visualization delivers much greater transparency with the figures. During presentation of a product calculation, for example, Neige says it was possible to portray the distribution of the costs across the individual areas in great detail. This means it is possible to systematically assess an area in which the costs were extremely high. »Whereas only a figure is displayed in a table or a cell in Excel, graphic presentation reveals deviations or shares much more quickly and enables more targeted reactions«, says Neige. »Particularly for a medium-size company, this quickly becomes a competitive advantage. After all, transparency and better visualization makes us more flexible and capable of reacting better.«

All in all, Neige views the ability to design graphics and reports on his own to be a major advantage. »In terms of quality, our reporting has definitely improved considerably. I am already able to see this. Thanks to the multidimensionality, we have more ways of evaluating it and are essentially capable of comparing everything with everything else. In addition, visualization of the data in MIK-Graphics is simply very impressive. Especially the speed

with which analysis can be performed and the extremely quick query times were aspects completely new to us. All in all, we really like the analytic capabilities MIK-BIS offers. Now, we have a number of ways of performing analysis, such as deviation from the previous year, or previous periods, as well as standardization of data in order to present it as percentage values that we are able to portray using only a few clicks of the mouse. Thanks to the intuitive operability, MIK-BIS has been able to make our work much easier without hardly any training«, Neige concludes.



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